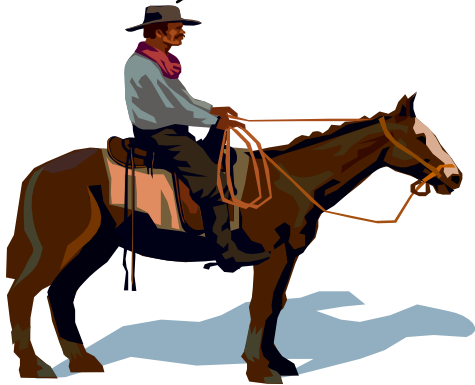


Notes from the Bunkhouse



In light of the recent tragedy in Uvalde, I find it necessary to go over the Edna ISD safety protocols in place. I state this not as an assurance but as a statement that we must all understand the process and do our part to keep our Cowboy Family safe.

This summer as a result of the Governor's proclamation we have conducted additional safety and door audits and completed revisions to all existing safety plans and annexes. EISD strives to be at the forefront of school safety and drills. It is unfortunate that we have to devote a massive amount of time to this but the fact is in today's society it is necessary to be prepared for every unthinkable situation.

Edna ISD meets with all of the County First Responders as a part of our Safety and Security Committee which includes representatives from parents and community, DPS, PD, Sheriff, EMS, Fire, and the Board. We cover situations and responsibilities and talk about equipment needs in light of new details. In a rural setting it will take an all-hands-on-deck approach and I feel that we have that in Edna and with the Jackson County first responders. We are all parents, grandparents, spouses, and siblings with an extreme vested interest in keeping our staff and students safe. I feel very confident in the fact that all will do their part to respond to the crisis at hand.

Edna ISD and the Board of Trustees have invested above and beyond to address safety issues and needs. Safety film is on all exterior windows which delays entry in order to get law enforcement on site and engaged. Dead bolts have

been installed on all classroom doors to allow for easy lock down with a second locking mechanism. Even the students, substitutes, etc. can lock the dead bolt from the inside- without a key. All classroom door handles will be expected to remain locked during the day. Experience tells us that if our kids can get behind locked doors- they are safe. We also need to keep the intruder from gaining access to the classroom as well. We practice lockdown and barricade drills on a regular basis- not to alarm anyone but to insure our people and kids know what to do in an extreme situation. Our people can and will put us into a lockdown if a stranger appears to be looking to gain access and we have done this. Every time it was a false alarm however I am good with the approach of better safe than sorry. EISD will notify you if this occurs or if a drill is being conducted through our communication app- be sure you keep your contact info up to date so you receive these safety notices and alerts.

We will ask all visitors to check in through the front office and we will lock as many of the exterior doors as possible. We have replaced door units, added locks, and improved their locking mechanisms. The problem is the High School where there are many high traffic buildings that are not connected. We still have to function as a school and allow for kids to travel to and from class, restroom, lunch, band, athletics, etc. We will fence the PK-3 playground this summer – more for safety of kids running than intruder. We still need to have easy access for fire drills and evacuation on that end and will need to get further from the building in certain situations. All these protocols we realize are impediments to parent access such as arrival and lunch but we try to default to a medium where we limit problems with too much access but still try to allow parents to be involved and included.

One of the other foundations of our safety plan is the Guardian program. We have staff and administrators who are actively armed in the case of an active shooter. This decision was not done lightly however with the number of instances increasing and the fact that several incidents were very close to home- it had to be done. There has to be an answer. This is not in lieu of law enforcement but more for us to transition to their arrival. Most of the devastation happens the first 5-7 minutes and even with an SRO on campus it is a real possibility they could be delayed in their arrival by a couple of minutes- what fills that gap? Keeping that person away from the kids and engaging them

just to the point of making them not be able to actively shoot people is our priority. I know that this decision is controversial however we ask our Guardians to constantly train and discuss scenarios and safety as this is our last option to deploy. However, we will not be victims without any answers to a person intending harm to our staff and children.

Edna ISD has plans and protocols in place that we hope we never have to use but to be unprepared is not an option. We have all seen stories and sound bites out of Uvalde and we all realize this was a tragic and terrible situation. One takes events that happen and then you design a strategy to avoid repeating any mistakes. We have done this through honest dialogue and planning. It will take all of us to keep our kids, teachers, and community safe. If you or your children see something unusual or problematic- by all means report it. You have access to anonymous tipline reporting through the app or the website, email or cell phones of staff and administration so there are multiple ways to get it checked out and vetted. Nothing is too small as we would rather be safe than sorry (again). If we all work together and not against each other, we can improve our reaction and response to any event. I have no doubt that the Cowboy Family will respond and insure that we continue to try to keep our schools and communities safe.