

June 12, 2013

Dear Peel District School Board Families:

In December 2012, then Premier Dalton McGuinty announced a new program, in the wake of the Newtown tragedy in which Connecticut students and staff lost their lives, that all Ontario elementary schools would be locked during the school day. As a result, funding has been made available to all school boards for the implementation of this practice, and Peel District School Board trustees have made the decision to apply for this funding for our elementary schools. Funding has now been approved.

We have long had the practice for Peel schools that all outside doors with the exception of the front door would be locked during the school day. While we acknowledge that locking doors will not in itself prevent all risks to the safety of students and staff, it is an important step in providing an additional level of security.

The locked door practice will be in place, beginning in September 2013, for all elementary schools. A camera and buzzer unit will be installed by the front door and will be linked to a monitor in the main office of the school. Anyone who wishes access to the school, once the school day has begun, will request entry by pressing the buzzer. Staff in the main office will be able to see and speak to the person, and release the door lock to provide access. Signage will also be installed to inform visitors to the school.

In addition to this letter, information about the locked door practice will also be included in school newsletters. While this practice will require some adjustment in routines at our schools, we are confident that the increased security it provides will be reassuring to all students, families and staff. As a result of this new practice, we ask that parents be patient when waiting to enter the school.

Thank you for your continued support for the safety and well-being of all students and staff in our schools.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tony Pontes". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped "T" and "P".

Tony Pontes
Director of Education