Established 1894
Tecumseh
Public Schools

Robert Kinsey
Superintendent

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Dear Parents and Guardians,

We appreciate all the feedback that we've received from you regarding the safety and security of our schools. We had a total of 657 responses to the survey we shared, with 83.7% reporting as parents or guardians of at least one student attending Tecumseh Public Schools. Based on the results from this survey, we have developed a plan for immediate safety measures to be implemented when students and employees return to school this Monday, October 20th. We are also working on long-term safety measures that the district will consider as we move forward.

New Safety Measures Being Implemented Immediately

From our survey and partnership with local law enforcement, we are implementing the following by Monday, October 20th.

- **A trained officer and his firearm and explosive detection dog** will go through the high school before returning to school next Monday. Thanks to the Pottawatomie County Sheriff's Office, Tecumseh Police Department, and our SRO, Officer McCormick, for coordinating this effort.
- **Additional law enforcement presence** - Partnering with local law enforcement, the district will have additional officers present at each building during the week of October 20th.
- **Clear backpacks** - Beginning Monday, October 20th, all students will use a clear backpack to carry their belongings while at school. All students will transfer their belongings to a clear backpack that is provided by the district on Monday.
    - Please note that this clear bag policy will apply at all gymnasium and stadium entrances for extracurricular activities (including Fine Arts) and events and will apply to visitors, guests, and employees as well.
    - If you wish to purchase a different clear bag than the one that is provided by the school for your child, you are able to do so. A child may use any clear backpack to satisfy this requirement.
    - Athletic bags, musical instruments, etc. must be stored in designated areas of your child's school upon arrival.
    - All bags are subject to search by school administration if reasonable suspicion exists.
    - Students must keep clear backpacks closed and stored in designated areas during the school day. Backpacks will not be allowed in restroom areas, however, purses will be allowed as needed.

Strengthening Our Current Safety Protocols

We have reviewed our existing **daily safety protocols** and developed enhanced procedures to prevent potential threats, respond effectively to emergencies, and foster a culture of vigilance and preparedness across all district campuses.

We encourage you to remind your children of how important it is not to open exterior doors for visitors, even known visitors.

Campus Access Control

- All exterior doors remain locked during instructional hours and monitored by staff during transitions.
- Single, monitored main entry point for all visitors.
- The visitor management system is used to check in all guests.
- Staff are required to wear visible ID badges at all times.

Morning Arrival Procedures

- Designated entry points supervised by staff and/or School Resource Officers (SROs).
- Bag checks or walkthroughs as deemed necessary by administration.
- Duty staff assigned to visible, strategic supervision posts during arrival.

Hallway and Common Area Monitoring

- Staff assigned to high-traffic locations during transitions.
- A high-quality camera system is installed across the entire campus, which can be monitored and reviewed onsite or remotely.
- Routine perimeter checks throughout the day by administration or law enforcement.

Classroom and Instructional Space Safety

- Teachers maintain locked door protocols during instruction.
- Staff review emergency drill procedures regularly with students.
- Staff use Centegix (an immediate notification system to alert emergency personnel) to notify site administration, district nurses, and police as needed.

Long-Term Safety Measures the District Will Consider

The following safety measures were favored by survey participants. The district can consider these options, but each of them will require updates to current school policy, additional staffing, training for current staff, and additional funding sources in order for them to be implemented at our schools.

- **Handheld Metal Detectors** - All students will be wanded upon entry to school and all extracurricular activities at school facilities.

- **Metal detectors** will be installed at each entry point of the secondary schools and used daily for entry, as well as for all sporting, fine arts, and extracurricular events.
- **Additional Funding for Mental Health** - At the end of the current grant cycle that has allowed the district to hire a full-time licensed mental health professional, the district will try to find additional sources of revenue to continue the programs we have established.
- **Additional Permanent SRO Positions** - The addition of one or two more school resource officers to work within school sites will require collaboration with the City of Tecumseh and Tecumseh Police Department as well as additional funding sources.

Policies and Procedures

While we recognize and appreciate the many recommendations and understand your concerns about policies and procedures, it is important to note that our school district is bound by state laws. There are certain actions regarding student discipline and suspension that the district cannot legally take.

- **Expulsion vs. Suspension** - The longest time period that a student can be suspended by law for possession of a firearm while at school is one calendar year. State law does not allow for a student to be expelled from school.
- **Privacy Laws** - Privacy laws for all students restrict school officials from releasing names of individuals involved in misconduct.
- **Mental Health Evaluation Requirements** - The school district cannot require any student to undergo mental health evaluations or treatments.

In the near future, we are planning to hold a community forum inviting all parents and guardians to participate in a discussion about improving safety in our schools. More information will be shared with you soon about this event. If you have any questions about these new safety measures or additional ideas, please feel free to contact me or any member of our district's administrative team.

Results from the recent survey will be posted in the News section of our website for all who are interested. Thank you for your help in ensuring our schools are a safe place, and thank you for your continued support of the district.

Regards,

Robert H. Kinsey

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