



HARRISON HILLS CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
HOME OF THE HARRISON CENTRAL HUSKIES

For Immediate Release
January 25, 2023

Subject: Harrison Central Pk-12 Building Tabletop Safety Exercise

On January 19th, the administrative and safety teams of Harrison Hills City Schools welcomed local law enforcement and community agencies on campus for review of emergency school plans. As part of the day's agenda, a model exercise developed by the Ohio Emergency Management Agency was distributed to simulate an active aggressor and local response. Representatives from local agencies including the Harrison County Sheriff's Office, Cadiz Police Department, Ohio State Highway Patrol, Belmont County Sheriff's Office, Silver Spade Ambulance District, WVU Medicine Harrison Community Hospital, Jefferson County Educational Service Center, Ohio Emergency Management Agency, and Harrison County Emergency Management Agency participated in this tabletop exercise organized and facilitated by Harrison County Emergency Management Agency Director Eric Wilson.

Director Wilson commented, "The Harrison County Emergency Management Agency was pleased to design and facilitate the recent active aggressor table top exercise at the Harrison Central campus. Events like this are crucial to testing response plans as well as integration of responding agencies in an emergency situation. These low-stress environments are the perfect opportunity to discuss and test all phases of an emergency plan and see how responding agencies will fit into that plan. Procedures, policies, radio communication and requesting additional resources from surrounding counties as well as at the state level were all tested. I feel confident that the school administration and local police, fire and EMS are well trained and versed in response procedures for any emergency that may affect the students or staff. While we always hope that the horrible situations we train for never affect our community, I know we are taking the necessary steps to prepare for them."

The exercise detailed an incident and allowed those in attendance to explain anticipated actions based on Harrison Hills City School District's Emergency Operations Plan. Objectives of the exercise included defining the following: how school staff will initiate a lockdown procedure immediately following an active aggressor event; how school officials would disseminate information, both internally and externally; how school staff will assess mental health needs following trauma and provide services to those affected; and finally how school staff and emergency responders will account for and reunite students with parents/guardians following an active aggressor incident.



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Integral to school safety and security, Harrison County Sheriff Joe Myers was equally involved in the preplanning and preparation for this exercise. “The Harrison County Sheriff’s Office along with Harrison County EMA, local first responders, and WVU Medicine Harrison Community Hospital staff met with Harrison Central Administrative Staff on January 19, 2023, at Harrison Central High School for an active shooter tabletop exercise and training. Participants reviewed various techniques to prepare for and respond to an active shooter incident. Training is ongoing to educate participants to recognize signs of violent behavior, how to react during an incident, and render aid when needed. The event was well attended with valuable input from all participants. The Harrison County Sheriff’s Office SRT unit (Special Response Team) will continue to train regularly at the school to keep their skills sharp and polished,” echoed Myers.

Superintendent Duran Morgan of the Harrison Hills City School District commended all in attendance for their dedication to student and school safety: “Harrison Hills is proud of the dedicated effort of the school community and local community alike in cultivating a safe school environment. We are thankful for the active involvement of all agencies in reviewing and practicing our policies and procedures. The Board of Education, administration, faculty and staff continue to put the safety and well-being of our students at the forefront. Review exercises like these allow us to collaborate and grow alongside those in the community who may be called into action in the event of an emergency.”

The Harrison Hills City School District is a proud partner with the Harrison County Sheriff’s Office in providing comprehensive school security for students and staff. Superintendent Morgan added, “Harrison Hills is proud to offer school resource officer protection through three full-time officers from the Harrison County Sheriff’s Office. These trained officers are part of the fabric of the environment at Harrison Central and provide dedicated protective service to our school, students, families, and community.”