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May 26, 2022

Dear FCS Families:

We made it! Thank you for another wonderful year. This year started out even more challenging than the year before. COVID cases were up and our team of professionals had to pivot often to keep classrooms and schools open. Once again, our staff met these challenges head-on and our parents and community worked with us to provide the best possible experience for our students.

I have often said that the best schools and the best school systems are the ones where home, school and community work as partners. I feel that we have always done that well in Forsyth County. I think we have done that exceptionally well since the pandemic began in March of 2020. Let's move forward.

This year, we worked with our community to complete a new Strategic Plan. This plan will be our guide for the next five years. For those of you who took part in the process, whether in person or in the online surveys, thank you! I can sum up the entire plan in one word, "connection". We want ALL members of our family: students, staff, parents and business partners to feel connected to FCS. Our goal is to offer our students an unparalleled education. How do we accomplish this?

We want ALL students to be safe, to be known, to have the resources and support they need to access their learning and experience success, to be respected, to be respectful and to have a sense of purpose and belonging. In short, we want ALL children to want to come to school. It's our responsibility to create the conditions for success. When students feel connected, they achieve. Working together, we will make this happen. We must. Our children deserve to have us working in concert.

To the FCS Class of '22 and your families, congratulations. To the incoming Class of '23, let's make it your best year yet. It will pass quickly. I wish you all a very safe and enjoyable summer recess.

With appreciation,

Jeff

Forsyth County Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, or gender in employment decisions or educational programs and activities.

May 25, 2022

Dear FCS Families:

In this season of what should be nothing but celebrations, I write to you this morning with a heavy heart. As we mourn the lives lost and lives forever changed in Uvalde, Texas, I want to reassure you that the safety of our students and staff is now, and will forever be, our number one priority.

After the tragedy in Parkland, Florida in February 2018, Sherriff Ron Freeman and I commissioned a task force to conduct a security audit of all schools in Forsyth County. Law enforcement officers and school safety personnel visited every school. As a result, several enhancements were made.

We now have security vestibules at each school. Visitors are only allowed in through the vestibule and must present identification so we can perform a background check. We have School Resource Officers on each campus and when other deputies are on patrol they often conduct any administrative work sitting in their cruiser in a school parking lot. It's not unusual for us to have several deputies on any one campus at any time.

Keeping our facilities safe is critically important, but so is communication. Any suspicious activity must be reported. Our "See Something, Say Something" campaign works. When tips are received, our school safety team and law enforcement react immediately, 24-7, to investigate the credibility of any alleged threat.

I want to thank Sherriff Freeman and his entire team for their tireless efforts, dedication and commitment to ensure that our schools are safe. FCS and the Forsyth County Sherriff's Department are a team.

Yesterday's tragedy was senseless and heartless. As a dad, as an educator, it's hard to fathom. Our children, our staff need us ALL to continue to work together, to support one another and love one another.

If you need assistance in how best to speak with your child about what happened, please reach out to one of our many talented guidance counselors or social workers. They have many useful strategies. We are all here to help.

Sincerely,



Jeff