



FALL RIVER JOINT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

September 10, 2014

Dear Parents, Students, and Staff Members of the Fall River Joint Unified School District,

The safety of our students and staff continues to be a top priority. As a district, we have been, and will continue to be proactive in our approach to preparing for a disaster on campus. We recently held a staff training with *Abila Security and Investigations* of Colorado to better prepare for a disaster; this was extremely well received and challenged staff members to think beyond our “normal” plans. Our staff members were introduced to skills to hold “tabletop discussions” among themselves and with students in order to better prepare for a disaster. Just over a year ago, Board President Teri Vigil arranged for a complete Safety Audit with David Johnson, President of *ITG Consulting, Protective Services, and Training*, located in Washington D.C. While both of these professional safety-security companies were very impressed with our district’s approach to school safety, as well as what we have currently done, they provided valuable suggestions and insight to further enhance our district’s Comprehensive Safety Plan and to validate the steps we have already taken to insure school safety.

Research indicates that the best thing a school can do is *practice* for different situations which might occur on or around campus. Please note the following times for our first disaster drills:

Wednesday, September 24, 2014

8:30 to 9:45 A.M. Burney Elementary, Burney High School, Special Education Center

11:00 A.M. Mt. View Alternative Education School and District Office

Tuesday, September 30, 2014

8:45 A.M. Fall River Elementary School

10:30 A.M. Soldier Mountain Alternative Education School

1:00 P.M. Fall River High School

Prior to or immediately following each drill, Shasta County Sheriff’s Department will conduct a school-wide briefing to introduce or review everyone’s role and responsibilities. Further student and staff debriefing will continue throughout the day. These are “scripted” drills—each school will give parents a “courtesy call” as a reminder that this is only a drill. Additional disaster drills will occur later in the school year.

The most effective and proven way to prevent a crisis is to communicate with our schools and law enforcement agencies. If you hear or know of any potential problems, behavior changes, emotional outbursts, or family problems which may become a serious issue, please report your concerns to the appropriate authorities; these will not be taken lightly. Encourage all students to *let someone know* if they witness mood changes, signs of depression, or thoughts of suicide in any students. Our district has reinstated three outstanding counselors with whom our students may use as a resource.

Once again, please be assured the safety of our students is paramount. Thanks for your understanding and willingness to help.

Sincerely,

Greg F. Hawkins
Superintendent