

Emergency Situations: The Importance of Working Together

Wednesday's lockdown at Henry C. Beck Middle School was a stressful time for students, staff and parents. The Cherry Hill Police remind us all that an appropriate response from everyone involved is crucial to a successful outcome.

I believe it's safe to say our entire community is well aware of the threat and subsequent emergency response that took place at Beck Middle School on Wednesday, January 4, 2017. We are fortunate that the threat ultimately was determined not to be credible. Our law enforcement officers, in cooperation with the staff and students at the school, conducted an exhaustive search to make sure everyone was safe. And while the hours it took to ensure everyone's safety were stressful, the outcome was what we focus on every day: our students and staff are safe.

While we all are relieved that the threat was a hoax, administration and law enforcement are now working together to improve certain aspects of our emergency management. One of the areas we are looking at is communication. Not only the communication that goes out to the public, but the communication among people "inside" the emergency situation, and people "outside" it.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Board of Education Work Session

January 10 @ 7 pm
Malberg Administration Building

MLK Day of Service - SCHOOLS CLOSED

January 16

Board of Education Action Meeting

January 24 @ 7 pm
Malberg Administration Building

Policy & Legislation Committee Meeting

February 6 @ 6 pm
Malberg Administration Building

Curriculum & Instruction Committee Meeting

February 6 @ 7 pm
Malberg Administration Building

Business & Facilities Committee Meeting

February 7 @ 6 pm
Malberg Administration Building

Board of Education Strategic Planning Committee Meeting

In [an excellent interview on www.njpen.com](http://www.njpen.com), Cherry Hill Police Chief Bud Monaghan went over some critical points for our community to keep in mind should a similar event occur in the future:

- Parents: Please resist the urge to rush to the school. “When [parents’ cars] start clogging up the roadway, they’re taking up spaces where we would want to park emergency vehicles,” Chief Monaghan explains. During a lockdown, no one is permitted in or out of the building, under any circumstances. Parents will be asked to leave until students are dismissed. The police and the school district will direct parents about dismissal procedures.

- Students and parents: Do not text and/or post information and images related to the crisis on social media. [Lockdowns](#) are designed to keep everyone in the building safe. Posting and sharing information about occupants’ whereabouts “is not good if a bad guy is monitoring us,” Chief Monaghan says. “We want that information confidential because we might be moving people [inside the building] for a reason.”

- Trust in the law enforce officials and school district staff on site. All have been trained, and will continued to be retrained, in emergency response and will do everything possible to keep the students calm. Encourage your children to trust the adults in charge in these situations.

Chief Monaghan will be joining me for my next live “Online Lunch” [YouTube](#) broadcast on January 12 at noon, where we’ll discuss this at greater length and invite questions from viewers. I hope you’ll join us!

As a parent, I do understand the difficulty in waiting for communication from the school or district during an emergency situation. Please remember that the Cherry Hill School District works closely with law enforcement during these types of events. We release information as we are able in a way that will not hinder an ongoing investigation or response. We continually work to improve the communication systems for emergency notification.

I urge you to check with your school or schools to make sure all of your emergency contact information is up to date. If your school has a text alert system, be sure you are signed up for it.

One last thought: Please, whether it be an emergency situation or general communication, rely on direct contact with the school or district (including our [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) platforms) and local law enforcement rather than posts and comments on outside social media. Remember the game we all played as children, "Whisper Down the Lane," where messages are garbled by the time they are whispered from one person to another down a line of people? The "Whisper Down the Lane" effect tends to be magnified on social media. Rely on official sources so that the information is credible.

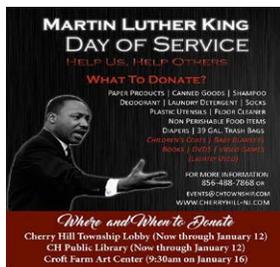
I wish you a relaxing weekend.

Regards,

Joe Meloche

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Superintendent, Cherry Hill Public Schools



Volunteers Needed for MLK Day of Service Event

Cherry Hill Township will host this year's Martin Luther King Day of Service event and is seeking volunteers on Monday, January 16 from 9 am to noon. Several volunteer opportunities will be available. A complete list of activities and locations will be available from the township soon.

Donations are being accepted



Our Latest Communication Forum: "Quick Question!"

Did you ever wonder about something in the Cherry Hill Public Schools and believe your friends and neighbors are wondering the same thing? Submit your question for a published answer on [the new "Quick Question" page](#) on the CHPS web site, <http://www.chcl.org/>, under the "Community" pull-down



Graduates from 2012-2016 Still Needed for Young Alumni Board

Superintendent Dr. Joseph Meloche invites Cherry Hill Public Schools graduates from the classes of 2012-2016 to be a part of the new Young Alumni Board, which met for the first time in late December and will meet again in the spring.

Dr. Meloche is especially

now at the Cherry Hill Township Municipal Building, 820 Mercer Street and at the Cherry Hill Public Library, 1100 Kings Highway North. Donations also will be accepted the day of the event at Croft Farm.

What to donate?

Cases of water
Paper products
canned goods
shampoo
deodorant
laundry detergent
books
DVD's
Video Games
Plastic Utensils
Floor Cleaner
Non-Perishable Food Items
Children's Coats
Baby Blankets
Socks
Diapers
39 gal. trash bags

If you wish to volunteer, please contact the Recreation Department at 856-488-7868 or Events@CHTownship.com

menu.

We'll review your question and answer it on the page. Questions to date include, "Is the day before winter break (12/23/16) an early dismissal day?" "What are the make-up days if we have snow days this year?" and "What is the difference between a lockout and a lockdown?" Each of these questions, and accompanying answers, currently are on the page. [Submit your question to be answered and published as well!](#)

seeking representation from Cherry Hill High School East. Discussion will focus on what recent graduates found most useful – and what they wish had been available to them – during their time in the Cherry Hill Schools. "This information will help us continue to best meet the needs of our students," Dr. Meloche says.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Mrs. Janet Cohen at (856)429-5600, extension 4309 or jacohen@chclc.org. Please indicate the time of day (morning, afternoon or evening) that works best for you.