

**FOR YOUR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION**

April 20, 2007

Dear Cass Jr. High School Parents and Students,

This is to let you know that the events of April 16 at Virginia Tech University have affected us all. We at Cass have had questions from students and parents about how a similar event would be handled in our District.

Please know that we have a comprehensive emergency management plan that includes fire, tornado and security procedures. The plan has been developed in cooperation with local law enforcement and fire protection agencies, and the plan is revised annually based upon our school's needs. The local agencies have a copy of the plan, as well. All Cass parents received a letter this week explaining that Cass will hold a "Lockdown Drill" in early May under simulated emergency conditions. Ironically, we were composing this letter as the news of Virginia Tech began to be known.

We referenced the tragedy in Tuesday's (April 17) announcements when we were discussing the purpose of emergency drills with our students. Ironically, we had a tornado drill scheduled for April 17, and we also alerted the students about the upcoming Lockdown Drill. *In addition, our faculty was specifically notified to look out for students who might be overwhelmed by the news of the Virginia Tech tragedy.*

Public schools do have students with significant emotional stress and/or debilitating psychological conditions. I can assure you we are vigilant about any "red flags" that would indicate that students might be a danger to themselves or others. Our teachers, counselors, social workers and psychologists are experienced and well-trained in identifying and working with troubled youths. Many times, we are able to identify these types of problems and work with families and/or implement services to help address and resolve these conditions.

Our District's Emergency Management Plan has elements that we publicize – fire and tornado procedures are posted in every room, for example. There is also information in the plan that is confidential – publicizing this confidential information could actually jeopardize our school(s).

I hope this answers any questions you may have. I too, have listened to a number of interviews and read several accounts of the Virginia Tech tragedy. I do think that colleges and universities have an extraordinary challenge with campus security. Smaller schools like ours are comparatively easy to secure (e.g. our locked doors during the day). However, I can assure you we take our responsibility for providing a secure environment very seriously. Please let me know if you have any additional questions.

Yours truly,

Mark Enright  
Cass Jr. High School Principal