



FAQ from the Board's Work Session on Community Safety September 5, 2019, 6-9 p.m. Vashon High School

How are you going to make it (bullying allegation) better for my family?

- Federal law prevents the District from commenting publicly on student records. However, every allegation of bullying is taken seriously and thoroughly investigated.
- In addition to reporting incidents of bullying to school-site based personnel (teachers/principals/safety & security), students are also encouraged to report bullying by calling the District Security **Hotline/Tip Line at 314-241-7577**. The line is monitored from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Callers can speak directly to an officer or leave a message, if preferred. Students are encouraged to use this line to leave an anonymous tip. If you hear something or see something that concerns you, report it.
- In addition, parents/guardians are encouraged to talk with students about their use of social media. It is important for students to understand there are significant consequences for misusing the medium to bully people, spread rumors, gossip or incite violence.
- At the start of each school year, all district employees are required to review policy regarding use of social media and bullying and sign off, indicating their understanding of bullying and how reports are handled in our district.

The District's policy on bullying, along with our procedures on reporting and investigation allegations—is included in the [SLPS Student Code of Conduct](#) (beginning on page 24). The Student Code of Conduct is available in seven languages and can be found online at www.slps.org/CodeOfConduct.

Have you (district) ever had terrorist training from federal or state?

- The SLPS security team engages students in all grade levels in fire, tornado, earthquake and intruder drills, each twice annually. Students are prepared to handle lock-down situations and evacuations.
- In addition, SLPS collaborates with Florida-based SafePlans, a nationwide resource in all-hazards emergency preparedness efforts. SafePlans augments district security plans by delivering high-level training drills and up-to-the-minute information for staff. Staff learn established best practices, which are shared with students through age-appropriate lessons.

Where are the community centers and summer school programs (I had as a child)?

- The District has a number of before and afterschool programs currently operating at the various grade levels. The Food and Nutrition Services team now also offers meals after school, which makes it easier for students to stay. For more information, please check with your student's school.
- The District's summer school program aims to serve all students. Along with the Credit Recovery Academy and End of Course Academy, SLPS offers the 8th to 9th Grade Transition Program, the Intensive Literacy Academy, Extended School Year, the Kindergarten Readiness Program, the Summer Enrichment Program and the Pre-AP/ACT Program.



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We (district) need to consider added security measures around Roosevelt High School, e.g., lights and cameras at school that tie into real-time crime system, locking school grounds after hours. There is a lot of drug activity around Roosevelt, and signs will help.

- Thank you for dedication to our school community. We appreciate your suggestions, including the idea of additional lights and cameras that tie into a real-time crime system. It is certainly something we can consider. Our security team will conduct a special security audit at Roosevelt.

Students need after school programs at all high schools and middle schools.

- Where they are supported, before and afterschool programs are available in many of our schools. For more information, please contact your neighborhood school. Before and afterschool programs are so important to our students, we recently began to serve dinnertime snacks, and we have, at times, arranged for transportation so that more students could participate in unique activities.

Donate excess building to places that could redevelop and bring more families into district.

- The District's real estate officer works with community, business and governmental leaders to help find a second life for empty school buildings. Keeping them in use is not only what is best for the district and community, it is the best way to preserve the District's real estate investment. However, any agreement for building use must be made in a fiscally and educational responsible way and in accordance with the District's Transformation Plan 3.0. [LINK](#)

I suggest you have a forum like this for children 25 and younger. Can we have a Forum like this for kids every month to address what is going on?

- We really like the idea of hosting Town Hall type forums for students. Currently, we have programs that offer opportunities for student leaders and seniors to have their voices heard, e.g., the Superintendent's Advisory Council, but we will continue to encourage younger students to share their insights as well.
- We encourage our students to email or call with ideas and information and, just like parents and the community at large, our students can also use the "Let's Talk" feedback feature on the website to ask questions or make suggestions.
- Students regularly participate in assemblies and special events where they have a chance to voice their ideas, opinions and concerns. We will be sure to keep that program going and to share information and ideas that come of it.



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We know about middle and high school, but do we know our preschoolers want to kill themselves?

- What we know is that our youngest students tend to have poor coping skills, which puts them at high risk. Other times, it is older children who feel they have run out of options. Our work is to help build their coping capacity.
- Thanks to a very robust program of trauma training and information within our Student Support Services team, the District can immediately engage and deploy a strong network of resources in meeting the social-emotional needs of our students. Here is a link to recent media coverage that focuses on our trauma team. [LINK](#)
- We are very aware of and focused on training staff to recognize the danger signs of depression. In addition to providing resources, as needed, staff are given the latitude to work with students and parent(s) to provide interventions and remedies to improve mental health.
- Annually, school nurses, counselors and social workers participate in professional development focused on suicide awareness. The team is also trained on the District's suicide risk and harm-to-others risk assessment protocol. Once trained, these individuals share training and information at individual schools.
- The school-based crisis team (nurse, counselor, social worker) respond to building crises. The District-level team responds to a death of a student, teacher or other crisis that impacts the overall culture or climate of the building.

I want to stop that young person from being killed -- that robbery from taking place. However, we have to start (getting to them) younger because robbers are now 12 years old.

- Superintendent Kelvin Adams and members of his administrative team met with St. Louis Circuit Attorney Kimberly Gardner immediately following the meeting to discuss her ideas on how the District and City could collaborate to equip students with the tools they need to cope in today's world. We take this opportunity to thank the Circuit Attorney's Office for the Diversion Centers program that has been in place since January 2019 and seeks to provide alternatives to students who may be considered at risk due to behavioral and environmental issues.

The District should proceed as if every child either knew one of the victims or knew someone who knew them. Everyone in the whole district is traumatized.

- We agree and would even extend it further to not only include students but also staff. We are looking at ways we can better support everyone who is a part of the SLPS community.
- To-date, 45 schools have participated in a trauma-informed learning collaborative through partnership with [Alive and Well Communities](#), [Children's Advocacy Services of Greater St. Louis](#) and [Shut it Down](#).
- We have a District-level trauma team, focused on creating and implementing policies and procedures to support the District's mission to become trauma-informed.
- In November and April of each year, SLPS hosts trauma workshops for parents/guardians and interested adults. **The SLPS November Trauma Workshop is scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 23, 8:30 a.m. to noon, 801 N. 11th Street.** Please contact your school's Social Worker or Family and Community Specialist (FCS) to RSVP. There are childcare services available, a warm breakfast buffet, fresh produce to take home and door prizes. The event includes a series of breakout sessions. If you have attended in the past, remember you are welcome to come again. There is always something new offered.



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We (district) have a hotline, we have SROs – We need a way for kids to safely report what they know catch things brewing on social media. We need support crisis teams and trauma informed support. The SLPS Foundation can help fund. It's interesting that there are few elected official here today.

- The Work Session was a time for public comments. Since the event, we are pleased to have heard from a number of legislators and city officials, including Mayor Lyda Krewson's staff. Many have offered support to us as we move forward with this conversation.

At the last board meeting, there was someone who offered money to the district (New York Life) – I want an update on those dollars. Someone talked about free tutoring at Dunbar – I need an update.

- Members of our Development and Volunteer/Mentoring team met with the gentleman who offered funding and volunteers through his place of business. The team was briefed on opportunities that might be applicable to our district. We appreciate his interest and look forward to working with him as a partner. **However, most of the options presented required a solicitation of our teachers and staff, which is not in accordance with district practice or policy.**
- The District's Office of Institutional Advancement has developed a strong working relationship with the leaders and organizers of the Dunbar community organization sponsored by faith-based partner Thessalonian Missionary Baptist Church. SLPS team members, including Dunbar Principal Anthony Virdure, support neighborhood-canvassing events and regularly attend meetings to provide information, education and community partner updates.

Show the (district) finances.

- You will find a complete financial account of the District's budget under DISTRICT INFO and click FINANCE.
- The District publishes a Budget Book annually that provides detail on how money is spent. In addition, the District's Chief Financial Officer hosts a Budget Forum twice annually. The next scheduled session is **Oct. 14, 6 p.m. at Central Office in Room 108.**
- The **Let's Talk** feature (available 24/7) on the District's website is another way to provide feedback or ask questions about the budget.

Kronos is an expense and is literally unnecessary.

- Kronos is the District's time-keeping software application that tracks when employees arrive to work and depart from work. The software has been in existence at SLPS for over 10 years and tracks accruals, e.g., funeral leave, PTO, vacation. Kronos allows payroll to properly pay according to hours/time worked. In accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the District is required to track hours for non-certified (hourly) staff and, for a district this size, Kronos was determined to be the most efficient way to track. Kronos costs \$150,000 annually (a special project pushed it up \$25,000 last year).



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Schoolzilla is an expense and few teachers know what it is or how to use it.

- Schoolzilla is used to combine multiple data sources into one online dashboard. It includes demographics, assessments, attendance, discipline and other pertinent data. In other words, it provides a quick and easy way for staff to identify strengths and weaknesses, then act accordingly in order to provide the best support to students. We have had multiple professional development training sessions with the Schoolzilla team, and the usage report shows a significant increase in use during the last school year (despite turnover) – 72% of the school leadership teams used it on a regular basis. Schoolzilla costs \$103,000 annually.

Coaches were alerted in advance of problems at the Jamboree. They knew there would be trouble at that game.

- Neither District administration nor local law enforcement were alerted in advance to potential issues at the Jamboree. Everything went according to plan during the match-ups. Our first alerts came from rumblings among students at the game, and we responded by immediately launching orderly exits from the stadium while the last games were being played.

How are the children? The answer should be that, “The children are well.” Are the decision makers in SLPS middle or high school trauma-informed?

- Because we recognize the impact of trauma on a student's ability to learn and to live a healthy life, you may consider SLPS a “trauma-aware” district—one that is pursuing the trauma-informed level with respect to the training and programs offered to key staff.

There is a crisis hotline in elementary and high – is there a *social media* hotline?

- **The District's security Hotline/Tip Line (314) 241-7577 is also the social media hotline.** If students, teachers or staff see anything unusual or even slightly concerning on social media, we encourage them to call the hotline and report it. If you prefer, you may leave an anonymous message.

Can we put together a plan to equip parents students and teachers to safely remove children from area where gun shots are fired?

- Please be assured that every school in the District has a crisis and evacuation plan that is, for security purposes, not public.

There are no resources to train teachers to teach them (third graders) to read.

- “All students learn to read and succeed” is one of the five priorities of the District's Transformation Plan 3.0. Our students come to us with varying skill levels and support systems that challenge us to look for creative ways to address growth in reading. We currently have evidence that actions we have taken over the past two years are working for our students. Grade equivalency and student growth percentages demonstrate progress over the course of one year.



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We (district) have chalky windows and asbestos laden windows.

- Under Prop S (2010), the District was able to undertake the replacements of windows due to age and insulation issues and that process is ongoing.
- In accordance with the Environmental Protection Agency's [Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act](#) (AHERA), the District submits to inspections at least every three years. Every six months, any areas known to contain asbestos are re-inspected to ensure containment.

Can you (district) go into homes and see what's happening?

- The District's Student Support Services team and school staff and some partners like HomeWorks! often visit homes to meet with parents/guardians and to counsel on academics, grief or help with basic needs. As a district, we do our best to help where we can, but the majority of issues our parents struggle with are systemic and, therefore, beyond the District's ability to effect change. We must all continue to urge our civic leaders and legislators to take up the root causes of issues in our community: poverty, joblessness, underinsured or uninsured, the prison pipeline, etc.

I really liked the weekend backpack program...

- The District is fortunate to have partners who believe in and support the weekend backpack program, which is still active. District partner Operations Food Search (OFS) is a pioneer in the program. They call it [Operation Backpack](#). Their volunteers and donors help provide weekend meals for students in a backpack that they can take home and bring back to fill. Both OFS and St. Louis Food Bank provide summer feeding programs at SLPS.

I cannot find the district's ESSA Plan on line.

- The State has an ESSA Plan (Every Student Succeeds Act). The District is required to have an [Accountability Plan](#), which is how we use our strategic framework, Transformation Plan 3.0. The District's Transformation Plan 3.0, our Game Plan for success, is posted online at www.slps.org/gameplan.

Sumner High School Library has no books.

- The Sumner High School Library is a full-service, fully curated library. However, it is presently under construction, as plans are in place to create a Media Center thanks to a grant from the Innovative Technology Education Fund.

Did you know that the district has a Foundation where you can request support? You can ask for them for help.

- [The SLPS Foundation](#) is a valued district support organization. Thanks to partners and individual donors, the SLPS Foundation has brought more than \$3 million in funding to the District in the past year, particularly in the strategic areas of Early Childhood Education, Health and Well-being, Leadership Building and College and Career Readiness.