

PKYPTO School Safety Meeting

March 8, 2018



Developmental Research School
at the University of Florida

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

The administration at P.K. Yonge, and partners from the University of Florida Police Department, in partnership with the P.K. Yonge PTO, held a special PTO meeting on March 8, 2018. This meeting was designed to share information regarding campus safety and to address questions from families in response to the tragic event that took place in February at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida.

Families submitted questions online and shared questions during the presentation. Answers to questions submitted online and at the meeting are provided below. For specific questions and for questions that cannot be addressed in a public forum, please contact Dr. Carrie Geiger | cgeiger@pky.ufl.edu.

During the presentation, Dr. Geiger and student representatives spoke. The University of Florida Police Department shared their presentation from the student safety school assemblies on March 5.

SCHOOL PLANS

Does the school have a school evacuation plan and school safety plan?

Yes. There is a detailed school safety plan and evacuation plan, both of which remain confidential to maintain the security of the buildings and the safety of the P.K. Yonge community. The plan is revisited and updated often in consultation with the University and University Police Department. An essential component of the school safety plan is keeping all doors to all buildings locked at all times, preventing access from the outside in.

What are the safety plans for students who are in open classrooms if a shooter is in the building?

Teachers are aware of designated spaces and procedures in the event of an unauthorized person in the building intending to do harm, and in the event of other need for school lockdown. These plans must also remain confidential to maintain the security of the buildings and the safety of the P.K. Yonge community.

Have plans for the new building taken into consideration hiding students from a school shooter?

The new building will include designated spaces for students should unauthorized persons be on campus or in the building with the intent to do harm. Procedures regarding school safety in the new building will be developed as part of the transition plan.

Are substitute teachers trained in the safety plan?

Substitutes are trained for emergencies and future training will include specific training regarding lockdowns and unauthorized persons on campus with intent to do harm.

PKYPTO School Safety Meeting

March 8, 2018



Developmental Research School
at the University of Florida

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

How often are teachers and police officers trained for a campus crisis?

Teachers discuss and train on the School Safety Plan annually. As the plan is updated, teacher training is refreshed. UPD trains throughout the year and updates their training in response to what is learned from national events.

DRILLS

How do you do drills?

Drills are carried out multiple times each year. Drills include: fire drills, lockdown drills, tornado drills and evacuation drills. Typically, drills are not communicated ahead of time to faculty and students to ensure that the drill is taken seriously. We treat every drill as a serious event and evaluate successes and challenges of each one. If issues are identified, those issues are resolved and changes are incorporated into the following drill.

How are drills communicated to elementary school children?

Teachers take great care in communicating safety drills to students to make sure students take them seriously and to minimize student anxiety. Teachers says things like "We're going to practice our safe spaces." They don't talk about shooters or describe dangerous situations to the students.

CAMPUS ACCESS

How does the person who opens the elementary school door know that the person wanting in is authorized to be on campus and be in the building?

People who are authorized to be on campus either have a P.K. Yonge lanyard and ID badge, or have a visitor sticker provided by the front office security check-in system. Plans are being developed for enhanced training for aides assigned to the elementary building to clarify that they must check each person before opening the door. Parents can also be of assistance in supporting the role of the aide in the elementary building by being sure to check in at the front desk, to display your sticker, and to be patient if an aide asks you to return to the front office to get the appropriate sticker.

STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

How do you support students with mental health issues?

Student and Family Services meets weekly to discuss school systems and student cases. Our school psychologists, counselors, deans, administrators, SRO, and nurse develop and implement plans to support students. Parents of students needing support are also included in discussions and plan development when appropriate.

Concerns regarding student mental health may be brought to the attention of administration and Student and Family Services by faculty, parents, or students. If there is evidence to suggest that a

PKYPTO School Safety Meeting

March 8, 2018



Developmental Research School
at the University of Florida

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

student could be a danger to themselves or others, the University of Florida Police Department is engaged to take additional steps. Parents are always contacted and involved if their student is exhibiting the need for mental health services.

How do we make sure that students who are struggling the most get the help they need?

It is important to understand that we all play a role in identifying those students who are struggling or are in crisis. Students of concern should be brought to the attention to the P.K. Yonge administration immediately so that each situation can be properly assessed. If it is determined that a student needs immediate assistance, Student and Family Services will respond to students in need of services with support from school counselors, and school psychology. If a student is a potential danger to themselves or others, additional steps are taken. Parents are also contacted and involved for any student needing mental health supports.

Is there a way to submit the name of someone that I think might be at risk?

If any parent or child has a specific concern, please contact Dr. Geiger (cgeiger@pky.ufl.edu, x268), Dr. Hill (ahill@pky.ufl.edu, x283), or any other member of the administration.

ARMING TEACHERS

Arming teachers – what is P.K. Yonge's position?

P.K. Yonge administration, faculty, and staff are following closely the public and legislative conversations regarding arming teachers and other school personnel on K-12 school campuses. School safety is the school's top priority. Administration's initial response is one of concern that the presence of weapons on campus, other than those carried by a school resource officer, may diminish the safety of the school campus rather than enhance it. The school will continue to follow the conversation about arming teachers very closely.

If Florida requires teachers to carry guns, does this apply to P.K. Yonge?

Under Florida law, the possession of a firearm on the P.K. Yonge campus is prohibited even for those with a concealed firearms permit; there are very limited exceptions, which includes law enforcement officers. Currently there is proposed legislation at the State level that would allow faculty and staff who are not classroom teachers to be armed; school districts would have final say according to the legislation. P.K. Yonge is governed by the University of Florida Board of Trustees.

PKYPTO School Safety Meeting

March 8, 2018



Developmental Research School
at the University of Florida

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

What does P.K. Yonge do if a student threatens another student on campus?

- As soon as any threat is brought to our attention, administration investigates claims of threats and collects information regarding the threat.
- Depending on the type of threat, SRO and UPD may be involved, as well as Student and Family Services.
- When necessary, disciplinary measures are taken based on The Code of Student Conduct.
- Discipline is progressive in nature; decisions are informed by the frequency and severity of the behavior.

What does P.K. Yonge do if a student threatens another student via social media while on campus?

- Administration investigates claims of threats and collects information regarding the threat
- Depending on the type of threat, SRO and UPD may be involved, as well as Student and Family Services.
- When necessary, disciplinary measures are taken based on The Code of Student Conduct.
- Discipline is progressive in nature; decisions are informed by the frequency and severity of the behavior.

What does P.K. Yonge do if a student threatens another student via social media while off campus?

- When threats are initiated beyond the school day and/or off campus, administration investigates and takes action only when there is a disruption to the educational environment.
- In the event that the threat disrupts the educational environment, discipline is the same as above.
- If threats are initiated beyond the school day/and or off campus, families are advised to contact their local law enforcement agency.

Prevention of drugs on campus

Searches are carried out when administration receives information regarding suspicion of drugs on campus or suspicion of students under the influence of drugs on campus. If a student is found in possession of drugs on campus, the SRO determines the level of offense. Charges may or may not be filed. Student is disciplined according to the Student Code of Conduct.

If a student is suspected of being under the influence of drugs on campus, the student is pulled from class, the parent is contacted, and the student is sent to the nurse for evaluation. If the nurse has reason to suspect the student is under the influence, the parent is required to take the student for drug testing and asked to provide the results to P.K. Yonge. Discipline is informed by the Student Code of Conduct. In general, P.K. Yonge works to be vigilant about keeping drugs off campus.

PKYPTO School Safety Meeting

March 8, 2018



Developmental Research School
at the University of Florida

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Families, students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to report any suspicions or observed drug-related activity to administration.

PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE ON CAMPUS

What does P.K. Yonge do to prevent violence on campus?

In general, student on student violence is quite uncommon at P.K. Yonge.

The school campus is monitored throughout the day by administration, faculty, the SRO, the Dean, and Student and Family Services. If information is shared regarding a potential fight, administration coordinates efforts to closely supervise students who may be involved. If students are involved in a fight or other violent act, disciplinary measures are taken based on The Code of Student Conduct. Discipline is progressive in nature, based on frequency and severity of infractions.

UNAUTHORIZED ACCESS TO CAMPUS

What are the school's plans for keeping unauthorized people off campus?

Visitors to campus are required to check in at the front office. A driver's license is scanned and a visitor's tag is issued. Administration, faculty, and staff question unknown individuals and bring them back to the front office to check in with a driver's license and receive a badge that identifies the person as an approved visitor. School administration is working with the university planning to address car, pedestrian, fencing, and campus accessibility challenges.

What is the school plan if there is the threat of violence involving unauthorized people on campus?

Should unauthorized persons be on campus intending to do harm, administration immediately initiates a lockdown where students and teachers are to remain inside locked classrooms. For classes that are outside, like P.E. classes, there are designated classrooms for them during a lockdown. The University of Florida Police Department (UPD) is notified immediately. If appropriate, school gates are closed and locked. Parents are notified via email and phone that the school is on lockdown and are advised not to contact their children. Updated information will be supplied to parents as it becomes available.

PKYPTO School Safety Meeting

March 8, 2018



Developmental Research School
at the University of Florida

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

POLICE PRESENCE ON CAMPUS

How many police officers can be present inside the school?

Our school is assigned ONE FULL-TIME SRO, however, UPD takes their supervision of P.K. Yonge seriously and provides periodic, scheduled and unscheduled patrols of the campus in marked and unmarked vehicles. Many times, we are, by design, not aware of police presence on campus. Additional officers may be on campus for particular events or may be patrolling as part of their scheduled assessment of campus. During regular school hours, and many large after school events, there is at least one officer on campus. An increased presence of patrol officers may be observed on campus during the school day, and at peak times, such as special events, drop off, pick up, etc.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

How do you guarantee equity and consistency when adhering to guidelines for student safety?

Equity and consistency underpin the Code of Student Conduct, therefore adhering to the Code of Conduct is the way we strive for equity and consistency. We afford due process and thoroughly investigate all concerns, claims, and allegations.

Can you provide more details regarding the rumor on 2/26 – what happened and how did administration deal with the issue?

On the morning of 2/26, administration received information of a suspected weapon on campus. Members of the leadership team and the SRO acted immediately to investigate the claim. At the same time, administration contacted UPD to notify them of the potential issue. Once the claim was found to be false, administration acted to dispel the false information with the students involved in disseminating the information. The decision was made to add additional police presence that day to allay the fears of students. Two assemblies took place without incident.

Typically, parent communications are not sent regarding rumors on campus, however, in the case of 2/26, there was significant concern expressed by families in response to student texts and social media posts that created the need to publicly dispel the rumor. A parent communication was sent to clarify that the information was a rumor.

Are students allowed to bring toy guns to school?

No.

What are P.K. Yonge's plans for the National School Walkout?

Secondary students will be allowed to participate in the [#ENOUGH National School Walkout](#). This is an optional activity led by secondary students with faculty advisement. The event will take place on 3/14 on the P.K. Yonge campus during the school day.

Secondary students who choose to participate will go to a designated location on campus for 17 minutes to honor the lives lost in Parkland on 2/14. According to student organizers and faculty

PKYPTO School Safety Meeting

March 8, 2018



Developmental Research School
at the University of Florida

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

advisors, the campus event will include speeches that honor the victims, describe the history of youth activism surrounding gun violence, and civic engagement. The event will be supervised by P.K. Yonge personnel and administrators.

For secondary students who choose not to participate, supervised spaces will be provided, where students will continue with their regular classwork while the event is taking place.

In the interest of student safety, additional security measures will be in place during the walkout. While these measures may pose some inconvenience, the safety of our students is our top priority. Thank you for your patience with the additional security measures we will put into place to support student safety.