

New Lockdown Drill Good Idea But More Safety Measures Needed

After 18 school shootings in 2018, NFHS has now decided to take new safety measures during FLEX

Staff Editorial

For the first time in 11 years, Nation Ford has finally put into play a new school lockdown plan with a mock simulation that occurred during lunch and FLEX. Administration has taken charge, and while no plan can be 100 percent effective, they are on the way to making NFHS a safer place. The plan was implemented after a shooter made his way into a school in Parkland, Fla. and gunned down 17 students and faculty on Feb 14.

Since 2013 there have been nearly 300 school shootings in America. On an average, one shooting takes place every week, according to a study done by Everytown for Gun Safety. Since 2018, 18 school shootings have already taken place. It is imperative that we have a safety plan when at FLEX/lunch. But the current plan doesn't go far enough.

"It's good to have lockdown drills and it's important to have them. I think it's

good that our school is taking steps to prepare and protect our students. I don't think this drill was as effective or smooth as it could've been, so I think we will have to fine tune our practice going forward," one teacher said.

"First and foremost, student safety - physical and emotional, and mental - is paramount at Nation Ford," said Principal Jason Johns to parents in an emailed letter. "As a parent... and a principal, I want every one of our students to feel safe when they are on our campus ...I do think it is important in light of recent events to reach out to ensure you the importance we place on our school safety."

However, on Feb. 15, just 19 hours after the Florida shooting, students found that not every door to the school was locked during classes. Unfortunately, no one can watch bus loop doors all day. "The doors by the car rider line are locked throughout the day,"

School Resource Officer Dave Prescott said. "Coach [Pete] Tui and Coach [Brian] Turner monitor the bus loop doors during the day. Coach [Kate] Edwards and Mrs. [Heather] Unger are there during FLEX and do not let students past them. I am also near the serving lines to keep an eye on the doors as well."

Bottom line, the bus loop door is unlocked, making it too easy to enter our high school. One solution is it may be easier for all students to have student ID's which allow them to come in through that door and still keep it locked. Teachers, and students in classes like journalism (who sometimes leave the building and come back) could have access cards which administrators can assign to students. This does not minimize the possible threat if the shooter was a student, but it increases

the safety of NFHS.

Another problem is the noise level. Within the Commons, students are often extremely loud, so if a shooting did take place they might not be able to hear instructions given to them by teachers and staff. Chaos and mayhem

will likely follow. For example, our fire bell is a unique sound, and when we hear it, we automatically think "we must move to our respected area of exit." If we had a specific alarm sound for when a threat occurred, it may be able to alert teachers and students before a tragedy happens or warn them to move to the area in which they are assigned. Practice must also be put into play as half of the students didn't get to practice the lock-down drill in the Commons.

Students and teachers have to take initiative to close doors during flex. During first FLEX on the second floor, a Talon reporter found 29 classrooms were open, while during first FLEX on the first floor 22 doors were wide open.

With the world getting more dangerous, teens have been calling for more safety within schools. At NFHS, we can take steps to making our school an overall safer environment when in the Commons, hallways, or even in classes.

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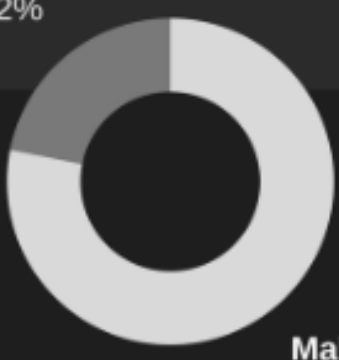
NFHS - THE TALON

SCHOOL SHOOTINGS

Sources: everytownresearch.org, http://www.ipr.northwestern.edu

THE VICTIMS OF SCHOOL SHOOTINGS

Female
22%



Male
78%

SCHOOL SHOOTINGS STATS

1992-94

60 shootings occurred between these years. There were two periods of elevation in school shootings. The number did not skyrocket again until 2007-13


2007-13

152 shootings occurred in this period of time. The number of shootings doubled during these years.

GENDER OF SHOOTERS

Unknown
11%

Female
7%



Male
82%

As you can see the gender of shooters are mostly male according to a study done by Everytown for Gun Safety Fund.

Maggie Kell

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The Talon provides students with an opportunity to discuss information related to Nation Ford High School. The paper's objective is to notify the school community of the news in a timely and informative manner and to entertain them through articles and columns.

The staff encourages letters to the editor. Nation Ford High School students, staff members, and the public can express their opinions and reactions to the articles in *The Talon*.

Letters should be signed and should not exceed 150 words. Letters submitted may be published in the paper at the discretion of *The Talon* staff and will be edited for accuracy, length, and grammar, as well as offensive or inappropriate content.

The staff may permanently keep all unpublished letters for reference or guidance for future writing. All submissions should be submitted to Mrs. Swann, room D109, or via email to swanne@fortmillschools.org.

Please keep in mind that opinions voiced in the articles and personal columns are not those of the Nation Ford High School newspaper staff or Nation Ford High School's administration, faculty, or staff; opinions are solely those of the author who submitted the article.

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