

SANTA FE ISD

SAFETY MATTERS

Santa Fe ISD Safe and Secure Schools Update

November 2, 2018

Safety Drills

Throughout the school year, Santa Fe ISD schools will conduct a variety of practice drills during the school day to ensure that all persons are familiar with their roles and responsibilities for safety and crisis response situations. If a safety situation occurs, the District may utilize parent text messages, callouts, emails and the District website www.sfid.org to communicate information to parents. The website also has a [Safety Information tab](#) on the right bar on our homepage for additional information. The September 21 edition of Safety Matters provides an [overview of the safety drills](#) performed in Santa Fe ISD schools.

Monthly Fire Drills

Santa Fe ISD schools notify parents about the monthly drill as we understand how these drills could affect our students after the May 18 events. Earlier this week, parents, staff and students were notified about a monthly fire drill at Santa Fe High School that was planned for October 31. Due to inclement weather, the drill was postponed. We received some questions from parents about the District's rationale in how the drills are being conducted and wanted to share some important information with you about the monthly fire drills.

- As required by state law (Texas Education Agency Government Code 61.1036 Section 3F), Santa Fe ISD schools must participate in monthly fire safety drills, and the District diligently tries to conduct the drills with minimal impact to our students and their learning environment. To that end, the District exhausted every option (legal, state and local) to have an audible drill at the high schools waived, but was not successful as the local fire marshal makes that determination.
- Our schools take students through these drills in small stages with many warnings to the students. We don't want to cause any surprises, and we want to minimize any post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) triggers. We also have our counselors available after the drills to meet with students who need their help. Included are some important facts about the drills that we share prior to the drills:
 - We will use a voice command to notify students that it is a fire drill.
 - Students will practice the procedures for safety and return to class.
 - Teachers have been trained on how to help students who might experience PTSD.
 - At the high school, counselors will be available in the library for any students who need help after a drill. Students at other campuses should check with their school counselors if they need assistance following one of the drills.

We are using cautious procedures to minimize the experience of any triggers for PTSD or additional trauma. However, the school staff and counselors are prepared to help students if they experience any anxiety due to the drills. We asked parents to talk to their children at home about the drills. Thank you for partnering with the Santa Fe ISD staff to help students acclimate to practicing these monthly drills. Please send any questions or suggestions you may have to

santafeupdates.com. Please don't hesitate to contact school counselors at any time with any questions or for assistance with your child.

Wellness and Recovery Resources

Many of you have met Dr. Julie Kaplow, PhD, ABPP, who is the director of the TCH Trauma and Grief Center. Dr. Kaplow said at the August 16 SFISD parent meeting that 78 percent of children find resiliency in a traumatic experience and can rebuild their lives. The other 22 percent need extended services to prevent post-traumatic stress syndrome, which is the most difficult part of the recovery from traumatic experiences. View Dr. Kaplow's [Helping Kids Cope with Trauma and Loss Reminders](#).

As the District said over the past five months, we understand that healing and recovering from the May 18 events have not been easy and will take a very long time. Our efforts are intended to support and encourage the transformation of the traumatic experiences into a process of rebuilding for individuals, families, school district and the Santa Fe Community. We thank you for your continued feedback and engagement as we work together to build unity and restore the culture of trust by focusing on providing a positive learning environment for our schools.

The Resiliency Center, Teen Talk and Parent Talk

We are grateful for the counselors at our schools and also for the Resiliency Center that provides free long-term services at no cost to Santa Fe community members and is open to serve the Santa Fe community. The Center's caring professionals provide a safe and supportive healing environment dedicated to everyone affected by the May 18 events. As a referral hub, the Center works with partner agencies that provide spiritual care referrals, training, advocacy, legal aid, equine therapy, recreational therapy, and more. The Resiliency Center is open daily, and for more information, contact the center directly at 409-218-7129 or email the Director, Carol Gaylord, at cgaylord@ci.santa-fe.tx.us.

Teen Talk and Parent Talk sessions were held in separate meetings this week at the Resiliency Centre to share and learn about ways to help deal with the stress and struggles that students and parents may be experiencing. Teen Talk is led by a trained therapist who works with teens, and the group was designed to be a safe place to deal with their feelings and thoughts about what is happening in their lives. The parent session is led by a trained facilitator and its goal is also to provide a safe place to deal with feelings and thoughts about what is happening in the lives of parents and their teenagers. These sessions will be held again in January and are provided at no cost to participants. If you are interested in participating in Teen Talk and/or Parent Talk in January, please contact Gwen Brehm at (281) 660-6286 or email her at brehm.gwen@att.net.

Santa Fe Strong Safety and Security Committee has met within committees to discuss safety recommendations to improve safety and security in Santa Fe ISD schools. The committee will meet next week to hear the committee reports.

Questions?

Please submit any questions you may have to the Santa Fe Strong Interactive Web Portal at: santafeupdates.com/contact-us

United, we are Santa Fe Strong!