

SCHOOL POLICE OFFICER AND OTHER SAFE SCHOOL INITIATIVES AT NORWIN

NORTH HUNTINGDON, Pa. – Acting upon a recommendation made by High School students this spring, the Norwin School District has hired a school police officer and is moving ahead with several other school safety initiatives.

In October, the Norwin Board of Education approved Officer Jeffrey Pritts as a School Police Officer, effective Thursday, November 1, 2018, or upon release by his current employer, with an initial contract that runs through the 2020-2021 school year. Officer Pritts has been a School Police Officer with the Mount Pleasant Area School District from 2014 to the present. Before that, he served 26 years as a municipal police officer for the City of Greensburg, retiring in 2014.

Officer Pritts will be based at Norwin High School, but will provide school police services for all seven schools in the Norwin School District. He has told school officials that his initial goals will be developing a rapport with students and working cohesively with the North Huntingdon Township Police Department. Officer Pritts will be available to speak in classes, will serve on the District-Wide Safe Schools Committee, and will be an integral part of the School District Emergency Operations Plan.

Once duly approved by the Westmoreland County Court of Common Pleas, Officer Pritts will be authorized to carry a firearm and will have full authority as provided by the School Code, including the authority to make arrests and issue citations.

Late last school year, Superintendent Dr. William Kerr met with nine Norwin High School students to discuss school safety measures that resulted in several recommendations for future improvements. Their top recommendation was to have a school resource officer or school police officer. In May, the Board of Education directed the Administration to begin the process, and the recruitment, screening, and interviewing phase took place during the summer. Local and state police assisted Norwin School District by serving on a panel of interviewers.

“Our highest priority is safe and secure schools for an environment that is positive and conducive to teaching and learning,” Dr. Kerr said.

Other school safety improvements include:

- Nine welded frame advisory signs have been installed around the Norwin campus and outlying elementary schools advising the public of minimum expectations for safe and respectful use of District facilities.
- Students are being more involved in emergency drills. Posters explaining safe schools emergency drills have been placed in each classroom.
- A student-teacher school safety advisory committee has been created at Norwin High School. Meetings are held monthly with High School Administration for students to share safe school concerns. Several student-generated ideas brought up this fall are in the process of being implemented.

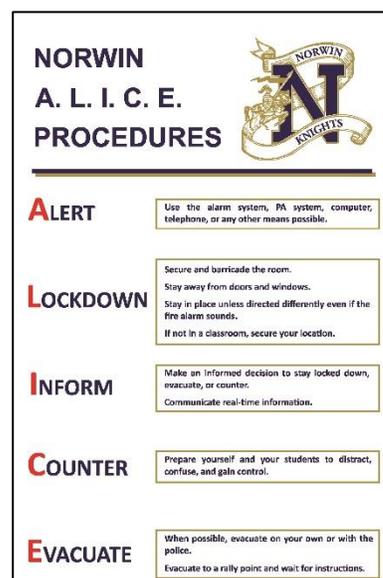


Welded frame signs announce prohibited activities to promote the safety of students, staff, and visitors. These have been installed around all Norwin schools.

NORWIN SCHOOL DISTRICT SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

The Norwin Board of Education, the Administration, faculty and staff have kept the safety and security of our children, staff and visitors as the highest priority. The District has implemented these safe school initiatives:

1. **The Raptor Visitor System in all school buildings:** This requires visitors to present a driver's license, which is scanned for a background check on that individual. A visitor's badge is issued with the person's picture, time they checked in, and the location they will be visiting.
2. **Video surveillance** of doors, hallways, stairwells and some school grounds. All activities are recorded and stored for a period of time to be reviewed if necessary. North Huntingdon Township Police Department Officers can access the camera system both in their station and in their vehicles at any time.
3. **Exterior doors of all schools are electronically and manually locked.** They are monitored and controlled at the main office secretary's desk.
4. **Mobile Emergency Response Plan (MERP):** Every staff member has access to the MERP application, which provides lists of action steps to take in an emergency situation.
5. **The District-Wide Safe Schools Committee** continually reviews and improves the School District's Emergency Response Plan. It consists of local, county and state public safety agencies, hospitals, and District staff.
6. **Training for District staff:** Employees have been trained in ALICE (Alert, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate) techniques. Staff members were also trained in Allegheny Health Network's "Stop the Bleed Program."
7. **Scenario Training and Full-Scale Exercises:** Through OneStar training, staff members have completed FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) training in NIMS (National Incident Management System) for schools, along with incident management for all hazards. District employees have completed various scenario training exercises during the past two years, and the District also held a full-scale exercise on June 4, 2018 to evaluate the school's safety procedures.
8. **Student Assistance Program (SAP):** Norwin has an active Student Assistance Program (SAP), which identifies and supports students who have academic, behavioral, mental health, and drug and alcohol concerns.
9. **Student Safety Advisory Board at High School:** This board began meeting in September 2018, and meets monthly to discuss safety issues. Two student representatives provide reports to the District-Wide School Safety Committee.
10. **ALICE Posters:** Placed A.L.I.C.E. posters in every classroom in the district to remind the students and staff of emergency procedures.
11. **Emergency drills** are held twice per school year. Starting in the 2017-2018 school year, high school students began receiving detailed instructions concerning A.L.I.C.E. procedures during drills.
12. **Vinyl Room Numbers:** Placed vinyl room numbers on the exterior classroom windows so first responders can quickly identify rooms from the exterior of the building.
13. **Welded Frame Advisory Signs:** Nine welded frame advisory signs have been installed around the Norwin campus and outlying elementary schools advising the public of minimum expectations for safe and respectful use of District facilities.
14. **School Police Officer:** At the October 2018 school board meeting, Mr. Jeff Pritts was hired as a school police officer.



Posters with the ALICE protocol have been placed in each classroom.

**"IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING.
IF YOU HEAR SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING."**

Tell the School Principal's Office, call the North Huntingdon Township Police Department, or call 911