



SCHOOL SAFETY
A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

WEST AURORA SD129

- 30 miles west of Chicago
- One of the most historic school districts in the state
- 11,000+ student enrollment
- Birth through grade 12+
- 1,800 staff members
- 24 buildings
- Rank #15 "Most diverse districts in Illinois"



PREVENTION & PLANNING



RELATIONSHIPS MATTER

- **Connect with students & families**
- **Connect with community members**
- **Connect with staff**
- **Foster relationships between groups**

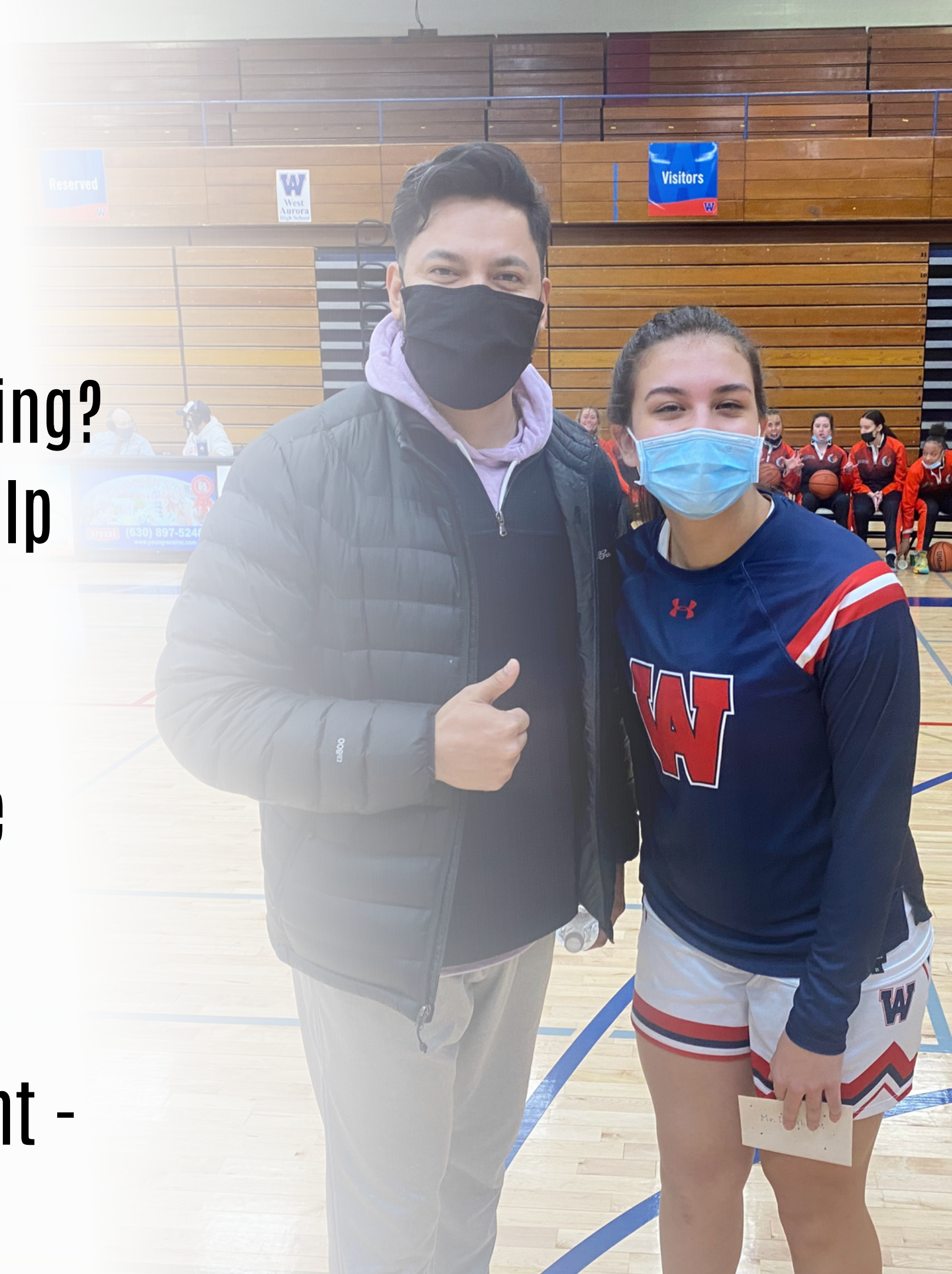
SAFETY INFORMATION

- Building Signage
- Student Handbooks
- "Stay Safe at Home" Video Series
- Safety Website
- Social media



SEE...SAY!

- See or hear something that is concerning?
Say something to someone who can help you.
- Refrain from using social media as the vehicle to “say something.”
- Report concerning social media content - screenshots are important.

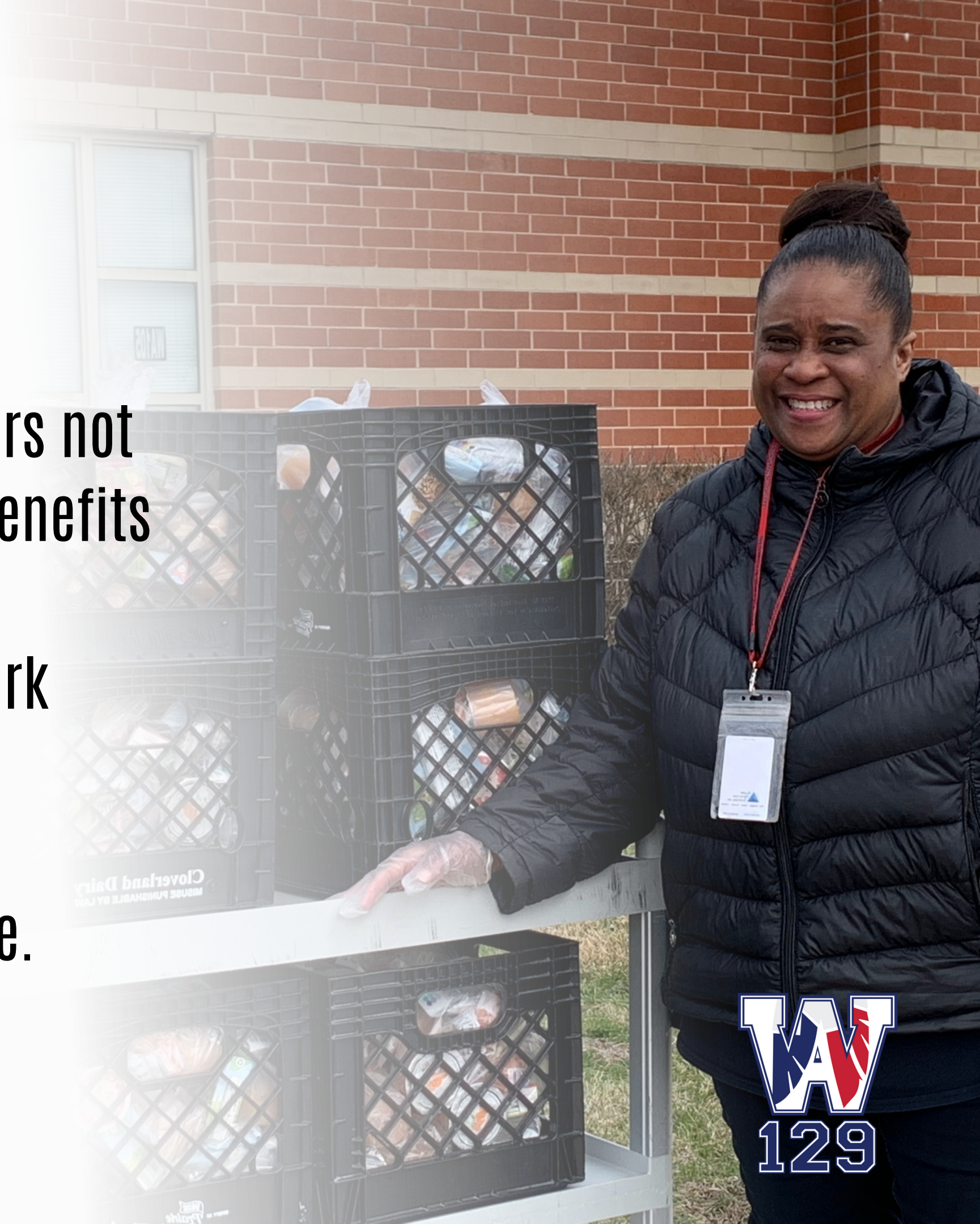


COMMUNITY PARTNERS



IT TAKES A VILLAGE

- **Include parochial schools - makes taxpayers not using public schools feel connected/see benefits**
- **Don't forget about all first responders - park district and university police as examples**
- **Include staff and non-employee groups - ie. lunch staff or contracted services**



PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS



Mitigating Risk



PREP BOE

West Aurora School District 129

- **Community members will reach out to them**
- **We ask them to be mindful of the order of communication and reinforce the most recent global communication sent**
- **Media may also reach out, we ask them to direct them to Community Affairs**



PREP ENTIRE TEAM

- Practice regularly-mix it up
- Make it as real as possible
- Everyone should feel included and ready to react regardless of their role
- Invite law enforcement to observe and get comfortable with buildings and staff



NOT IF, BUT WHEN

- Swatting/Hoax or Actual Crisis
- Established incident command roles - Who is in charge of what?
- Be prepared to play the way we practice - Don't just check the boxes

Aurora Illinois Police

⚠️ public safety alert for Aurora
1h · 🌐

APDAlert: The Aurora Police Department is currently on scene at all three Aurora libraries due to the report of a bomb threat. The libraries are located in the 100 block of S. River St., the 500 block of S. Eola Rd, and the 200 block of S. Constitution Dr.

As a precaution, the evacuation of all three libraries is underway. We are asking the public to avoid the areas as officers work to safely evacuate and shutdown roadways.

Updates will be provided as they become available.



INCIDENT



COMMON LANGUAGE



- Easily understandable
- Shared with local first responders
- Parents should be aware so they don't overreact to situations that might arise
- In a crisis, IQ points drop. Make things as simple as possible



SCHOOL SAFETY PROTOCOLS

SEVERE WEATHER

Is initiated when a tornado warning requires relocating to the designated shelter area.

EVACUATION

Is initiated when a hazard is inside the building (fire, gas leak, chemical spill) which requires locating outside of the building.

SECURE THE BUILDING AND TEACH

Is initiated when a hazardous situation outside of the school requires all persons to remain inside of the school.

HOLD IN PLACE AND TEACH

Is initiated when a situation inside the building requires immediate action for all to stay put. This is non-life threatening to the population and the general school community.

ALICE-ALICE-ALICE

Is initiated when an active assailant with a firearm or active threat with any other weapon capable of causing death or great bodily harm.



SEVERE WEATHER



- **“Severe Weather” (followed up with common language referencing the incident)**
- **Take shelter in designated safe areas inside of the building**
- **Account for students and staff in Raptor**
- **Await further instructions**

EVACUATION/FIRE



- “Evacuation” (followed up with common language referencing the incident) - This may also be alerted by an alarm.
- Staff and students should STOP, LOOK, LISTEN
- Evacuate the building to the rally point - provided distance from the building
- Account for students and staff in Raptor
- Await further instructions



SECURE THE BUILDING & TEACH



- “Secure the building and teach” (followed up with common language referencing the incident)
- The building will operate under a regular indoor schedule with no restriction to in-building movement
- All regular teaching and related service activity should continue as scheduled
- No one in or out of the building

 This is not a "lockdown"



HOLD IN PLACE & TEACH



- “Hold in place and teach” (followed up with common language referencing the incident)
- Sweep the hallways and bring students into classrooms.
- No movement in the halls.
- Teaching and regular classroom/office operations continue.
- No one in or out of the building

 This is not a "lockdown"

ALICE-ALICE-ALICE



- **“ALICE-ALICE-ALICE”** (followed up with common language that gives as much detail as possible about the incident so staff and students can make a decision about how to respond) (Could also follow “Run-Hide-Fight”)

- **A - ALERT** others of the threat
- **L - LOCK** the room and **BARRICADE** the entrance point
- **I - INFORM** others of continued actions taking place
- **C - COUNTER/DISTRACT** the assailant as a last option when loss of life is imminent
- **E - EVACUATE** when possible to move as far away from the threat as you can

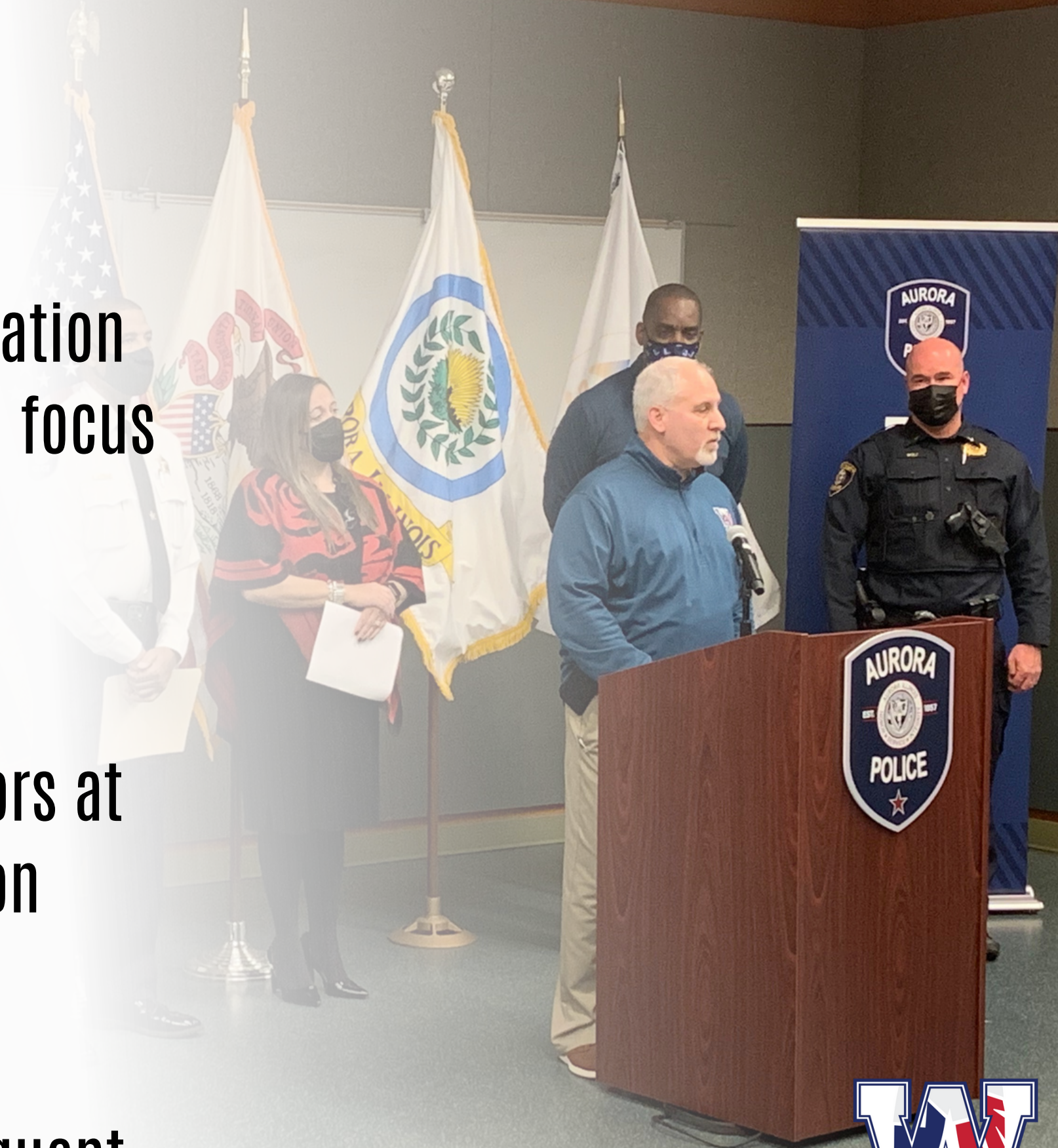


RALLY POINTS

- Put distance and/or brick-and-mortar between you and the emergency.
- At least two blocks from the building where the incident is happening
- If you can't get two blocks away - brick and mortar
- Move away from where emergency vehicles will need to be
- Practice for each evacuation - build muscle memory

CRISIS COMM PLAN

- Community Affairs (CA) takes over communication so that building administrators and staff can focus on the crisis at hand
- During the situation, there is ongoing communication between CA and administrators at the site, as well as relevant Public Information Officer(s)
- CA receives that information and creates frequent messaging to keep audiences informed



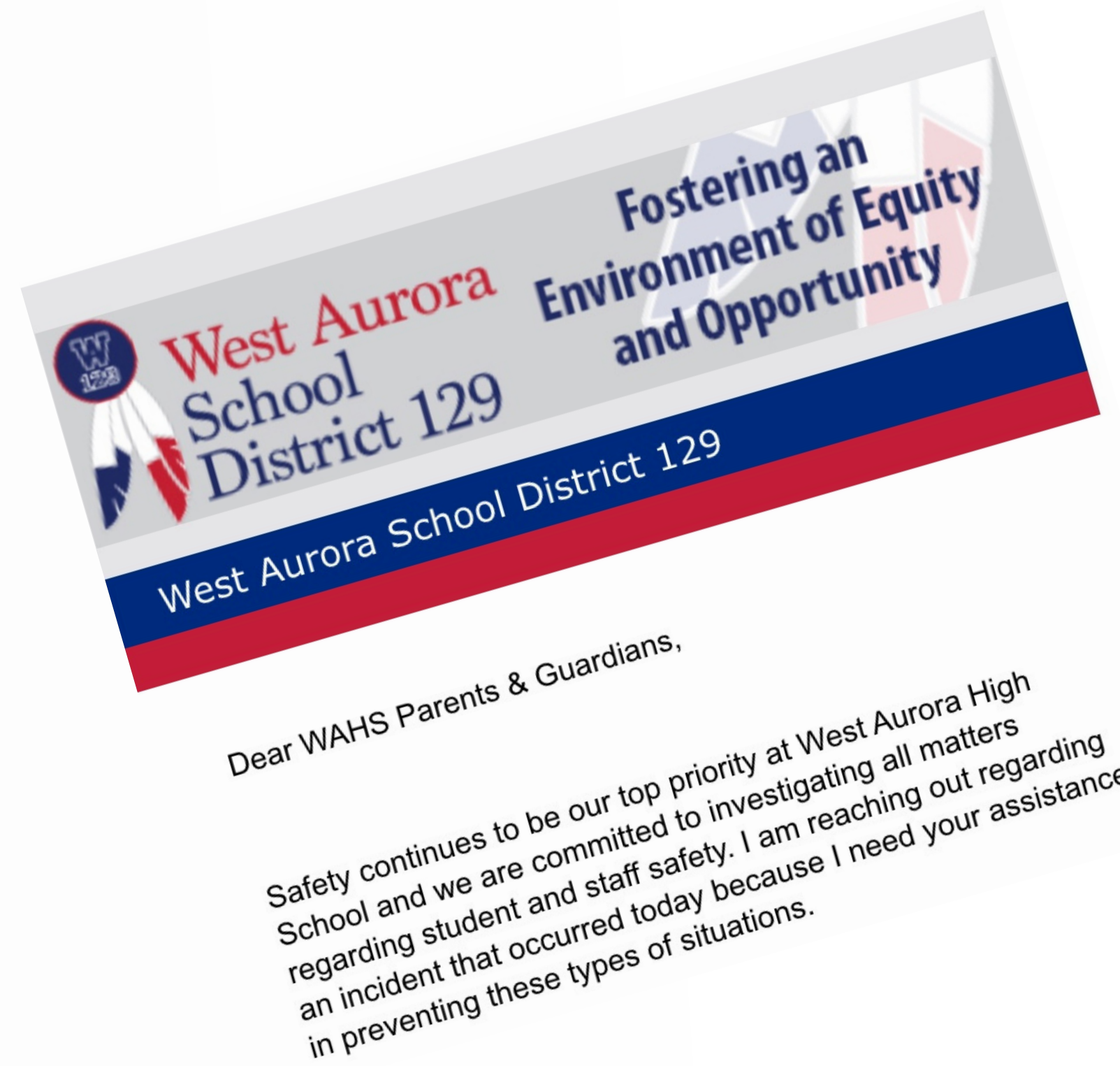
COMMUNICATION CADENCE

- The goal is to provide accurate, timely information to all targeted internal and external audiences, as appropriate
 - Board of Education
 - Administrators
 - Staff
 - Parents & Guardians
 - Media & Community Members



CONTENT OF MESSAGING

- Using the FAPE Formula, we share:
 - Facts of the situation
 - Actions the district has taken
 - Promise next steps
 - Empathy
- Communication is disseminated in either English or Spanish as identified by families during registration



MODES OF MESSAGING

- **SMS or Text:** Quicker to send & receive
 - Used during crisis
- **Phone Blast:** Not as effective as text
 - Used to reinforce messaging
- **Email:** Works great for long, in-depth communication
 - Possibly as a follow-up to the situation
- **Social Media:** Effective for communicating with the broader community



DON'T FORGET!

- **Schoology:** Learning management system that allows for “posts” to be shared with groups/buildings
- This gives us direct access to message secondary students (Grades 6-12)
- Students can help us get accurate information in the hands of parents and guardians

REUNIFICATION

Reunifying students with their parents/guardians is a critical component of emergency response, but it is frequently overlooked. Our team, in collaboration with the "i love u guys" Foundation, surrounding school districts, and the Fox Valley Park District, have been training to achieve a process of reuniting families in as less of a chaotic and stressful manner as possible.



Where and How to Invest



TECHNOLOGY

The Raptor Alert application allows staff:

- Access to all school safety plans
- Report their location and if they are safe or need help
- Account for students who are with them
- Initiate the need for emergency response
- To chat and communicate during an incident
- Initiate a “Team Assist” (administrative assistance) in the case of a student issue (like a fight or medical emergency)
- Get union buy in and support



PD/STAFFING

- Even if it requires time sheeting, make sure all staff have had some training/exposure
- Consider adding staff dedicated to security - retired officers
- Safety is everyone's job, don't let it be the first area sacrificed when time is tight

FACILITIES

- Incorporate into your ongoing planning-
Doors and windows are safety - use as part of rationale
- Can't eliminate all risk, goal is to slow down an active shooter if you can't stop
- Don't let design elements or features create risk
- Keep facility equity in mind - don't want to appear to only care about certain grade levels for example



FUNDING

Look for grant funding opportunities:

- Department of Justice - COPS program
- State grants for mapping school facilities to assist law enforcement
- ESSER funding - might be some crossover
- If part of JUUL lawsuits, might use settlement to help pilot of addition of staff or to fund one-time programs
- Consider making improving school safety a category just like paving, roofs, etc.

Questions?



SCHOOL SAFETY WEBSITE

