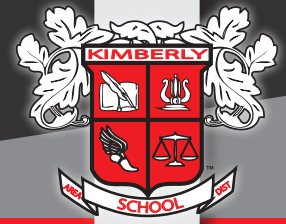


# School Matters



Special Insert  
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School News for Residents of the Kimberly Area School District



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Superintendent

Safety is a top priority in our District. As part of our continuous improvement work, we recently had a third party conduct a safety assessment at all of our buildings. While there are many procedures and physical features in place to enhance safety for students and staff, there are still opportunities for improvement. We are prioritizing the recommendations that were given to improve school safety and will continue to roll them out during the next three years.

Keep reading to learn more about some of our existing safety programs and the improvements we are working on.

-- *Bob Mayfield*

## Actively Improving School Safety

The Kimberly Area School District believes that the safety of students and staff is a top priority. School safety encompasses many aspects, from the physical features of our buildings and community to the procedures used in emergency situations. Based on a District-wide safety assessment, there are many school district protocols, practices and infrastructure elements in place to help increase safety for students and staff. However, there are opportunities to improve safety at each school and across the District. Each building has identified and prioritized areas to improve during the next three years.

### *District Safety Team*

The District has a safety team that evaluates and implements improvements regarding school safety. Each building has a safety coordinator that is part of the District safety team. The coordinators meet monthly to review and provide feedback on safety improvements. Table top exercises are conducted at each building to simulate different scenarios, such as intruders, accidents and medical emergencies. The safety team also ensures that their school is holding practice drills for events such as fires and severe weather.

Additionally, a Police School Liaison is assigned to each school. The liaisons are also part of the District safety team and provide feedback and expertise on safety topics. Decisions on safety improvement ideas made by the District Safety Team are brought back to each building for implementation.

### *Why Does Safety Change?*

There are several key factors that drive the changes and improvements that are made for District safety. The primary drivers are the continued school shootings across the nation, as well as updated recommendations from the FBI and Homeland Security, and mandates from the State of Wisconsin.

The recent safety assessment was done by the Wisconsin School Safety Coordinators Association and also came with recommended changes for each building and facility.



All staff participated in training and a drill of the Run Hide Fight intruder protocol.

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## ***Safety Assessment Recommendations***

Each building reviewed the assessment feedback and identified the top three priorities to put into action in order to increase safety. Creating a three-year plan at each building was also recommended to plan for future safety improvements.

Based on those recommendations and with assistance of grant funding from the state, the District is implementing the following safety updates this year:

- Security camera systems that increase video footage storage capacity, image quality and coverage.
- Updating to a buzz-in system for visitors that uses a video intercom at school entrances.
- Electronic key fobs for staff access to District facilities.
- Upgrading the last of the school classrooms that have hollow core doors to solid core doors.

Future updates planned for facilities include door and window upgrades.

## ***Intruder Safety***

Two years ago, the District adopted, trained and practiced the Run Hide Fight (RHF) intruder model which is recommended by the Department of Homeland Security. The roll-out of this model included District training and a drill with all staff. Each building completed a second RHF drill and additional staff training which included talking points that could be used for student classroom presentations. This year, communications about RHF were shared with parents in their school's newsletter. The schools will continue to work on increasing student awareness of Run Hide Fight.

Next school year, the District plans to conduct a staff and student RHF drill, and to develop a See Something Say Something awareness campaign which will be tied to the social and emotional outcomes in the District's Plan for Excellence. Awareness and training of Run Hide Fight will continue into the third year of the plan.

## ***Safe Routes to School***

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a national program intended to increase safe pathways for students to access schools and help the community connect to school facilities.

During the last two years, the District and SRTS have been working with parents, local municipalities, community members and staff to prioritize areas where improvements can be made for the safety of students, staff and community members when walking, biking or driving to access District facilities. Also, each building has created a plan to increase safety around their facility.

## ***Social and Emotional Well-being***

Students face issues that go beyond academics. Far too often students need support and intervention to protect their mental well-being. The District strives to make sure that every child in our district feels connected and supported as they address these social and emotional challenges.

The District's Plan for Excellence has several goals related to social and emotional well-being for the next five years. These goals include all students having at least one person in their life they can talk to; connecting students at risk of harmful behaviors to support, and developing a comprehensive program to address tolerance and diversity in our community.

The See Something Say Something awareness campaign is related to the social and emotional well-being goals because it takes a community effort to recognize when someone needs more support.

Safety is a top priority for the Kimberly Area School District and has many components and considerations. Upgrading facilities and infrastructure are important, but staff and students must also be prepared for a variety of emergencies through drills, trainings and awareness. Communication between staff, students, parents and community agencies builds awareness of safety and improves the response to emergency situations. It takes everyone working together to improve school safety.



Westside Elementary School students participated in a Walk to School day where they learned a Safe Route to School.