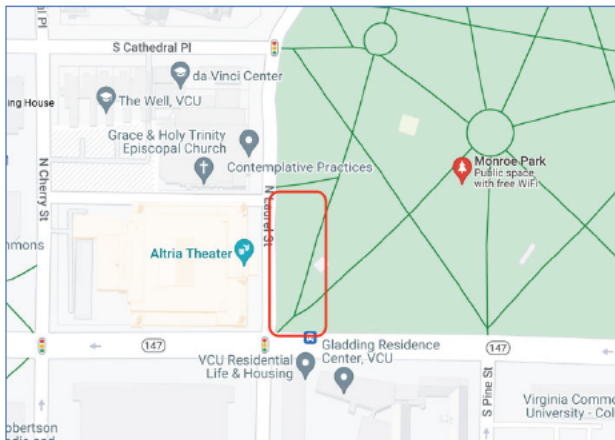


Monroe Park Shooting Report (7-20-23)

Section I – Overview of Incident

On June 6, 2023, RPS held two graduations at the Altria Theater: Richmond Community High School at 10 am and Huguenot High School at 4 pm. After the Huguenot ceremony, students exited the main theater doors and crossed North Laurel Street (which was blocked off for the event) to celebrate with family and friends in Monroe Park. Shortly after the last students exited the theater, gunshots were heard in the park (see the area in the red rectangle below).



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Several other individuals suffered non-life threatening wounds and other injuries. Though the specifics of what occurred are still under investigation by the Richmond Police Department, [REDACTED].

[REDACTED]

Section II – [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Section III – [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Section IV – Security at the Altria Theater

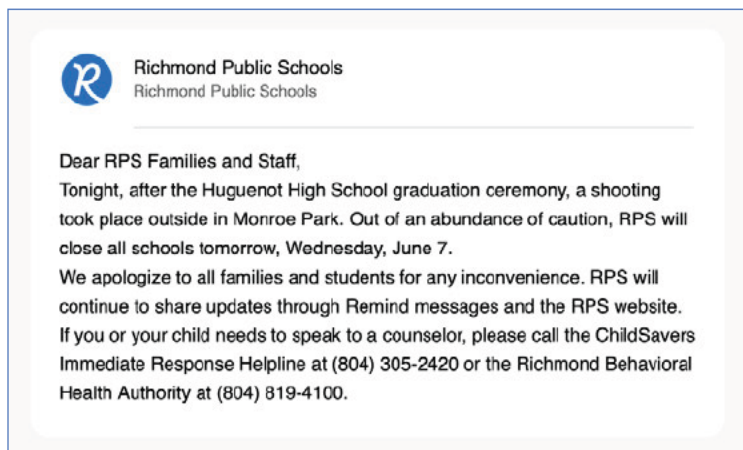
The following personnel provided security for the graduation ceremony: the RPS Director of Care and Safety, 3 Care and Safety Zone Supervisors, 17 RPS Care and Safety Associates, 10 Richmond Police Department officers (3 inside the Altria Theater and 7 outside to help with traffic and crowd control), 24 RMC Security staff, and EMS/RFD personnel.

In addition, all audience members went through metal detectors at the main entrance to the Altria Theater. Students, Board Members, and RPS senior staff came through the side entrance by the loading dock. In the morning, Richmond Community students were checked with metal detector wands as they entered the building. To accommodate Huguenot’s larger class, a walk-through metal detector was added for the afternoon ceremony. Dr. Ramsey, who was posted at the side entrance, indicated that she saw all Huguenot students go through the metal detectors. She reconfirmed this in an email on July 6, 2023, writing: “On June 6th at Altria I volunteered at the rear entrance of the building to assist with staff and student intake. During my time at the entrance for Huguenot Staff and Students, I witnessed each student walking through the metal detector to enter the building.” It is important to note that several adults who entered through the side door – including some Huguenot staff, central office staff, and Board Members – did not go through the metal detectors.



Despite initial concerns that a firearm may have entered the Altria Theater, the Richmond Police Department concluded otherwise. As Chief Edwards stated in a video on June 23, 2023: “We can confirm through our investigation that we don’t believe that any guns were brought inside the Altria Theater during the course of the graduation.”

Section V – After the Incident

Following the incident, RPS sent out a Remind message at 6:36 pm to notify RPS families that school would be closed the following day in light of the tragedy.



At 9:19 pm, a similar message went to all staff.

Tuesday, June 6, 2023

Dear RPS Staff,

All RPS schools and offices will be closed tomorrow, Wednesday, June 7. Please contact your supervisor if you have any questions.

RPS will continue to share updates through Remind messages, RPS Direct emails, and the RPS website.

RPS employees in need of emergency support should contact the Cigna 24/7 crisis line at 1-833-ME-CIGNA (1-833-632-4462). Additional counseling and support services are also available through the Cigna Employee Assistance (EAP) program by calling 1-800-544-6931.

www.rvaschools.net

At 9:56 pm, a special RPD Direct went to the entire RPS community.

Tuesday, June 6, 2023

Dear #RPSStrong Family,

I am devastated to share that seven people were wounded in a shooting in Monroe Park right after the Huguenot HS graduation today. Two of these individuals have died.

In addition to keeping the Huguenot community in your prayers this evening, please check on any Huguenot students, teachers, staff, or families you know. Even a quick text that says "I'm here for you" could make all the difference.

Students who need emergency mental health support should call the **ChildSavers Immediate Response line at 804-305-2420** or send a text to 741741. RPS employees in need of emergency support should contact the **Cigna 24/7 crisis line at 1-833-ME-CIGNA (1-833-632-4462)**. Additional counseling and support services are also available through the Cigna Employee Assistance (EAP) program by calling 1-800-544-6931.

Out of an abundance of caution, I have **closed all RPS schools and offices tomorrow**. In addition, **all remaining graduations will be rescheduled** for next week (details forthcoming). I sincerely apologize for the inconvenience these changes will cause our families and, of course, our graduates.

I've lost count of the number of times I've written about the horrific impact of gun violence on our students, staff, and families. I simply no longer have the words to fully express the anger, frustration, and profound sadness I feel this evening.

But I am going to close tonight with a few images that you won't see on the news. I wish you all could have been at Huguenot's ceremony to see our students' smiles, tears of joy, and tight embraces of gratitude. I wish you could have seen their beautifully designed mortar boards, adorned with flowers, flags, and messages of inspiration. And I wish you could have heard the shouts and cheers from families who were brimming with pride. I am immensely proud of our graduates and refuse to let this latest senseless tragedy detract from all that they have accomplished. To our graduates, we love you and are always here for you.

With great appreciation,

Jason

We ultimately decided to close school for the final day-and-a-half of the year. Despite being closed, the RPS mental health team mobilized to provide in-person and virtual support for the Jackson-Smith family, the Huguenot team, and any others who requested assistance. In addition, School Board members and other staff called Huguenot graduates to check on them. Furthermore, RPS broadly shared the following mental health message:

- *The RPS Crisis Team will be providing virtual support to students and families from 11 am - 4 pm and 5 - 7 pm. You can access the support through [Google Meet](#). The 24/7 hotline in Spanish is (888) 969-1825.*
- *Students who need emergency mental health support should call the Richmond Behavioral Health Authority at (804) 819-4100 or the ChildSavers Immediate Response line at (804) 305-2420 (or send a text to 741741).*
- *An additional counseling resource available to students and families is Challenge Discovery Projects. Their counselors can be reached by calling (804) 643-0002.*
- *The Latinos in Virginia Empowerment Center will be open all day for any Latino/Hispanic individuals affected by the shooting. The 24/7 hotline in Spanish is (888) 969-1825.*
- *The Trauma Healing Response Network is a coalition of grassroots, community-based organizations and mental health partners that provide support services to families and communities impacted by gun violence. The network can also facilitate the distribution of emergency relief funds to help those in crisis. For more information, email traumahealingresponsetnetwork@gmail.com.*
- *RPS employees in need of emergency support should contact the Cigna 24/7 Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255. Additional counseling and support services are also available through the Cigna Employee Assistance (EAP) program by calling (800) 544-6931.*
- *If you are looking for resources to help you talk to your children about this latest tragedy, please see [this document](#) from the National Council on Family Relations.*

For the remaining graduations, RPS increased the number of RPD officers and CSAs; prohibited bags of any kind; prohibited signs, balloons, or anything else that could obstruct the view of security personnel; limited graduates to five guests each in order to keep crowds small; and encouraged people not to congregate in large groups after the ceremonies.

Section VI – Recommendations

Recommendation 1: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Recommendation 2: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Recommendation 3: Adopt a new, enhanced security protocol for all graduations.

Following the Monroe Park shooting, we enhanced our security protocols for the remaining graduations. As noted above, we increased the number of RPD officers and CSAs; banned all bags and all signs, balloons, or other items that could obstruct the view of security personnel; limited the number of attendees; and encouraged families not to congregate following the graduation ceremony. We recommend adopting this enhanced protocol for all future graduations and all large RPS gatherings, including sporting events. Target completion date: August 15, 2023.

Recommendation 4: Identify a new site for all future RPS graduations.

Given the trauma many students, staff, and families experienced in Monroe Park, we recommend discontinuing the use of the Altria Theater for future graduations. We recommend exploring other venues, such as the Siegel Center, for use in 2024 and beyond. Target completion date: October 1, 2023.

Recommendation 5: Develop a mental health plan that can immediately go into effect in the event of a crisis.

Though the RPS mental health team quickly responded to the tragedy by creating opportunities for students and staff to receive counseling both in-person and virtually, we did not have a formal mental

health response plan ready to implement. We recommend developing one, including (among other items) the logistics of offering mental health services to a broad group of students and staff as well as “ready-to-go” mental health flyers, videos, and other resources. Target completion date: October 1, 2023.

Recommendation 6: Develop a communications plan that can immediately go into effect in the event of a crisis.

Though RPS communicated three times on the evening of June 6 (see above), we should have done so earlier, and we should have issued a formal statement from the school division. Given this, we recommend developing a formal communications plan that we can immediately implement in the event of a crisis, including (among other items) draft templates for Remind messages, RPS Direct messages, and official statements from the division. Target completion date: October 1, 2023.