



WEST LONG BRANCH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Dr. Christina M. Egan
Superintendent of Schools

Ms. Corey Lowell
Business Administrator

January 24, 2024

Dear West Long Branch School District Families,

We hope that this letter finds you well, and that your new year is off to a strong start!

The West Long Branch Board of Education and West Long Branch Borough Council are excited to announce a shared service collaboration that will allow for the placement of an armed Special Law Enforcement Officer (Class III) at the West Long Branch School District on a daily basis during the school year.

The safety and well-being of our students and staff has always been, and will always be, of utmost importance. Together with the West Long Branch Police Department, we continuously evaluate and enhance our security measures, proactively taking steps to build upon our security infrastructure and practices. For example, we have secured and hardened entry points with controlled access, comprehensive video surveillance, and we conduct regular safety drills and training with staff and students. Members of the West Long Branch Police Department are a frequent and highly-visible presence on our school grounds, and our community law enforcement officers are familiar, trusted faces to our students, staff and families. This strong partnership has already played a critical role in ensuring a safe environment.

The placement of a full-time, uniformed Class III Officer furthers our commitment to building a multi-layered approach to school security. Class III Officers are recently retired law enforcement officers who are hired and given specialized training by the local police department. They are wholly committed to on-site support and protection for schools. Accordingly, our newly appointed Class III officer will be a uniformed member of the West Long Branch Police Department, operating under the supervision and direction of Chief Marlowe Botti. The officer will work closely with our existing school staff, security team, and the police department to patrol the buildings and grounds, deter potential threats, and provide immediate assistance in case of any emergencies. It is important to note that this officer will not be responsible for addressing any student disciplinary issues or concerns, as those responsibilities will remain in the capable hands of our dedicated school staff and administration.

The decision to enter into this agreement and to share the cost of the officer is a reflection of the Board of Education and Borough Council's joint commitment to the safety and well-being of our community's most precious treasure, our children. We are grateful beyond measure for how the West

Long Branch community has come together to safeguard and secure our schools by providing this additional layer of protection.

For some members of our community, welcoming an armed Special Law Enforcement Officer as a daily presence will be viewed as a long-awaited necessity, while others may have reasonable questions or concerns. We appreciate that there may be varying perspectives on this matter, and we look forward to sharing more information about our new Special Law Enforcement Officer and the role they will play in our school community. Please stay tuned for further updates, and feel free to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

Christina Egan, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Jason Gonter, CFP®, CPM, MBA
Borough Administrator

Christine Skellinger
President, West Long Branch Board of Education

Janet Tucci
Mayor, Borough of West Long Branch

Marlowe Botti
Chief of Police, West Long Branch Police Department