



RESCUE UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

"Educating for the Future Together"

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Dear Rescue Staff and Families,

I wanted to provide you with an update related to the safety measures and preventative steps we have in place, and have recently implemented, to help ensure that our students, staff, and community are safe and secure while on our campuses. After attending several training sessions and consulting with a security expert this past spring, I have categorized these into the following categories: **Deter, Detect, Delay and Defend**. Note: Some safety measures and preventative steps fit into more than one category, and I have noted that when applicable.

Deter

License Plate Readers Pilot (LPR's)

This past fall, Rescue USD partnered with Odin Industries to pilot the use of License Plate Readers (LPR's) on all of our campuses. These LPR cameras automatically capture and read every license plate that enters onto all of our campuses on a 24/7 schedule. When our LPR's capture an image of a license plate, it processes the image and compares it against a national database of vehicles that have been flagged for law enforcement purposes in a matter of seconds. The system alerts local law enforcement officers when a match is found, allowing them to take swift action. We will be evaluating this tool this fall to determine next steps. (Also applies to Detect section)

Cameras

In addition to the many cameras we have previously installed on every campus this summer we installed an additional 72 security cameras district wide at our school sites. (Also applies to Detect section)

Panic Buttons

Every school site has multiple "panic buttons" installed that allow for the immediate notification to the entire campus, district leadership and law enforcement in the event of a threat on our campuses. (Also applies to Delay section)

Bus Rider Tracking Software

On March 21, 2023, the Rescue USD School Board unanimously voted to purchase and install software on every Rescue USD school bus that allows school staff, and eventually parents, to track their child's entry and exit from our school buses on a daily basis and during field trips. This summer we installed the hardware and software on all of our busses and will be training

staff when they return in the coming weeks. More information on this innovative safety option will be shared with our community in the coming months. (Also applies to Detect section)

School Safety Plans

Every fall, each site convenes their School Safety Committee and updates their school safety plans with guidance and technical assistance from our law enforcement partners. These plans are intended to ensure our safety and incorporate lessons learned from local and national events. Site staff are aware of the safety plans for their particular site. (Also applies to all other sections)

Lockdown Drills

Each year, our students and staff practice lockdown drills. These drills are often conducted at a variety of times during the day (during classes, passing periods and lunches) to ensure we are replicating and practicing for a potential real-world situation. (Also applies to Delay and Defend section)

Internet Safety HUB

We have partnered with Linewize, a leading global provider of online safety products and education, to create an educational hub for parents and teachers. This hub includes articles, videos, courses, and more, to ensure you know how to keep your kids safe online. You can find this information on our website under the Technology tab or by clicking [here](#). (Also applies to Detect section)

Cybersecurity

The ultimate goal of our cybersecurity efforts is to protect our information from being stolen or compromised. Our secondary goal in cybersecurity is to reduce the risk of any unauthorized access to our system. To achieve this we strive to focus on 4 fundamental tasks:

1. Protecting the Confidentiality of data
2. Preserving the Integrity of data
3. Restricting the Availability of data only to authorized users
4. Training

(Also applies to Detect section)

Detect

Threat Assessment Training

On March 23, 2023, Rescue USD sent a team (Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents, Directors and school site Principals) to the El Dorado County Threat Assessment Training entitled “Building and Operating a School Threat Assessment Program.” This program was intended to assist our Rescue USD staff to implement a systemic process that is designed to

1. Identify person(s)/situation(s) of concern.
2. Gather information/investigate.
3. Assess the person/situation.
4. Manage the person/situation.

(Also applies to all sections)

WE TIP (If You See Something, Say Something®)

We all have something worth protecting - a "why" that unifies our community. For each of us reading this message, our "why" are all of our Rescue USD children and staff. There is overwhelming evidence that those who commit violence at schools don't "just snap." Instead, there is a "pathway to violence." They develop an idea, plan, prepare, often share their plan on social media, make comments to friends, and eventually act. Informed and alert communities play a critical role in keeping our schools safe. Thank you for staying connected with your students and encouraging them to share anything that concerns them. Our [WeTip.com](https://www.wetip.com) website and phone number is a safe and anonymous method to report bullying, harassment, threats or other concerns. In short, **"If You See Something, Say Something®"**

[WeTip.COM](https://www.wetip.com)

or

1-800-78-CRIME (27463)

As of April 2023, all students see our WeTip App each time they log into their district account. (Also applies to all sections)

Staff Handheld Walkie-Talkies

Within the next month or so (supply chain driven) every staff member on campus will have a new handheld walkie-talkie allowing them to communicate important information with all staff and first responders from any location on the campus. (Also applies to Delay and Defend section)

On-site and Off-site Supports

Through agreements with nonprofits and government health agencies, several of our schools offer on-site services to help students and families navigate trauma and other challenges. Additionally, Rescue offers an off-site resource called CareSolace (<https://www.caresolace.org/>). Care Solace connects people in the U.S. to the support they need, anytime, anywhere. Their goal is to break the stigma surrounding mental health and offer every community educational prevention resources, provide prompt, compassionate support when necessary, and build resilience for long-term stability and health. They are determinedly working toward enabling everyone to get the mental health care they need.

Full-Time Counselors at Every Site

There are specific credentials required to work in schools, which for counselors, is the Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) credential. They provide instruction on bullying prevention, suicide prevention, substance abuse, help students with academic progress, and connect with students socially and emotionally.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) and Special Programs

Last year, we converted a vacant position into a newly-created Coordinator of MTSS and Special Programs. Our coordinator provides guidance and direction to support students academically, emotionally, and behaviorally. Our Coordinator also provides training, strategies, and tools for school staff in order to meet students' needs. Each site has Learning Support Team meetings to

identify students of need (academically, socially, and emotionally), with the intent of providing needed resources and support to identified students and families.

Yard Supervisors

Yard Supervisors provide supervision during recess, lunches, and at crosswalks. They help provide activities for students and connect students with their peers. They are often the first group of people to notice and report concerns. (Also applies to Deter and Defend section)

Mental Health Support

- **School Psychologists**

In the past 18 months we have added significant mental health support in Rescue USD. We now have five Psychologists within our district supporting sites in addition to full-time counselors at each of our school sites. Our Psychologists provide Educationally Related Mental Health Services (ERMHS) to students that are assessed with mental health needs.

- **Behaviorists**

We currently employ two Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA) and one Registered Behavior Technician (RBT) within our district behavior team. Our team supports sites and parents by providing ongoing behavior related training on: proactive behavior intervention strategies, de-escalation techniques, and basic principles of behavior.

District Staff ID Badges

All staff are issued Rescue USD ID Badges. These are intended to allow all staff to quickly identify staff and unauthorized visitors. (Also applies to Deter section)

Guest Badges/Stickers at Each Site

All visitors to all school sites are required to sign-in at the main office and wear a guest badge/sticker while on campus. These are intended to allow all staff to quickly identify authorized visitors and unauthorized visitors. (Also applies to Deter section)

Delay

Door Lock Enhancements

All of our classroom doors lock from the inside. During the 2021-2022 school year, Rescue USD demoed a unique door locking tool that allows anyone in the room to lock the door within seconds. The device was well-received, and we subsequently purchased and deployed enough of these tools for every compatible door in the district. We will continue to explore new and innovative locking products that come to market. (Also applies to Defend section)

Classroom with Office Phones and Emergency Intercoms

Every classroom and office is equipped with a landline phone that can call 911 in an emergency.

Window Blinds and Door Window Blackouts

We continually assess the window blinds in all of our classrooms and offices to ensure that every window has functioning blinds installed. We are in the process of providing every entrance door to every room with blackouts that can be installed to cover the door window within seconds.

First Aid Kits

In August 2023, we deployed new first aid kits for every room on every campus. These are intended to allow staff to address most medical emergencies until medical personnel can arrive on campus. All staff will be trained in the proper use of tourniquets in August of 2023.

Safety Communications System

Rescue USD utilizes the [CatapultEMS](#) system. Staff can also use this app to instantly issue a lockdown for the entire site and notify district office personnel who can connect with law enforcement staff.

Defend

Incident Command Systems (ICS) Training with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

FEMA provides world-class training and education for the nation's first responders, emergency managers and others. On July 28, 2023 Rescue hosted all district school site principals, vice principals and district leaders for a one-day training with FEMA. At the conclusion of the training all attendees were ICS certified by FEMA. (Also applies to all other sections)

Partnering with the El Dorado County Sheriff Office

Rescue USD has a long history of positive partnerships and relationships with the El Dorado Sheriff's Office (EDSO). Currently EDSO assists Rescue USD with:

- Threat assessments as needed
- Home visits as needed
- Site visits and educational programs
- Guidance and technical assistance on our school safety plans (lockdowns, evacuations, active shooter, wildland fires, earthquakes and more)
- Emergency responses as needed

(Also applies to all other sections)

Partnering with our Local Law Enforcement

Rescue USD has a long history of positive partnerships and relationships with many local agencies. In the past few months Rescue Leadership has attended El Dorado County (EDC) Student Threat Assessments Trainings in collaboration with:

- EDC District Attorney's Office
- EDC Child Protective Services (CPS)
- EDC Health and Human Services
- EDC Office of Education
- EDC Probation Department

- EDC Sheriff Department
- Placerville Police Department
- South Lake Tahoe Police Department

(Also applies to all other sections)

School Resource Officer (SRO)

The El Dorado Sheriff's Office (EDSO) has seven School Resource Officers in the County. We have one of these School Resource Officers dedicated to Rescue USD and he is able to support any of our sites in an emergency. This officer is armed and has instantaneous access to communicate with local law enforcement officers when needed.

Additionally, EDSO has a SRO that is assigned to support middle schools in the county. This officer regularly visits our two middle schools sites and is available for threat assessments, home visits as needed and emergency responses at any of our sites as needed.

Lastly, we are fortunate that our District is book-ended by two high school sites with full-time EDSO-funded SRO's (Oak Ridge and Ponderosa) who are able to support any of our sites in an emergency. (Also applies to all other sections)

Active Shooter Training

On April 27, 2023 several site leaders attended Active Violence Shooter Training hosted by Guardian Defense. Guardian Defense is a company located in Boca Raton, Florida that offers Active Shooter Training for schools, colleges, businesses, places of worship, and law enforcement agencies across the country. Their programs are intended to transform the way employers and staff respond to an active threat, and are designed to empower staff to act when faced with an active shooter.

Active Violence Training with Office of Emergency Services (OES)

On May 10, 2023 the OES conducted an extensive site training for the Marina Village Middle School staff. This training focused on procedures for keeping staff and students safe during an "act of violence" event as well as other safety measures needed during a disaster. Staff reviewed and analyzed the site safety procedures with the OES officer in light of the latest recommendations. District personnel were also present to discuss upcoming safety measures to enhance abilities to communicate and available classroom materials to respond to such events. We are working with OES to conduct additional training for our District and site-level administrators and at our remaining six school sites. (Also applies to all other sections)

Active Shooter Training (now being termed Active Violence Training)

In July of 2022, the El Dorado Sheriff's Office (EDSO) utilized a Rescue USD elementary and a Rescue USD middle school site for their countywide Active Shooter Training. Rescue USD has offered all of our sites to EDSO for future training. Additionally, EDSO has confirmed that they train their officers to take swift, but calculated, individual or coordinated action when arriving on a campus with an active shooter.

Classroom First Aide/Emergency Kits for all Teachers

Every classroom is equipped with emergency backpacks/bags to support a classroom in the event of an extended lockdown.

In closing, I know that several in our community have asked about installing perimeter fencing on our campuses. Rescue USD has been in communication with the Office of Emergency Services and the El Dorado County Sheriff's Department and both have advised us that perimeter fencing actually creates more of a safety concern than an enhancement. As a result, they have advised all schools in the county to avoid installing perimeter fencing.

Again, please know that student and staff safety is a top priority. We ask for your help in continuing to create safe schools and reporting any concerns. **We will continue to ask our students, staff and families that if they hear something, or know something, to [say something](#) to a school adult or utilize our 24/7 WeTip website or telephone number.**

Take care.



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