



Laurie W. Newell, PhD  
Superintendent of Schools

October 6, 2023

Dear Paterson Public Schools Community:

As you know, there has been an increase of gun violence in Paterson over the past week. I want you to know that your child's wellbeing is my greatest concern. The growth and betterment of the children of Paterson are my first and last thoughts every day. As a parent, I understand the concerns you may have in sending your child into the world beyond the safety of your home. The fatal shootings that happened on Sunday and Tuesday sadden and frustrates me as much it does you. When I see the reports in the news, when I watch the footage online, the evidence of gun violence that has taken place over the last week alone, in broad daylight, brings safety at our schools back into sharp focus.

Our children are exposed to many stressful factors throughout their day. We strive to provide a caring, nurturing, and safe educational environment for them. A school is a second home for children, and it should be a place where they can feel at ease and confident. The administrators, faculty, and support staff of the District consider the security of your child a priority. Every possible measure is taken to keep them safe in their school. We have security personnel that are trained in emergency situations and have effective protocols in contacting law enforcement when needed.

My heart goes to out to the loved ones of those people whose lives were taken by this latest round of gun violence. I hope that the surge in gun violence soon comes to an end and that our streets will progressively improve.

Know that as the Superintendent of Schools, I will never settle for your child's safety and education being any less than the best that can be provided; because as a mother, I would want the same for my children. There is plenty of work that needs to be done to meet the goals ahead. Each of us must bear that effort as partners, equally and faithfully.

Sincerely,

*Laurie W. Newell*

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Superintendent of Schools

c: Paterson Board of Education