

HAMILTON TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATION

James E. Stevenson Board of Education Building
90 Park Avenue
Hamilton, NJ 08690
Phone: (609) 631-4100 Fax: (609) 631-4106
Extension: 3048



James Altobello, Ed. D.
Director of Administration

To the HTSD Community,

We hope this communication finds you excited as we approach the 2023 - 2024 school year. This message comes to provide you with some important information about our enhancements to school security across the district. As you may know, as part of the 2023 - 2024 budget process, the Board of Education made a commitment to bolstering school security; and we are happy to report that the following measures are in place.

We have hired a School Safety Coordinator, Mr. Robert Gioscio who will work alongside the Office of Administration in overseeing the district security apparatus; and ensure we adhere to our plan as well as all relevant policies and statutes that govern school security. At each of our 17 elementary schools for the first time we will have full time campus monitors. These individuals under the guidance of Mr. Gioscio and in coordination with the school principals will provide oversight, guidance and assistance in all aspects of the security during the school day.

This year at the secondary level, in addition to our continued partnership with the Hamilton Township Police Department, who provide full-time School Resource Officers (SRO's) at the High Schools, as well as LEAD officers at the middle school, there are three key upgrades to be aware of and prepared for. First, all secondary schools will be equipped with sophisticated weapon detection systems ([EVOLV](#)) allowing us **to screen all students and visitors** upon entry and re-entry to our buildings.

We ask that you begin to prepare your children for participating in our screening process by ensuring they do not bring prohibited items to school. Those items include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Any weapon – including any knife cutting instrument, cutting tool, firearm, any item that resembles a weapon such as an air-soft gun, orbeez gun or other.**
- **Any Instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury, including but not limited to, sparklers, fireworks, smoke or stink bombs, tasers, pepper spray.**
- **Any devices which are potential items of violence, certain rings, pipes or tubes, and any item which could, or would be, a threat to the students.**



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Additionally, please remind students that the following items are prohibited on school grounds:

- ***Any type of inhalant, such as non-edible paint, markers, gasoline, mouthwashes and/or breath fresheners with alcohol content, matches, lighters, electronic cigarettes/cigars, hazardous chemicals,***
- ***Tobacco products of any kind including vapes.***
- ***All forms of marijuana including traditional leaves, powdered leaves, hashish, and edible marijuana products such as tea, juice, tincture, honey-butane oil, shatter, and wax.***
- ***Any prescription drug which is not stored in our nurses office and administered by our nurse.***
- ***Any and all alcoholic beverages.***
- ***Illegal drugs/substances, as well as any controlled dangerous substances.***

In conjunction with our enhanced entrance protocol, and screening process, we have partnered with a private security company who will provide security officers at each of our secondary buildings. Middle schools will have three security officers, high schools will have four security officers. Please be aware that HTSD Policy 8467, "Weapons" grants authority for the possession of a weapon by an individual who is "***authorized by law***" and such weapon is required in the performance of their duties. As such, at times school security members may be armed as necessary and allowable under BOE policy and state statute. These individuals will work in coordination with Mr. Gioscio, as well as the building level administration to provide oversight, guidance, and assistance in all aspects of security during the school day.

Finally, an update to our policy and procedures has been made to address any unauthorized attempt to access our buildings; or to assist in an attempt to access our buildings without authorization. In any instance where a student who is found to have opened a door, or attempted to open a door, or propped a door open for another student, both parties will be found to have violated our Code of Conduct, specifically, "endangering the safety of others." This violation results in a mandatory 9 day out-of-school suspension and may potentially require a student to attend a hearing before the Board of Education.



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HTSD Policy 8420 states, "The Board of Education recognizes its responsibility to provide for the safety and security in each school building in the district. The district will develop and implement written plans and procedures to provide for the protection of health, safety, security, and welfare of the school population; the prevention of, intervention in, response to and recovery from emergency and crisis situations; the establishment and maintenance of a climate of civility; and supportive services for staff, pupils, and their families." The Board of Education, as well as our district and school administration take this responsibility with the utmost seriousness. We are confident that the enhancements to our already robust security practices will continue to allow us to focus on the academic, social and emotional success of our students.

We thank you in advance for your cooperation with these initiatives, and encourage you to reach out to your respective school administration with specific questions.

Educationally Yours,

James Altobello, Ed.D.

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District Director of Administration