



December 12, 2006

Dear Parents/Guardians:

You may have read recently in the Cape Cod Times that parents elsewhere on the Cape have expressed concerns about security drills at their children's schools. Nauset has been having similar drills since last spring, and we hope you find that reassuring. Our principals and I meet regularly with public safety officials to design, practice, and improve our response to the various kinds of emergencies that have occurred all too frequently in American schools. With our youngest children, we have started with the simplest drills, consisting of little more than locking the classroom door and staying in the room (probably listening to a story being read aloud) until the drill is complete. We do the drills about once a month, just like fire drills, and vary the circumstances so that we are prepared for different kinds of threats. We are trying to balance the need to be prepared with the possible anxiety that could be caused if children find themselves in situations they don't understand.

If you have questions about this process, please call your school's principal, because procedures and drills do vary from school to school. We will be happy to tell you as much as we can, without compromising the drills themselves. You see, unlike the traditional fire drill, in a security drill it may be important that people outside the school (other than police and fire officials) not know how we will respond. We are learning lessons as we work on these drills, and I believe we are making your children safer every time we hold one.

Thank you for your understanding and support. I wish you all the happiest holiday season.

Sincerely,

Michael B. Gradone

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