

SUBJECT: Campus Security and Safety. I am writing to inform you of some recent events that merit your immediate attention. Our nation and the education community have experienced yet another series of tragedies. On Wednesday, September 27, in Bailey, Colorado, a man held several female students hostage at gunpoint and killed one girl before killing himself. On Friday, September 29, near Madison, Wisconsin, a principal was shot to death at school by a student. Today, in Paradise, Pennsylvania, a man, targeting female students, apparently entered a school and shot three students to death before killing himself. According to reports, at least seven other students were wounded in the attack.

As the similarities between the incidents in Bailey Colorado and Paradise Pennsylvania demonstrate, acts of violence such as these have the potential to induce others to commit similar acts. We must never let our guard down when it comes to the safety of our students and we must be particularly vigilant during the times surrounding such incidents, when the potential for copycat acts is at its highest.

It is very important that all of you take the time to remind your school principals about the need to take potential threats to student safety seriously. I urge you to review your school district's security procedures and to encourage your faculty and students to immediately report any possible threats or suspicious behavior. Since these most recent incidents involved perpetrators entering campuses with weapons, you may wish to consider additional steps to ensure that weapons and unauthorized individuals are not entering your campuses.

The Texas School Safety Center may be able to assist you in your violence prevention and security efforts. The Center's website is <http://www.txssc.txstate.edu/txssc.htm>. Additionally, Governor Perry has authorized me to inform you that in the event of an imminent threat to any of your campuses, he will provide any necessary state law enforcement resources to assist local law enforcement with ensuring the safety of your students and faculty.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Shirley Neely

Commissioner of Education