

# PALESTINE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Superintendent

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## **Palestine ISD Safety Plan**

TO: Palestine ISD Parents and Palestine Community Members  
FROM: Jason Marshall, Superintendent of Schools, Palestine ISD  
DATE: Friday, April 20, 2018

Safety is a growing concern for schools in light of increased incidents on school campuses that threaten the safety of our students, as well as staff members. Palestine ISD has named School Safety the #1 Goal for 2018 and is taking a proactive approach to improving safety within the district. Although the district has always taken safety seriously and has made many improvements with regard to campus security over the last several years, we are concerned by the recurring gun incidents across the country and believe that we must look at additional ways to keep our children safe.

The district began reviewing the PISD Safety Plan this past fall and has conducted meetings with administrators, teachers, and Board of Trustee members to discuss the overall district safety plan that we currently have in place. We have also held Safety Forums for parents and the community to gain input on ways to improve safety within the district, and we are working with local law enforcement and the Texas School Safety Center to determine all options available and those best suited for our specific needs.

Below are some concerns and recommendations we have received. The district has clarified many of these concerns to our stakeholders and has begun to investigate the possibility of implementing a number of these ideas.

### **Concerns:**

- All students report/go to same areas during drills, making them more vulnerable
- Guns on campus, with teachers not trained, students knowing who possesses the guns, and placing teachers in situations much like police who have been criticized for shooter decisions
- Teachers with no protection if someone was able to gain access to the classroom
- Lack of a plan for the time between the beginning of a situation and the time of arrival of law enforcement
- Ability of a school staff person to retain the gun in an intruder's effort or student's effort to get the gun
- Determination of which teachers would be armed with gun/weapon
- Gym access/lockdown/keys during a lockdown time
- Restroom access/lockdown/keys during lockdown time
- Substitute teacher access/keys during lockdown time

### **Suggestions/Considerations:**

- Encourage parents to initiate conversation with students about what they have seen, heard, or been told from or about other students
- Drill repeatedly so that all involved know appropriate responses to each type of situation; research new/effective training
- Require clear back packs, stricter dress code, bullet proof back packs
- Assist students in ways to help identify troubled students
- Provide PR follow-up to situations to provide explanation and report the positive outcomes, and provide explanation to parents of codes used with students in training
- Research finance of safety measures, bonds, grants, etc.
- Provide guns on campus to selected staff persons
- Train for and implementation of the Guardian Plan
- Communicate with bus drivers as situations would affect directives and decisions for them and their students
- Require all students to enter at one area, check with metal detectors
- Consider construction of safety measures such as razor wiring or perimeter fencing
- Consider Bullet Proof Glass
- Develop mentoring programs for students who demonstrate anger and behaviors that indicate problems for the student
- Provide a district-wide counselor, trained in addressing anger management and behaviors that have been identified in previous shooter/intruder personalities
- Develop a "TIPS" to teach students to watch for and report suspicious/concerning activity
- Add to REMIND app

### **Questions/Comment topics:**

- Cameras and metal detectors at all doors?
- Is glass shatterproof? Use of metal plates instead?
- What is the Guardian Plan and how does it work?
- What are some measures for protection...tasers?
- How secure are the locked doors and is there notification of having doors propped open?
- Has the district looked into the availability of grant funds for financing of safety measures?

### **Information provided:**

- Explanation of audit 5 years ago and measures taken since (vestibules, cameras, locking mechanisms)
- Determination by Board and Superintendent to address safety as priority goal
- Seeking community input on safety measures...Guardian Plan, physical and facility changes such as razor wire and fencing, addition of a district-wide counselor
- Researching new training for response to shooter/intruder situations.

In the next 3-6 weeks the district will take input from local law enforcement agencies as to the best ways to keep our students safe. Additionally, the district will work with the Texas School Safety Center in providing a new safety audit. We will keep the community informed and provide updates as we continue through the process of ensuring safety and security within Palestine ISD.

*“Educating the most important resource, your child!”*