

Cairo-Durham Central School District

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Office of the Superintendent

Anthony J. Taibi

Superintendent of Schools

www.cairodurham.org

April 10, 2018

Dear CDE Families,

We want to update you on school activities at Cairo-Durham Elementary following the April 2nd fire in East Durham. The loss of three of our promising young students has affected our school community in many ways, and we want to reassure you that we are here to support your children in any way we can.

Since today was the first day back at school after this tragic event, counselors joined students on a few specific buses this morning. We also greeted students upon arrival to start the school day on a positive note. The morning news announcements took place as usual to maintain a level of normalcy for our students.

Classroom schedules remained the same as much as possible, however opportunities for counselor support were available in the Media Center whenever needed. We had counselors circulating throughout all lunches to sit with students and check in with them. On Wednesday, the library will continue to serve as a counseling center throughout lunch and recess for students who need it.

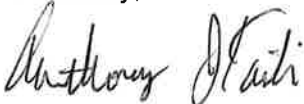
We also welcomed several therapy dogs to spend the day in each of the classrooms directly impacted by this tragedy. The therapy animals, including a pig named Albert Einswine, visited other locations in the school as well. By the end of the day, all classrooms were visited by a therapy animal, so ask your child which animal they got to spend time with. At least two therapy dogs will be in the building again on Wednesday.

Throughout the day, teachers and counselors emphasized certain points with students. If you'd like to keep a consistent message, these are the points you can reinforce with your children:

- There is no right and wrong way to do this.
- Whatever you are feeling is a normal reaction to an abnormal situation.
- We will continue to support your needs and the needs of the students. Please let us know what you need.

We sincerely thank all of the different agencies, including school districts, that have supported us throughout the past week and continue to support us moving forward. Remember that young children can react to sad news in different ways, so talking with your child is the best way to know how he or she is feeling. We also posted some resources to our website that may help you support your child through the grief process outside of school. Please do not hesitate to contact me or the main office (518-622-3231) if you feel your child is in need of additional assistance.

Sincerely,



Anthony J. Taibi
Superintendent
Cairo-Durham Central School District



Joseph Witezek
Building Principal
Cairo-Durham Elementary