Huntington Union Free School District

"A Tradition of Excellence Since 1657"

John J. Finello
Superintendent of Schools

September 8, 2009

Dear Parents:

On September 1st at 3:30 p.m. there was a disturbing incident on Lowndes Avenue across from Church Street in Huntington Station. Multiple gunshots were fired and one man was taken to Huntington Hospital with injuries sustained as a result of the altercation. Newsday.com carried a report of the incident.

The safety of our students is our top priority. This letter is to inform you of the actions taken by the district immediately following the incident. I was in the school at the time it occurred and witnessed a quick response from the police and from our administrators, who were on the scene gathering information.

Following the incident, School Board President Bill Dwyer, trustees John Paci and Elizabeth Black and I met with the Inspector Joseph Blaettler, commanding officer of the Suffolk County Police 2nd precinct, Legislator Jon Cooper and other county and police officials to discuss a set of actions that will be taken by the school district, town and Suffolk County. A second meeting was held later that day with Huntington Supervisor Frank Petrone and town officials.

As a result of these meetings, the following actions will be implemented for the 2009/10 school year:

- During the opening of the new school year, Suffolk Police will be present for the arrival and departure of students.
- The district is hiring another security guard to patrol the area around Jack Abrams Intermediate School.
- Town of Huntington Public Safety cars will also be patrolling the area.
- Two security cameras are already in place in front of the school and Supervisor Petrone has committed to the installation of additional cameras on the corner of Tower Street.
- Signs will be prominently posted indicating school grounds are being closely monitored by security cameras.
- Suffolk Police will continue car and bike patrols of the surrounding area and be a visible presence in the neighborhood.

During the past few years, the town has improved street lighting around the school to aid with the security of evening meetings. The Town of Huntington Public Safety has been present during school hours.

While this latest incident did not occur on school grounds we are very alarmed by this violence and take it seriously. We will continue working with those in town and county governments to provide a safe and secure school environment for the Jack Abrams Intermediate School community.

Very truly yours,

John J. Finello

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