



February 15, 2018

**Re: Message from Director Jim Costello**

We are deeply saddened by the incident that occurred on February 14 at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, where 17 people lost their lives and numerous others were injured as victims of a shooting.

We all have a responsibility to help our students feel safe and work towards ensuring their safety within our walls each day. However, we recognize our students are not isolated from the outside world. Our thoughts go out to students, parents, staff and community members who are impacted by these events.

It is natural that many students and parents will have questions about safety in our own schools. As you know, student and staff safety are a top priority for us. From our partnerships with the Community Threat Assessment Protocol; Sarnia, Chatham-Kent and Ontario Provincial Police Services; our video surveillance and entry control systems; safe school protocols, mental health supports and the Violent Threat Risk Assessment training for school administrators and other selected staff, as well as the ongoing, careful vigilance provided by caring staff, I am confident that we are mitigating risk and supporting safe learning environments for students, staff and visitors.

Should you have any concerns about wellbeing, we encourage you to contact your school to learn more about supports available to students or visit the LKDSB website to learn more about [mental health resources](#). Staff members are encouraged to access the [Employee and Family Assistance Program](#). The [Tips for Supporting Children and Youth after a Crisis Event](#) document is also a helpful resource.

In honour of the lives lost during this tragic shooting, we will be lowering all flags to half-staff across the LKDSB until the end of day on Friday.

On behalf of LKDSB senior administration, I want to thank you for supporting a safe and caring learning environment for all of our students and staff members.

Sincerely,

Jim Costello  
Director of Education  
Lambton Kent District School Board