



January 5, 2013

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As we prepare to welcome your children back to school I wanted to reassure our families, employees and community that safety is an ever-present priority within the Coeur d'Alene School District.

Public schools are a sanctuary for learning where students, teachers and parents need to feel safe. Sadly, the current reality is that there is no absolute guarantee of protection from senseless acts of violence.

While last month's tragic events in Connecticut cannot paralyze us from getting back to teaching and learning, we wouldn't be a school district of excellence if we didn't use this opportunity to learn from this tragedy and incorporate new strategies into our district's crisis intervention and security enhancements.

Over winter break, I led our district's administration team through the process of identifying enhancements to our schools to reduce the risk for a similar tragedy to happen here.

We spent a significant amount of our winter holiday break meeting with local law enforcement, facilities security experts and internal teams to work on thoughtful approaches to identifying our most vulnerable areas and address them as quickly and effectively as possible.

What are the strengths of our current security measures?

- Close coordination and ongoing emergency planning with City of CdA Police and Kootenai County Sheriff's Department
- Comprehensive district-wide School Emergency Response (SERP) plan that we have been updating regularly for 10+ years
- Individual school crisis response drills including: evacuation, shelter-in-place, lock down
- Execution of a full-scale active shooter tabletop exercise with regional law enforcement and emergency responders last school year
- School Resource Officer (SRO) presence at all high schools and two of our middle schools

What are we currently doing to enhance security?

- Over the holiday break we began installing secure equipment safes at each high school and middle school for School Resource Officers' exclusive use
- We have agreed to purchase additional equipment for our School Resource Officers to give them the best tools to protect our schools in a crisis
- In consultation with the Chief of Police, the school district will begin paying for enhanced police presence at Canfield Middle School starting Monday, January 7th until we can fully re-instate a dedicated SRO to Canfield
- Meeting this coming week with Sheriff's Department to enhance response at our "County" schools

What are we recommending to the School Board to further enhance safety?

At Monday night's Board meeting school district administration will recommend a comprehensive and measured approach to enhancing and strengthening building safety and emergency response.

Why now?

The Coeur d'Alene School District has run a Maintenance & Operations (M&O) Levy every two years to supplement the basic education funding levels provided by the State of Idaho. The School Board will be setting the dollar amount of the M&O Levy at their January School Board meeting.

We want to be measured in our approach to enhancing school security but do not want to wait two years for a funding opportunity. With the community voting in March on a school district M&O Levy, we feel it is imperative to have this discussion with our Board this month.

District Administration will ask the School Board to consider increasing the M&O Levy request to pay for district-wide security and safety enhancements.

The School Board will consider a recommendation to increase the M&O Levy amount by \$1M in the first year to improve the security infrastructure at our 17 school buildings, increase our School Resource Officer (SRO) model to add additional officer presence at our schools, and enhance communications and notification tools to our parents and community during crisis response.

The Bond that was passed last summer will renovate five of our school buildings and improve facilities security. Our district wants to take the opportunity now to ask for community support to implement additional measures for security at our schools.

Due to precautionary recommendations from law enforcement, we cannot share all the specific details of our heightened security, as we do not want to compromise the safety of our students or law enforcement during a response to a

crisis. We do intend to be as forthcoming as we can with where your tax dollars will go.

Where will the dollars be spent if the school board, community and our taxpayers support increasing our M&O Levy for school safety?

ACCESS CONTROL

- Entry systems and door access technology upgrades
- Proximity card controlled facility access
- Stricter visitor controls; employee and contractor IDs
- Tailoring assessment to each school campus
- Perimeter fencing

TOOLS to ENHANCE SAFETY

- Metal detection systems
- Strategically placed bullet proof glass
- Video surveillance

PEOPLE and TRAINING

- Enhancing our existing SRO model to increase 3 officers to our existing 5 officer SRO team to cover all secondary schools and create a presence at elementary schools
- Continually update school-level safety plans through prioritization of time for staff preparation and training

COMMUNICATIONS and NOTIFICATION TOOLS

- Additional technologies for emergency communications and parent notification. Continue to enhance “Skylert” Parent emergency communication system, Rapid Responder joint information system with law enforcement and first responders and update school district websites and other electronic communication systems.

Again, our goal is to enhance safety at all school buildings, streamline communications and make appropriate adjustments to our SERP plans based on new information and best practices in our continued close relationship with local law enforcement.

A thoughtful approach to school safety is paramount to long-term success.

As a mother and now grandmother, I hold the safety of children among the most sacred of responsibilities as your superintendent. I appreciate your continued support as we work together to sustain a safe environment for all our children.

Hazel Bauman, Superintendent
SD 271