



GOTHENBURG
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1322 Avenue I
Gothenburg, NE 69138

August 29, 2018

The purpose of this correspondence is to update our school community concerning the safety and security measures being implemented in Gothenburg Public Schools. Visible changes in facilities and additional changes in protocol have occurred in the past few months.

After Labor Day, all exterior doors will be locked during school hours with guests being restricted to entering at the main entrance in each building. A video doorbell system has been installed to work in conjunction with the handicapped accessible doors. Visitors will push the doorbell, wait for a response, provide the purpose of the visit, and proceed to the office for a visitor's badge once entrance is granted. A visitor's pass is required for anyone in the building during school hours that is not employed by the district or enrolled as a student and anyone without a pass will be escorted to the office. While this may be inconvenient at times, patience is critical as the office personnel may be involved with other visitors or assisting callers on the phone.

The building has also been updated to allow for compartmentalization. A set of steel doors has been added to the hallway between the elementary and junior/senior high school and hallway doors near the entrance to the South Gym have been modified to allow school officials to lock down the three areas of the building if necessary. The doors can be shut in an emergency so that no one may go between buildings. Less obvious facility upgrades have also been made within all classrooms and hallways limiting access to individual classrooms. The district has updated the video system and is converting from actual keys to key-card entrances so that access can be controlled at all times. Cards can be monitored, activated, deactivated and reprogrammed at any time through the district technology department giving the district the ability to take a card out of circulation if necessary. Law enforcement has similar access.

SafeSchools protocol involving "I Love You Guys" and "ALICE" have been updated to meet current state and national standards. Training for all GPS staff has increased with SafeSchools conversations happening monthly through our PLC process. The district continues to work with the Gothenburg Police Department (GPD) who are in the building daily. A daily presence provides an additional level of security and provides an opportunity for officers and students to gain comfort around each other. Law enforcement has real-time access to the video system 24 hours per day. Finally, we will roll out the "See Something, Send Something" app made available by central Nebraska Law Enforcement to interested students and parents upon completion of training by district officials. Students continue to be our most effective resource for identification and prevention.

GPS takes safety and security very seriously and is open to receive comments and suggestions. While some safety procedures cannot be made public in order to maintain the integrity of the system, a community conversation on school security will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 12th, during Parent-Teacher Conferences.

Dr. Teahon