

## ■ INTERNAL MEMO

<b>DATE:</b>	February 24, 2017
<b>TO:</b>	Secondary Principals & Vice-Principals
<b>FROM:</b>	Michael Prendergast, Superintendent, Leadership & Learning
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Bomb Threat Awareness for Parents/Community

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### MESSAGE:

The Hamilton Wentworth District School Board believes that every student has the right to learn, work and be present in a safe and secure environment. However, the possibility of a major incident of violence is a reality that cannot be overlooked. Everyone needs to know how to minimize the risk of harm to themselves and how to protect our children, in the event of a major incident or threat of school violence. School administrators, staff, students, parents, and police all have roles and responsibilities to support and implement the secure schools policy directive and procedures to help reduce the risk of harm to staff, students, visitors, and facility users should a violent or serious incident occur. It is the collaborative commitment of the Hamilton Police Service and the Hamilton – Wentworth District School Board to support and ensure a safe learning and working environment in all schools in the greater Hamilton community.

It is the policy direction of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services that School Boards and Police Services establish and follow a protocol for the investigation of school-related occurrences. This includes developing policies on how to respond to crises, including the development of a crisis management plan, that includes how information can be shared with the community. All School Boards have Emergency/Crisis Response Procedures in place. Schools carry out emergency drills on a regular basis and continue to develop school-based plans to address emergency situations.

Parents and guardians must be informed of the existence of the lockdown plans in the school and should reinforce with their children student responsibilities to follow directions during a crisis and disclose any information they may have prior to or during a crisis situation. Parents should also be informed they are not to use their cell phones to communicate with their children in lockdown. Parents are responsible for keeping their child's contact information up to date so they can easily be reached by staff in the event of an emergency.

New in 2016 is a procedure to respond to bomb threats. Staff, students, parents/guardians who become aware of a bomb threat through any source or social media should contact the Principal immediately during school hours and contact police by calling 911 anytime the



**Michael Prendergast**  
Superintendent of Leadership & Learning  
Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board  
20 Education Court, P.O. Box 2558  
Hamilton, ON L8N 3L1  
905-527-5092

Principal cannot be reached at the school. The Principal will work with Hamilton Police Services to assess the situation and follow procedures as outlined in the Bomb Threat Plan. Full information on emergency procedures is available at [Hamilton-Police-School-Board-Protocol-2016](#). You are encouraged to speak with your school Principal who can assist with any questions you may have about school safety.