

Center Elementary School

65 Silver Street
Hanover MA 02339

Tel: 781-826-2631
Fax: 781-826-0765



Jane DeGrenier, Principal
jdegrenier@hanoverschools.org

Russ Wilson, Assistant Principal
rwilson@hanoverschools.org

Kim Stoloski, Special Education Administrator
kstoloski@hanoverschools.org

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Dear Center School Parents/Guardians,

Each year our staff and students participate in age appropriate safety drills to ensure they are prepared in the event of an emergency. Safety and security are an important part of every school day and the more we practice routines and use common language with our students, the more prepared they are during an emergency. Our strong relationship with the Hanover Police, Fire, and EMTs is the cornerstone of our work in preparing our students in a developmentally appropriate way in how to respond during an emergency situation.

Teachers review the plan for an emergency and talk with students in class about what to do. The key messages that we impart to our students for each drill is to (1) listen to the adult in charge; and (2) follow the plan.

On an annual basis, our students participate in three different safety drills:

Fire drills, which are conducted by the Hanover Fire Department, four times per year. These drills are an opportunity for us to practice following our evacuation route out of the building in a safe and efficient manner. The first drill was held on Thursday 9/8/22 and our students did a great job following the exit plan, listening to the teacher, and getting out of the building quickly and safely. This drill will be repeated three more times during the school year and are unannounced.

Bus evacuation drill, which is conducted by the bus driver(s) and Mr. Ingle. This drill is typically held in October and students review what to do in the event there is an emergency on the bus. This includes teaching them to evacuate from the back of the bus if necessary. We encourage all students to participate in this drill even if they do not take the bus to/from school. This drill is conducted using our school buses and takes place in the bus dismissal area. Students attend the drill with their teacher and class shortly after morning arrival.

A.L.I.C.E. is the emergency response that our teachers have been trained to use in the event of a threat during the school day. This emergency response can include staying in place, locking down, or evacuating, depending on the threat and the information we have at the time. This school year, we will be conducting two A.L.I.C.E. drills. The first will be announced and will be held on September 20th, sometime during the school day. The second will be unannounced and held later in the school year. Both will be developmentally and age appropriate practice for our elementary students.

Communication with parents and guardians is key during emergency situations, expected or unexpected. In the event there is a drill or emergency at school, communication will be provided in as timely a manner as possible, to provide you with information to best understand the experience your child had in school that day.

You can help us by speaking with your child about these drills. We ask that you emphasize that the purpose of these drills is to keep them safe while at school and reinforce the language we use with students at school: *"listen to the adult in charge" and "follow the plan"*.

While these topics may be unsettling in today's world, your child's physical and emotional safety are paramount to all of us at Center School. Our goal is to ensure that every staff member and every child is well prepared in the event of an emergency situation. Should you have any questions about our emergency response plans, please contact one of us and we will be happy to speak with you.

Jane DeGrenier
Principal
781-826-2631, ext 5303

Russ Wilson
Assistant Principal
781-826-2631, ext 5304

Hanover Hawks will soar and succeed without limits.