Friday, June 3, 2022

Dear Watertown Community Members,

Over the course of this week, our entire nation felt a surge of sadness, disbelief, and anger upon hearing the news of the shooting in Uvalde, Texas. Many of us were taken back to a time when our close neighbors Sandy Hook, CT were devastated by the very same act of violence.

On behalf of the Town of Watertown, Watertown Police Department and Watertown Board of Education we would like to share a joint response to the many messages we’ve received from the Watertown community and reassure the members of our town that we are prepared, we are trained, and we will continually work to be vigilant for the children, families, and members of our Watertown.

The safety and security of our schools and wider community is and will always be top priority.

The partnership between our Watertown schools, WPD, and Town is the driving force in ensuring our town is prepared and able to respond quickly in unthinkable and catastrophic moments like a mass shooting. Our police department is highly trained and dedicated to the latest training and resources in regards to school shooting incidents.

In addition, the Watertown Board of Education, Watertown Police Department and the Town of Watertown will be collaborating to offer additional active shooter training, also known as ALICE training, to key members of the WPS and Town teams. Each of our schools are staffed with a School Resource Officer or Armed Security Officer who are currently active WPD or retired law enforcement personnel who were carefully selected for each of our schools. In addition, police patrols visit every school every day to enhance security and maintain strong relationships with the students and staff.

No words will ever be enough to bring back those who were part of this unfortunate tragedy, but we do hope that our actions will provide assurance that our community leaders and those on the front line are always at the ready. Always examining best practices in detail. Ensuring teams are equipped with the necessary skills and resources to protect, and dedicated to continually learning how to do more for our community everyday.
Attached are several resources that may help when trying to process traumatic events such as these for all ages.

- [Restoring a Sense of Wellbeing in Children After a Disaster](#)
- [Helping Children Cope With Tragedy Related Anxiety](#)
- [Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Parents and Teachers](#)
- [The American Academy of Pediatrics’ “Talking with Children” provides resources to help parents talk to children about violence and disasters.](#)
- [NCTSN’s “Tips for Parents on Media Coverage” provides parents with guidance on helping children understand and cope with what they see and hear in the news regarding the shooting.](#)

Sincerely,

Mark A. Raimo  Joshua Bernegger  Alison Villanueva, Ph.D.
Watertown Town Manager  Watertown Chief of Police  Superintendent of Schools