

To: Meredith W. Dodson, Executive Director of San Francisco Parent Coalition

From: Dr. Matt Wayne, San Francisco Unified School District Superintendent

Re: Response to 03.01.2024 Basic School Safety Measures Petition

Date: March 28, 2024

Dear SF Parent Coalition,

I am writing in response to the school safety petition you shared on March 1, 2024. Thank you for your attention to school safety at SFUSD and your concern about recent incidents, including at New Traditions Elementary School. We recognize that this was concerning for the parents and staff, and most of all, for the students at New Traditions, and we have been working closely to follow up and support the school community and leadership. We appreciate when parents, families, and community members advocate for best practices and for what they feel is best for their children.

In our response below, we provide information on the District's PA system and security lock installation, as well as school safety plans. We hope this information addresses your concerns and highlights the proactive steps SFUSD is taking to make our schools supportive, safe, and welcoming environments for students to learn and thrive.

1. A comprehensive PA system will be installed and functional at every school

All school sites currently have some public address coverage. At some school sites, this is limited to phone handset communication located within classrooms. After a 2021 review of the District's public communications systems standards, and given heightened concern by the District and its stakeholders regarding emergency procedures, the District updated its standards to include coverage in corridors, collective buildings, and outdoor spaces. There are about 30 sites still in need of upgrades to meet this revised standard at this time, over half of which are elementary schools.

Because PA systems are hard wired and run throughout buildings, the work is invasive and typically needs to occur during summer months when students are not on-site. Design of these systems is roughly 9 months, and then public bid and installation can be an additional 6 months (timed to coincide with summer vacation).

SFUSD is bidding PA system work at 6 school sites for summer 2024, with final completion in September 2024. All remaining sites requiring improvements are initiating design now, targeting installation in summer 2025. The 2016 Bond is funding \$10.5 million toward these improvements. To complete all schools, it would require an additional \$9.5MM. That funding is planned from the upcoming 2024 bond, if approved by voters. In the interim, the District would rely on established emergency response procedures.

If a staff member or parent/guardian would like to inquire about their school's PA system, the District will share that information directly with these stakeholders, but it is not our practice to publish a list for public review.

2. Security locks will be installed on every classroom door at every school

SFUSD identified sites without security locksets (also known as Columbine locks) and staggered installation is currently in progress. Approximately 90% of SFUSD school classrooms have security locks and we are on track to achieve full implementation by Summer 2024.

3. A clear, comprehensive, and communicated school safety plan will be in place at every school

Each school year, per California Ed Code and SF BOE Policy, school sites are required to complete a Comprehensive School Site Safety Plan (CSSP). After completion of the plan, school site administration must share, discuss, get feedback and approval from the S.S.C (School Site Council) before submission.

At this time, every school site has completed a CSSP for the 2023 - 2024 school year.

The CSSP is created via a yearly template provided by the SFUSD Department of Emergency Planning & Preparedness. The template provides each site with guidance on Emergency Response Actions protocols & drills (Lockdown, lockout, etc.) but also Crisis Communication and how Central Office personnel support sites during an emergency through an Emergency Operations Center (E.O.C.). Each site is required to complete Emergency Response Drills (Earthquake, Fire/Evacuation, Lockout and Lockdown).

The Template also provides guidance and protocols regarding on-campus and off-campus evacuation, how to handle other incidents not requiring immediate Emergency Actions (i.e.. social media threats, suspected gas smell on campus) and other school site safety resources such as guidance on working with Law Enforcement & other City Agencies (CPS, etc.).

Sites may also access resources on supporting families to submit Title IX complaints as well as how they can request the assistance of the SFUSD Crisis Response Team in response to an aforementioned emergency, so as to access extra support from Central Office staff.

At the beginning of each school year, the SFUSD Department of Emergency Planning & Preparedness, in concert with the Communications Department, offers training to sites regarding the completion of the CSSP, as well consultation on completion of Emergency Action Response drills - via phone, virtual meetings and site visits. "Lunch & Learn" virtual presentations are also offered so sites can come and get support in a group setting and have any and all questions answered.

In addition to these infrastructure improvements and safety plans, SFUSD is committed to ongoing, collaborative work to address safety concerns in our schools and the broader communities in which we operate. As a district that deeply values each and every students' sense of belonging we also work to provide School Social Workers on our campuses to support the wellness of our children each day. Our student health and safety remains our top priority and we look forward to working with you to address concerns as they come up. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any additional questions you may have.



Sincerely,

Dr. Matt Wayne
SFUSD Superintendent

CC:

London Breed - Mayor of San Francisco
Lainie Motamedi - Board President
Matthew H. Alexander - Board Vice President
Kevin Boggess - Commissioner
Alida Fisher - Commissioner
Jenny Lam - Commissioner
Mark Sanchez - Commissioner
Lisa Weissman-Ward - Commissioner
Tamitrice Rice Mitchell - Associate Superintendent of Schools
Eric Guthertz - Assistant Superintendent of Student Family Services
Mele Lau-Smith - Strategy Initiatives
Gregory Markwith - Director of Emergency Planning and Preparedness
Chris Armentrout - Director of Policy and Planning
Connie Chan - Supervisor for District 1
Catherine Stefani - Supervisor for District 2
Aaron Peskin - Board President, Supervisor for District 3
Joel Engardio - Supervisor for District 4
Dean Preston - Supervisor for District 5
Matt Dorsey - Supervisor for District 6
Myrna Melgar - Supervisor for District 7
Rafael Mandelman - Supervisor for District 8
Hillary Ronen - Supervisor for District 9
Shamann Walton - Supervisor for District 10
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Ewan Barker Plummer - Chair San Francisco Youth Commission
Cliff Yee
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