



NRHEG Public School

Independent School District No. 2168

High School
306 Ash Ave. South
New Richland, MN 56072
(507)465-3205
Fax (507)465-8633

Elementary School
600 School St.
Ellendale, MN 56026
(507)684-3181
Fax (507)684-2108

Our Mission

Empowering students with knowledge and skills to succeed.

Our Vision

To be the school district of choice, inspiring excellence in academics, arts, and activities.

Safety is Our #1 Priority

Dale Carlson, Superintendent

February 2018

Our vision as a school community is to *be the school district of choice, inspiring excellence in academics, arts, and activities*. We strive to do this every day by *empowering students with knowledge and skills to succeed*.

The school safety conversation has once again been in the headlines nationally since the school tragedy in Parkland, Florida. Across our country, people are demanding solutions that will ensure the safety of our students while in school. Reactions have ranged from prohibiting the selling and acquiring certain types of guns to the need for more community involvement and financial resources to assist people with mental illness. President Trump has also reintroduced the idea of arming teachers in our schools.

Unfortunately, the reasons for the mass shootings in our schools and in other places such as malls, churches, movie theaters, and outdoor concert venues, are many and solutions to end the violence are complex. Limiting the availability of assault-type weapons, increasing background checks, increasing security officers in schools, and putting systems in place to better address mental health issues should be explored and debated as together we look for ways to protect our students. However, the suggestion to arm our teachers, even those who are willing to volunteer, is one that I believe requires further study and research into the potential ramifications it may have on our students, staff, schools, and communities.

Executive Director for the National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO), Mo Canady, issued the following statement. "NASRO strongly recommends that no firearms be on a school campus except those carried by carefully selected, specially trained school resource officers (SROs), who are career law enforcement officers with sworn authority, deployed by employing police departments or agencies in community-oriented policing assignments to work in collaboration with schools." The NASRO provided reasons for its position on teachers possessing a firearm while at work including: officers responding to an incident mistaking a teacher for the assailant; teachers not sufficiently trained; keeping firearms secure; and the unintended consequences of a teacher discharging a firearm in a crowded school.

Our schools have emergency plans and conduct drills in the event of an intruder. We work with law enforcement in a proactive manner in considering the multitude of options in responding to emergency

Dale N. Carlson, Superintendent

David A. Bunn, High School Principal

Douglas A. Anderson, Elementary Principal

response events. Most schools across the country regularly practice responses to potential threats; and yet, tragic events where innocent people are killed and injured continue. What more can be done? I believe we can do more as a nation, state, and community, but I am not convinced that expecting our professional educators to carry a firearm and take on the additional responsibility of shooting a gun while surrounded by students is the best solution.

I do believe the best solutions in protecting our schools will come from conversations within our own communities as we examine and implement the best practices in school safety. Active shooter drills, anonymous tip lines to report possible threats, mental health counselors, secure entrances, anti-bullying programs, metal detectors, gun control laws, school resource officers, and arming teachers are only a few of a long list of interventions already in place in schools or are potential solutions that continue to be debated in an effort to protect our schools. These issues need to be part of our conversations as a school community as together, it is our responsibility to protect our children.

In a February 22, 2018, message to our students at the Secondary School, Principal David Bunn shared:
Safety has been and will continue to be our number one priority at NRHEG. Strong, loving, and caring human relationships cost nothing yet are powerful in the fight against school violence. We need to continue to keep you connected at home and in school. Some things for us all to remember:

- *Respect others and their opinions even if they are fundamentally different than yours*
- *Post only positive things on social media*
- *Ask for help if you are struggling with life or with others*
- *Let's not tear people down but to build them up*
- *Celebrate differences as that is what makes us great*

*Remember Panther Pride at all times: Be Positive, Be Respectful, Be Responsible and Be Safe!
This school cares about you! As always, if you have questions or concerns, all staff is here to help and support you!*

NRHEG Public Schools is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and caring learning environment for our students beginning with reinforcing the strong, loving, and caring human relationships that start at home. Thank you for all you do to keep our children safe at home, in school, and throughout our communities.

A reminder that the School Board conducts its regular monthly meeting on the third Monday of each month. The location of the meeting is rotated monthly between the NRHEG Secondary School Media Center in New Richland and the NRHEG Elementary School Media Center in Ellendale. The next regular scheduled Board meeting will be held on Monday, March 19, 2018, at the Elementary School beginning at 6:30 pm. The April 16, 2018, School Board meeting will be held at the Secondary School beginning at 6:30 pm.

We celebrate together in the accomplishments of our students because we are in this journey together as a school community. Thank you for all you do to support NRHEG Public Schools and our students!