

For Immediate Release

Tuesday, August 13 2019

Contact: Mary Whitrock, Superintendent

WhitrockM@ripon.k12.wi.us

(920) 748-4600

Ripon Area School District Participated in Active Threat Training

Ripon, WI - City of Ripon Police, Ripon Guardian Ambulance, and the Ripon Area Fire District, as well as the Ripon Area School District participated in a live training exercise of an active threat event on August 13th, 2019 at the Ripon High School. The training was an effort to continue the education and training of personnel, from both the emergency responders in the community, as well as the Ripon Area School District, in the proper response to an active threat incident.

Over the past several years, these groups have worked to increase cooperation, training, education, and preparedness for such an event in the City of Ripon. Over 50 staff members attended the training to build a context for what will occur and the priority of each of our city agencies including police, fire, EMS and school personnel. The training included emergency response, incident command, radio traffic and dispatch of services.

Superintendent Dr. Whitrock noted, "The level of coordination between emergency response teams in Ripon is incredible. We are all learning to work in sync to secure the location, provide care to individuals who may be injured, and get students and staff safely home. Through this training we now have a greater understanding of how communication will flow and who will be responsible for all of the different elements of the process."

Dr Whitrock went on to say, “Each time we complete a training or drill, I am reminded of how fast things will move and yet how long it will actually take to ensure all students are safely back in the care of their family. Communication will be extremely important. Resources and personnel will be flooding in from other cities and we need to know how to work together. This school year our goal will be to help educate our parents and students about the reunification process and how they can help in the event of an emergency. While our first instinct as parents is to go to the event location to get our children and bring them home, that is the opposite of what our emergency teams are telling us. The District will work to get accurate information out to families about where they can find information and what they can expect through the reunification process.”

Jolene Meyer, Public Relations Specialist & Executive Assistant to the Superintendent commented “In the event of a critical situation, it is important for parents to know that the entire district will go on a hard lockdown which means that students in all buildings other than the location of the incident will be secured in their classrooms and the school buildings will be locked with no one entering or exiting the building until the all clear has been given by law enforcement. The District will be providing information to parents, the community, and the media as it becomes available from EMS. The District will utilize it’s website, social media channels, and emergency Infinite Campus notification system to keep parents and community members abreast of the situation and most importantly to give parents directions on reunification with their children.” Parents should not go to their child(rens) schools as all buildings will be on a hard lockdown but instead should monitor their phone for direct messages from the district as well as frequently check the district website and Facebook page

for directions on how to reunite with their students. When those details are determined, parents will be required to provide a photo ID when picking up their child. “In a critical situation, parents will be able to assist the District in the reunification process by not coming to the schools and taking resources away from the situation. Instead, they should keep their phone handy, make sure it is charged and monitor the District website, their email, and the District’s social media channels for directions on where and how to reunite with their students. The primary work of the District will be to account for each child and staff member in our care and to assure that they are reunited with their family” noted Jolene Meyer.

Comments or suggestions, please contact Dr. Mary Whitrock at (920) 748-4600.

###