

Dear Santa Clara Unified Families and Community:

As you know, just before the February break there was a school shooting at a Parkland, Florida high school. The news of this tragedy and others before it have left our nation and community shaken and heartbroken for the victims and for their families, friends, peers, and communities that mourn their loss.

We want to assure you that our schools are safe places for our students and staff. This is our highest priority.

School Safety

We partner with our local police departments to conduct annual “Run. Hide. Defend” trainings and drills on our campuses so that staff and students are as prepared as we can be in the event the unthinkable happens on one of our campuses. Police departments receive tactical training developed by the FBI and Department of Homeland Security. In addition, our schools conduct annual reviews and updates of School Safety Plans. There are also many health and wellness structures in place, including increased academic and mental health counselors and Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) programs.

In the event of an emergency on your child’s campus, we enact our School Safety Plans. We secure students and staff, notify law enforcement who take over management of the incident, and notify families. The district will communicate with you through the primary phone and email address listed in your child’s school records. Please make sure you update your child’s school as your contact information changes.

Talking with Students

These unimaginable events are so difficult to understand, let alone explain to students. There are links below to resources to help you navigate conversations within your families and our community.

Walkouts

We are aware of a number of nationwide walkouts being planned. We know you entrust us with your child’s safety. Student safety is our number one concern and we are actively planning for varying scenarios. The walkout gaining the most interest from students is planned for **March 14 from 10:00 to 10:17 a.m.** and is not a protest, but a remembrance event for the 17 lives lost in the Parkland, Florida shooting as well as a plea for school safety.

Our secondary school students are planning supervised remembrance activities to take place on campus during those 17 minutes for students who wish to participate. Students who do not want to participate, for many varying reasons, may remain in class. We are reminding and expecting students and community members to be open to varying opinions and to keep communication and behavior toward one another peaceful, respectful, and safe. We are not

facilitating one message or belief over another, we are creating safe space for all students during a time many wish to explore and exercise their right to free speech through a student-initiated event. We would like all students to remain on campus and not miss their educational day. Those who choose to leave campus or not return to class after the activity are subject to an unexcused absence.

At our elementary schools, we are not discussing the Parkland tragedy or walkout events on a schoolwide level, but will provide safe and supportive space for individual students who want to speak with a trusted adult. Please let your school office or teacher know if your child needs counseling support.

If you have any questions or thoughts you would like to share with us, we would like to hear from you. Please contact Public Information Officer, Jennifer Dericco, at jdericco@scusd.net.

Most sincerely,



Stanley Rose III, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Resources

- [Talking to Children About Violence](#) (NASP)
- [Addressing Grief](#) (NASP)
- [Helping Youth after Community Trauma](#) (NCTSN)
- [Parent Tips for School-age Children](#) / [Español](#) (NCTSN)
- [Parent Tips for Helping Adolescents After Disasters](#) / [Español](#) (NCTSN)
- [Recursos en Español](#) (Child Mind Institute)
- [School Safety Resources](#) (National PTA)
- [Run. Hide. Defend. Video](#) (San Jose Police Department)
- [Safe Schools Planning](#) (CDE)
- [Resources for Responding to Trauma and Tragedy](#) (Edutopia)