



Dear Parents and Students of Southside High School,

As Principal of Southside High School, please know that I share your concerns regarding school safety. There is nothing more important than the safety of our scholars thus making it our number one priority. We know students cannot learn if they do not feel safe at school. While we are always looking for ways to improve our security, below are some of the strategies that we currently have in place to keep our students, faculty, staff, and visitors safe.

1. We have an ID badge identification program for all students, faculty, staff, volunteers, and visitors.
2. There is one armed Greenville County Police School Resource Officer on site.
3. We have two behavior intervention specialist on site.
4. We have an extensively written safety plan that is reviewed and modified each year.
5. All exterior doors remain locked at all times except for the main entrance doors which are manned by administrators as students enter the building prior to 8:45 a.m. After 8:45 a.m. the main entrance is locked throughout the school day.
6. The front office has a “capture area” where people must be visually screened before entrance is allowed to the office or school building.
7. Our faculty is trained every year in safety procedures, including specific procedures for an active shooter.
8. Students are educated/trained in safety procedures with drills, assemblies, and instructional videos.
9. The Ignore the Door campaign keeps students from opening exterior doors to anyone from the outside.
10. The District has a District Safety Plan, School Safety Coordinator, District Safety Personnel, and an Emergency Response Team.
11. We conduct safety drills with local law enforcement.
12. Undercover law enforcement actively try to penetrate school defenses to identify vulnerable aspects to our safety protocols and procedures and provide the schools with valuable feedback on how to improve/maintain high levels of security.
13. We have a Mental Health Counselor on site as well as three School Counselors who proactively work with students.
14. Our district monitors social media posts and communicates timely action plans to the schools.
15. We have staff that regularly patrols/monitors our student parking lots.
16. Interior and exterior security camera systems monitor student activity.

Our students and staff provide over 800 sets of eyes and ears to alert us to any threat that may be made against our school. In almost all instances of a school shooting, there were warning signs or someone who knew there was a problem before the shooting occurred. We can be our own best defense.

Please take comfort and know that we will always continue to explore new ways to ensure the safety of our students while at school. Safety is our number one priority, and I hope our continued actions will demonstrate this to be true. But it takes all of us doing our part in keeping our school safe. Adhering to our safety procedures, being vigilant to possible threats, and reporting to administration or law



enforcement anything that doesn't appear to be quite right are important ways to defer any criminal activity.

Thank you for talking with your student about the importance of school safety and feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns that you may have.

Andre M. Dukes
Principal
Southside High School