



SYLVAN UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Dear Sylvan Union School District Community,

DEBRA M. HENDRICKS
Superintendent
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I want to reach out to you and share information regarding two separate incidents that happened at our schools this week. Yesterday, March 13, 2018, at approximately 4:30 p.m. Ustach Middle School received notice of a student hearing that another student might bring a gun to school the next day. The Modesto Police Department was notified and an investigation was conducted. It was determined to be not a credible threat. This morning extra staff was at Ustach to greet students as they arrived and answer any parent concerns. Safety is our first priority and we will always respond to what even appears to be rumors to keep everyone safe at our school sites.

Today, March 14, 2018, Savage Middle School received information at approximately 8:30 a.m. from a student who reported that he heard someone was going to come to the school during the time students may have participated in a highly publicized student walkout and commit a violent act. The Savage staff took immediate action and put the school on "LOCKOUT". Modesto Police Department was notified and conducted an investigation. The lockout was lifted at approximately 10:40 a.m. once it was made clear that there was no immediate danger.

I do want to inform you that at Ustach and Somerset today, a few students did choose to participate in the highly publicized student walkout. They did this by leaving their classroom and gathering in an area on campus where they were supervised by campus supervisors and administrators. Principals reported the walkout lasted approximately 17 minutes. Students were not encouraged or hindered to participate and for those students who did not participate in the walkout classroom instruction continued with no disruption.

Student safety has been and will always continue to be a priority for Sylvan Union School District. In light of the tragic events that have happened in schools within California and the United States, I wanted to inform you of the safety measures we have in place and areas we are strengthening.

In June of 2017 we formed an Incident Command Committee to review our current safety plans. The committee researched the most effective school safety guidelines being used in the industry and as a result implemented the Standard Response Protocol district wide on the very first day of school. All sites practice this protocol on a regular basis.

Our Mission:

To provide a dynamic, broad-based education that prepares each child to be a contributing member of society.

As a result of our Board and staff increasing safety measures throughout our schools and the research of the Sylvan Union School District Incident Command Committee the District has done the following to implement extra security:

- All schools have fencing that surrounds the entire school site and creates a barrier as well as limits access points once schools are in session.
- Increased requirements for volunteers working directly with students, either at school or on field trips, by implementing mandated fingerprinting.
- Installed advanced check in systems at our school offices for all volunteers.
- Developed and implemented district wide the Standard Response Protocol, which was approved by First Responders including the Modesto City Police, Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department, and Modesto City Fire Department.
- All staff and students have been trained in the Standard Response Protocols and on-going drills are taking place at each school site.

We are currently working on:

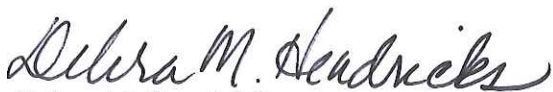
- Strengthening our partnerships with First Responders.
- Modesto Police Department representative is meeting with Incident Command Committee members to inspect entry and exit points to strengthen our Standard Response Protocols during a crisis on campus.
- Expanding two-way radio communication between the Sylvan Union School District Office and all school sites to increase our communication during a school or district crisis.

Please help our efforts by following these guidelines:

- Parents need to check into the front office at all times.
- Parents and volunteers need to have a visitor badge/sticker on at all times while on campus grounds.
- Anyone on campus without a visitors badge/sticker will be referred to the office to check in and get a visitor badge/sticker.
- During any site lockdown or lockout, please refrain from coming to the school site as a safety precaution. We also ask for everyone to limit your calls during that time as to not block phone lines. We respect your deep concern for your child's safety; however we must have limited distractions in order for staff to deal with the situation.

Thank you for your support and cooperation in assisting us with keeping your child safe before, during, and after school.

Sincerely,



Debra M. Hendricks
Superintendent