

# PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

*Educating the Whole Child*

School leaders:

Columbine, Virginia Tech, others – and now Parkland, Fla.

As a society, we must find long-term solutions. As school leaders, we must continue to take the actions we have in our power to prevent such tragedies in our schools.

More will follow from my office as we enter the upcoming legislative session, but here is a reminder list of actions you can reemphasize at your schools today:

- **The small procedures add up.** Strictly follow the entrance and visitor check-in processes. Make sure doors are never propped open and that students/staff do not open doors at-will for others.
- **Encourage students to report odd behavior and odd social media trends.** Students should tell someone immediately and know there are no consequences for being concerned.
- **Don't think it can't happen in your town or at your school.** We have seen that these tragedies can happen anywhere. Remain vigilant.
- **Your SROs are trained first as law enforcement officers.** Work with them, allowing their training and instincts to define their daily schedule, interactions, and priorities.
- **Schedule a lockdown drill.** District schools are required to hold a lockdown drill at least once a year. I know many schools are drilling more often than that, but if you have not had one in a while, please schedule one soon.

Here are more steps to take in the weeks ahead:

- **Mental Health First Aid training:** Please see the flyer linked below for information about MHFA training and resources.
- **Critical Incident Response training for faculty and staff:** Training manuals and presentations are available [here](#). The Center for Safer Schools can also schedule trainings for districts or schools as available. Email [Mike Anderson](#) for more information.
- **Online PD for educators:** Training is available on the following topics [here](#).
  - Understanding Student Behavior in the Classroom (6th – 12th grade)
  - Understanding Young Student Behavior in the Classroom (PreK-5th grade)
    - Understanding the Role of School Resource Officers in Schools
    - Understanding the Schools' Role in Suicide Prevention
  - Preventing Substance Abuse and Underage Drinking Among K-12 Students

I know you care deeply about your students' safety and mental health. Thank you for all that you do, and while we remain bewildered and shocked by these kinds of events, let us work together to prevent more.

With my sincerest gratitude,



NC Superintendent