

May 25, 2022

Dear Staff and Families,

I am reaching out to you today heartbroken over the tragic and senseless loss of life in Uvalde, TX yesterday. Tragedies like this are becoming all too common in our lives. Schools especially should be havens of safety for children so it is even more difficult to understand how this could occur.

This week, throughout our district, school counselors engaged students and staff in various activities around mental health awareness as part of the Healthy Me, Healthy Us program. We never imagined how critical those activities would become. For young children, teenagers, and even yourself, we offer these resources for you at home in the coming days. Please use them to assist with discussions you may need to have with your child(ren).

- [National Association of School Psychologists \(Tips for Parents and Educators\)](#)
- [Managing Your Youths Emotions When Stressed](#)

Given that the location of the incident yesterday was in a school, I wanted to review many of the steps we proactively take to keep students and staff safe. To begin, this morning, and anytime a situation requires it, the district increased District and SW Borough Police presence around all school buildings during arrival, throughout the day, and at dismissal. This will continue for at least the remainder of this week.

Beyond that, the district has an armed police officer on-duty in-school every day. Officer Mike Samar is a fifteen-year veteran officer who patrols schools on foot and in his cruiser. He is visible and available for incidental conversations and emergencies.

In addition to the physical presence of District Police, we have enhanced and expanded safety and security measures throughout the district over the past several years. Some of these measures include:

- Locked double entrance exterior doors with cameras that are accessible by key-fob only.
- Secondary locking devices, “Night Locks”, on every interior door. Students and staff are trained in their proper use twice annually.
- Remotely accessible security cameras in all three buildings interiors and exteriors.
- Two-way radio communication between administration, security, other essential staff, and county EMS resources.
- Twice annual trainings for students and staff on emergency response procedures including “RUN, HIDE, FIGHT”
- Threat Assessment Team that identifies, evaluates, and addresses potential threats to school security.
- Bullying Prevention resources and referral forms accessible to students and families on the district web site at [www.swasd.org](http://www.swasd.org) “Bullying Prevention”.

Although more details of what and why this tragedy occurred will be known in the coming days, I also recognize there are no real answers to explain the loss of so many lives. Like you, we grieve with these families. Please know that we will continue to do everything we can to protect you, your children, and our staff so our schools remain safe, warm, and welcoming places of learning for all.

With deepest concern,  
Dr. Mark Stamm  
Superintendent of Schools