

# Ontario-Montclair

## School District

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*Superintendent*

February 16, 2018

Dear OMSD families, staff and community members:

As you have heard, a shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, in Florida took the lives of 17 people and left many others injured.

There have been several school shootings across the nation in the past weeks, and I am deeply saddened that we must endure yet another senseless tragedy. Our thoughts and prayers of comfort and healing are with the victims and their families, as well as the staff and educators at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School.

This tragedy highlights the critical importance of ensuring that our schools remain safe places for our students and staff. The Ontario-Montclair School District takes safety in our schools very seriously, and practice our emergency response plans frequently. Our trainings include working directly with the Ontario and Montclair Police Departments. We also have crisis counselors and teams available to help our students and families who need support with social-emotional and other non-instructional issues.

In the aftermath of this traumatic event, the National Association of School Psychologists notes there are effective ways to talk with students:

- create a sense of safety by returning to normal, predictable routines as soon as possible
- listen to their concerns and feelings
- suggest they limit their use of media to lower their stress and to maintain balance and perspective, and
- realize that sleep difficulties are common and can lead to fatigue and poor participation.

These horrific situations are so difficult to understand, let alone explain to students. Below are a few resources to provide some support:

Addressing Grief: Tips for Teachers and Administrators

[https://www.iacoe.edu/Portals/0/StudentServices/Addressing\\_Grief\\_Tips\\_for\\_Teachers\\_and\\_Administrators\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.iacoe.edu/Portals/0/StudentServices/Addressing_Grief_Tips_for_Teachers_and_Administrators_FINAL.pdf)

“Our Community, Our Children, Our Commitment, Our Future”

Helping Youth after Community Trauma: Tips for Educators

[https://www.lacoe.edu/Portals/0/StudentServices/helping\\_youth\\_after\\_community\\_violence\\_educators.pdf](https://www.lacoe.edu/Portals/0/StudentServices/helping_youth_after_community_violence_educators.pdf)

Talking to Children About Violence

<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/school-safety-and-crisis/talking-to-children-about-violence-tips-for-parents-and-teachers>

Safe Schools Planning by the California Department of Education

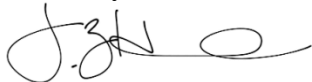
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ss/vp/safeschlplanning.asp>

National PTA School Safety resources

<https://www.pta.org/home/family-resources/safety/School-Safety>

A tragedy such as this reminds us to hug our loved ones a little tighter and appreciate each day a little more. If you have questions or need any assistance, please contact your school administrator.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Hammond', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

James Q. Hammond, Ed.D.  
Superintendent