Lockport City School District

Michelle T. Bradley, Superintendent of Schools
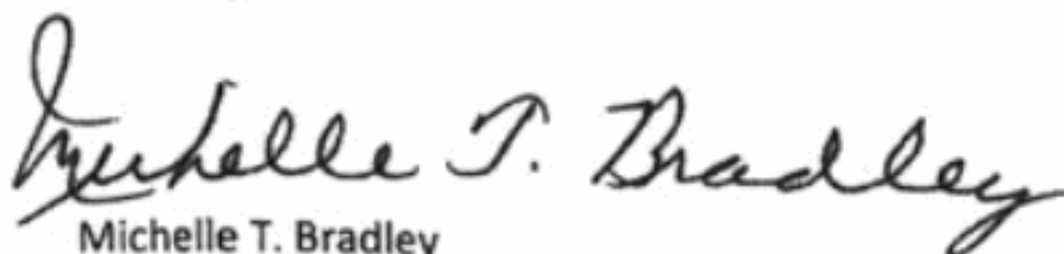
Fax

May 2019

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Much to our dismay, acts of violence in schools continue to occur in our country. Please be assured that the Lockport City School District continues to make school security a priority. In fact, some of the preventative measures taken to date include the hardening of school building entrances, the assignment of armed security guards in several schools, and an increase in the number of staff members who are counselors, social workers, and behavior intervention specialists. In doing so, the Board of Education has also developed and adopted Policy 5685 (available for you to read on the District's website) related to school security and privacy matters.

In January 2019, the Raptor Management System was implemented throughout the District as an added security measure. This system checks in all visitors to buildings and is proving to be an effective security measure. Beginning June 3, 2019, the Lockport City School District will move forward with the initial implementation phase of the Aegis facial recognition system. The components of the Aegis system, which were approved by the New York State Education Department in November 2017, have been fully installed. The general purpose of the initial implementation phase is to refine the operation of the system including making necessary adjustments to cameras throughout all school buildings, training staff members assigned to the district wide camera room located at Lockport High School, and engaging in dialogue with local law enforcement agencies. The system will be fully implemented on September 1, 2019.

The Lockport City School District Board of Education is committed to continually reviewing school security plans and measures to better ensure the safety of all people. Please remember to immediately report anything you see, hear, or read that is suspicious to law enforcement or school personnel. In addition, please monitor your child's social media accounts.

The reverse side of this letter contains frequently asked questions about the Aegis system, along with responses to the questions. Continue to be safe and vigilant, and thank you for your ongoing support and cooperation with keeping Lockport City School District a safe place to work, learn, and visit.

Sincerely,

Michelle T. Bradley
Superintendent of Schools

MTB:blb

"Pride in Our Past; Faith in Our Future"

We believe: All people can learn. Schools create conditions for success: academically, socially, emotionally, physically and aesthetically. Teaching and learning are the shared responsibility of home, school and community. Our mission is to assure comprehensive learning for all so that each person will be a lifelong learner.

Aegis Security System Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1.   What is the Aegis system?
A.   Aegis is an object and facial recognition technology system. Facial recognition is not new and is being used currently in airports, casinos, retail stores, and even on your phone and social media. The purpose in the Lockport City School District is to detect and characterize intrusions by people in critical areas. The Aegis system makes it possible to monitor perimeters and entryways into school buildings. The shape matching system enhances school security by comparing facial or object characteristics in our buildings against objects like guns or people determined to not be allowed in our school buildings, alerting school personnel if a match is found.

2.   Who will the Aegis system track?
A.   The Aegis system will track individuals only if in one of the identified categories including level 2 or 3 sex offenders, students who have been suspended from school, staff who have been suspended and/or are on administrative leave, any persons that have been notified that they may not be present on District property, anyone prohibited from entry to District property by court order presented to the District, or anyone believed to pose a threat based on credible information presented to the District. **Aegis will not generate information on or record the movements of any other district students, staff or visitors.**

3.   How does the Aegis system make our schools safer?
A.   Aegis is an early warning system that informs staff of threats including guns or individuals who have been identified as not allowed in our buildings as defined in District policy. Just as the Raptor system screens visitors to the building entering through approved entry ways, Aegis has the ability to extend that screening to every door and throughout buildings to identify people or guns. Early detection of a threat to our schools allows for a quicker and more effective response.

4.   What happens when a match is identified?
A.   When a match is identified by Aegis it automatically generates an alert with images for school staff to confirm or reject the match. If rejected, the match is discarded. If a match for a gun is confirmed, police notification is automatically initiated and the school is automatically placed in lockdown. All other match confirmations generate an immediate and appropriate response by the administrative team.

5.   What personal information is stored by the Aegis system?
A.   Aegis does not collect or store any information including all personally identifiable information until a match is made and confirmed and then only a record of the match is logged in the system.

6.   How will the District ensure that privacy is protected?
A.   Lockport City School District Policy 5685 establishes a range of privacy protections related to the Aegis system. The information databases are secured and accessible by trained administrators with security privileges. All management of alerts is maintained by trained District employees. The database is periodically audited and updated to ensure its accuracy. The only personally identifiable information generated and maintained in the system is for those individuals set forth in the categories of level 2 or 3 sex offenders, students who have been suspended from school, staff who have been suspended and/or are on administrative leave, any persons that have been notified that they may not be present on District property, anyone prohibited from entry to District property by court order presented to the District, or anyone believed to pose a threat based on credible information presented to the District. **Finally, the District is confident that the operation of the Aegis system complies with all applicable privacy laws.**

7.   How long will images be stored on the District systems?
A.   Video footage is maintained for 60 days at which time it is erased from the storage server as defined in Policy 5685. Images in the Aegis database are added to the database as described in Policy 5685 and are maintained as long as a perceived threat exists. Maintenance of the Aegis database is regularly checked and the removal of images is determined by the Superintendent also described in Policy 5685.