



SANTA MONICA - MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

November 14, 2019

Message from Superintendent Dr. Ben Drati: Tragic School Shooting in Santa Clarita

Dear SMMUSD parents, guardians, and staff,

Our hearts and thoughts are with the students, staff and families of Saugus High School and the William S. Hart Union High School District following this morning's shooting. We extend our sympathies to all of those affected by this tragedy.

We are unsettled and impacted when we hear of any school shooting, however, this one is particularly difficult as it is closer to home for us. We have staff who reside in the Santa Clarita community. Our students compete and perform alongside students from the Hart District in music, band, athletics, drama and academics. We have friends and relatives who live in this safe and close-knit community.

It makes us sad that once again students have been victimized by an act of violence in a place where everyone should feel safe.

We have received some calls from parents regarding our safety protocols. SMMUSD has a strategic security plan for preventing and mitigating active shooter events and other targeted violence. This plan is reviewed and updated regularly. The plan outlines prevention, protection and response components. Providing a safe learning environment is an essential goal of the Board of Education and staff. Our school sites practice drills as part of each school safety plan. If you would like to know about the specific plan for your school site, please contact your school office to make an appointment to review the plan.

Our local law enforcement agencies are providing additional patrols around our schools. We are fortunate to have many community partners supporting our safety and security efforts. If you hear or see something, including on social media, say something. Speak with your children to do the same. You can report directly to www.WeTip.com or call 800-782-7463.

We understand parent concerns whenever a tragedy like this occurs and we want to assure you that the safety and health of students and staff are our top priorities.

If your student is experiencing anxiety at school over this incident, please reach out to your school administrator or counselor. Here are two resources for schools and families on this topic that you may find helpful:

Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Parents and Educators: [English](#) | [Spanish](#)
[Helping your children manage distress in the aftermath of a shooting](#)

Sincerely,
Dr. Ben Drati, Superintendent