



Township of Bernards

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PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Company Name: Bernards Township
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Subject: School Safety

Since the Florida School Shooting there has, naturally, been a great deal of concern about school safety here in Bernards Township.

Immediately after that tragedy, Mayor Carpenter and Superintendent of Schools Nick Markarian coordinated with Deputy Chief Mike Shimsky to convene a meeting of all relevant parties from the Police Department, School District, and Township Administration. The purpose of this meeting is to review our plans and preparations to protect our children and to see if there is more we can/should do. This meeting is set for Friday, March 9th.

Additionally, Superintendent Markarian and Deputy Chief Mike Shimsky have been in constant communication and spoke with and listened to concerned residents at the Board of Education meeting on Monday, February 26th.

Mayor Carpenter, Board of Education President McKeon, Superintendent Markarian and Deputy Chief Shimsky want Bernards' residents to know the following:

1. *School safety has been, is and will remain top of mind for all of us.*
2. *Law Enforcement and the BOE have a long history of working hand in glove to protect our children.*
3. *We are completely open to receiving information about any ideas and opportunities to improve school safety.*
4. *It is to no one's benefit to discuss any observed vulnerabilities in public and that any such observations should be shared discreetly with DC Shimsky and Superintendent Markarian.*
5. *We cannot, for obvious reasons, discuss existing plans and preparations.*
6. *We will take the time necessary to make informed and productive decisions on this most important topic.*

After meeting with those who are most familiar with and qualified on the subject of school safety we can reflect on what steps may be appropriate going forward. In the meantime we can all take an active role in helping to keep our schools safe by remembering to take a "see something - say something" approach. We can also talk to our children about the same and their responsibility to take care of themselves and

their classmates by speaking up when someone needs help. Our children who are embedded in the fabric of the schools and their social networks are possibly the best source of helpful information.

Thank you,
Mayor John Carpenter
Board of Education President Robin McKeon
Superintendent of Schools Nick Markarian
Deputy Police Chief Mike Shimsky

03/05/2018