



# Loudoun County Public Schools Media Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 26, 2024

**ASHBURN, Va.** - Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS) has partnered with the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office (LSCO) and the Leesburg Police Department (LPD) to conduct random canine team scans in high school buildings. With the increase in awareness of possible substance use by students, as well as the increase in suspected drug overdoses in our schools and community, LCPS and its law enforcement partners are identifying multiple intervention and prevention strategies to protect students. Canine team scans serve as an additional drug deterrence in our collective effort to stop drug use across the Loudoun County community.

"Working closely with law enforcement and leveraging this added layer of prevention helps to keep our spaces safe. By teaming up, we're making sure our schools stay focused on creating a positive environment for every student," Dr. Spence said. "Together, we can ensure that our educational spaces remain sanctuaries for growth where our students and staff feel protected."

Parents and students must understand that drug possession, use and distribution will not be tolerated in LCPS (per [Policy 8240](#)). Consequences for students will be consistently applied and LCPS will continue to provide support for students and families struggling with substance use.

It is understood that parents and students may have questions about how this may affect the school day and what a canine team scan will consist of. LCPS has posted [Frequently Asked Questions and Answers](#) to provide additional information about this process.

"The LSCO is working aggressively with LCPS to keep dangerous substances out of our schools and communities," said Loudoun County Sheriff Mike Chapman. "More student and community awareness of the danger, coupled with greater deterrence, are key to our long-term success and I am hopeful that the use of canine scans will help," he added.

LCPS and law enforcement leadership have developed an agreement and process that minimizes any disruption to the learning environment during this additional prevention method.

"This initiative underscores our shared commitment to fostering a secure learning environment where students can thrive," said Leesburg Chief Thea Pirnat. "By working together, we are taking steps to deter drug activity and prioritize the safety and well-being of students and staff."

Canine team scans will occur randomly and without advance notice beginning in March at LCPS high schools this spring. Families will receive information in a community message after a scan takes place.

LCPS is also providing awareness information about substance abuse and drug use through community awareness events and encouraging parents and guardians to talk with their children about substance abuse or drug use to the degree they feel comfortable. LCPS provides resources at [www.lcps.org/opioid](http://www.lcps.org/opioid). Visit the LCPS [Drug Awareness](#) webpage to find information and resources about the dangers associated with substance abuse including tips on how to talk to your child. If you, or a friend or loved one are struggling with substance abuse, contact [Mental Health, Substance Abuse & Developmental Services](#).

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## **MEDIA CONTACT**

Dan Adams  
Public Information Officer  
(o) 571.252.1237  
(c) 571.479.9177  
[daniel.adams@lcps.org](mailto:daniel.adams@lcps.org)