

Superintendent Update from 2/22/2018 District Newsletter

Dear Parents,

Our schools are the hub of the Kentfield and Greenbrae communities. We try to balance their openness and availability to district residents with the safety and security needs of our students and staff.

While our emergency preparedness plans and practices are regarded as among the best in the county, these are mainly preparatory for natural disasters. The man-made tragedies such as what occurred in Florida last week are more challenging to anticipate.

Recently, we have added locks to several gates at Bacich, placed some security cameras at Kent, and are in the process of relocating our administrative offices to the entrance of both campuses thanks to our bond program.

Next, the District is consulting with a security expert who will look at the perimeter access, surveillance equipment, and locking hardware on both campuses. Based on his recommendations, bond funded construction and additions will ensure that our school sites are as safe as possible. Anything that can physically protect our staff and students within our budget will be done.

However, that is only one side of the safety equation. The social and emotional supports provided by our teachers, counselors, librarians, paraprofessionals, office staff, custodians, administrators and all adults on our sites are the other side.

As we have once again been reminded by the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School a week ago, a healthy childhood matters. A feeling of belonging, being liked, efficacy, matters. The safety net we provide in our schools - largely funded by local revenues like the parcel tax - is a deterrent as vital as any fence or camera.

We have been asked what, if anything, the district is planning to do about the walkouts planned on several days in the coming months. Bacich will not be acknowledging any the events as it is not appropriate to do so with its age group.

Kent will invite students to gather on the field during recess at 10:00 a.m. on March 14, 2018, if they so choose. A microphone will be set up and pre-approved statements may be read to the assembled students. The gathering will last for 17 minutes - one minute for every student killed at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School.

I invite your thoughts on this topic. Please email me at lschott@kentfieldschools.org.

Liz Schott
Kentfield School District Superintendent

