

Safety Message to New Horizons Charter Academy Families 05/25/2022

Dear New Horizons Charter Academy Families,

Yesterday, our national school community experienced yet another senseless loss. As we all think about yesterday's tragedy, I want you to know that student and staff safety is our highest priority. Please remember that we have plans in place to handle emergency situations and work closely with the North Hollywood Police and Fire Departments and LAUSD School Resource Officers to prepare for emergency situations. We regularly practice our safety procedures with students and staff through discussions and emergency exercises and drills.

Our school, or any schools, are not immune to violence. What we can do is have multiple layers of safeguards in place and provide a safe learning environment through preparedness and awareness. We have taken the following steps to strengthen the physical safety of our school buildings:

- All classrooms are equipped with 'lock' capability installed on each door from the inside
- Drills: fire, earthquake, and intruder on campus (we will be adding toxic air event drills)
- Buzzer/single point of entry systems, locked gate
- Video surveillance cameras – both sides of building
- Brightwheel visitor screening and check-in system
- 2 RoboCop surveillance systems

Staff are trained annually on emergency preparedness, which includes use of bleeding control kits. North Hollywood Police and Fire Departments work with us on emergency training and response and have detailed maps of all campuses and access to our camera system in the event of an emergency.

Our work with our students includes student training and anonymous reporting of any suspicious behavior or student threats to themselves or others. NHCA has increased the number of counselors and therapists on school campuses, and have provided specific training for staff to further emphasize the importance of building positive relationships. We strive to ensure that each student has at least one trusted adult on campus to whom they feel they can approach if they find themselves in a difficult situation. Keeping schools safe takes a community working together and we continually remind students, if they see something, say something.

Please know we continue to have discussions with our staff and administration on other steps we can take to expand the measures we are taking to keep students safe. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to me rthomas@nhcharteracademy.com

Sincerely,

Richard Thomas, Executive Director and Principal

New Horizons Charter Academy