November 14, 2019

Dear Oceanside Unified Community,

In light of the shooting this week at Saugus High School in Santa Clarita, our thoughts and prayers are with the community and families affected by this tragic event. We want to reassure our families that the safety and security of students and staff is a top priority in Oceanside Unified School District (OUSD).

News like this is always disheartening and can bring up many different emotions, including questions about what OUSD has done to create the safest possible environment at our schools.

In Oceanside, we continually work to enhance and practice our safety plans and procedures. We conduct safety drills and work to prepare for a variety of situations that may occur. We also have a strong partnership with Oceanside Police Department (OPD) and work with them to conduct routine safety drills and safety checks. Each school site has a comprehensive school safety plan created in partnership with OPD, and we have School Resource Officers (SRO’s), who are police officers and serve as resources assigned to work closely with our schools. Additionally, we have school counselors and other mental health and support professionals at every school.

The goal is always to prevent a tragedy before it occurs – this is where our staff focuses a great deal of energy and resources. We work hard to build safe and positive learning environments at each one of our schools. It is very important that all students feel safe, supported, and have adults on campus that they feel comfortable to talk with. This is also a good time to remind your student that if they see something, say something. Students who feel threatened or have concerns should talk with a trusted adult on campus, a counselor, a parent, or notify law enforcement.

While our staff is well-trained and conduct safety drills with our students, we need your help as well. It is essential that you start the discussion about safety with your student at home. Talk to your students about our shared commitment to safety, and let them know they are valued and encouraged to speak up.

If you have any questions regarding this matter or need someone to talk to, do not hesitate to reach out to your school administrators or district staff. For guidance to help you talk with your student we want to share the following tips for families and educators.

Julie A. Vitale Ph.D
Superintendent
Oceanside Unified School District