

BOLTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

May 25, 2022

Dear Families and Staff,

The horrific events in Uvalde, Texas have become incomprehensibly commonplace in our country. I know you join me in sending our thoughts and prayers to the victims, their families, and the entire community. As the coverage continues, your children may have questions and continue to experience a range of emotions. Please know that our staff is prepared to support students and parents. If you feel your child is in need of direct support please contact school staff so that they can be responsive to your child's needs. It is important to keep the following things in mind:

- Children and adults, even if they were not directly impacted, may still have feelings related to the event.
- Children and adults may become distressed about other troubling events in their lives when they are reminded about the tragedy – even if their own experiences are unrelated.
- Helping children deal with a difficult event is hard work – parents, teachers, and school staff need to be sure to take care of themselves to best support the needs of our children.

While we already have school security protocols in place, school safety is a responsibility that requires ongoing attention, practice, and improvement. So, although we continue to follow the All-Hazard School Security and Safety Plan, our Safe School Climate Plan, and our PBIS model we also find ourselves constantly identifying areas of improvement and refining our procedures to be more vigilant, more efficient, and more prepared. Please note that our All-Hazard School Security and Safety Plan is submitted to the Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security annually. In addition, we have a strong relationship with our State Troopers, the Town leadership, Bolton's Emergency Management Director, and the Bolton Volunteer Fire Department and we will continue to partner with them when refining our school safety procedures.

I assure you that we do not just say student safety is a priority. We make it a point to have procedures and practices in place to anticipate, prevent, and if necessary, respond to an array of incidents so our students and staff are kept safe and able to keep the focus on education. We are committed to doing everything within our control to keep our kids safe. Should you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me or your child's building principal.

In addition, below please find some very helpful resources about how to talk to children of varying ages about such horrific violence and tragedy.

<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-safety-and-crisis/school-violence-resources/talking-to-children-about-violence-tips-for-parents-and-teachers>

[Guidelines-Talking to Kids About Attacks.pdf](#)

[Talking to Children About Violence - School Safety and Crisis.pdf](#)

[Talking To Children About Violence.pdf](#)

[The National Child Traumatic Stress Network - Talking to Children about the Shooting.pdf](#)

While we certainly live in uncertain times, we must try to find the good in the world for the sake of our children. As your superintendent of schools and as a parent, I am filled with deep and profound sadness, but comforted by the fact that our children are supported and loved by their families, the Bolton community, and by caring and compassionate administrators, teachers, and support staff. These dedicated people will continue to support and care for your children and make our schools places that are filled with love, laughter, and learning.

With deep care and concern,

Kristin B. Heckt

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Superintendent of Schools