

# **Administration Reports**

## **February 2013**

### **FOCUS – SAFETY PLANS**

#### **AC. Houghton Elementary**

The high profile school shootings in Colorado, Wisconsin, Oregon, Pennsylvania and Connecticut have caused concern within school communities, even if they are not directly affected by the event(s). Adults and students struggle to understand why these events happen and, more importantly, how they can be prevented. As a school principal, I provide leadership in reassuring students, staff, and parents that ACH is a very safe place for their children and reiterating the safety measures and student supports that are already in place.

So far this year, as a school district, we have had two meetings with local law enforcements. I have, also, held meetings with ACH staff, safety committee, site council, parent club, Irrigon City Council and parents. At these meetings I have explained ACH's safety plan and evacuation procedures. As a school, we have practiced three drills: fire drill, earth quake drill and lock down with teachers only. Below are the items I have discussed at my meetings:

#### **Steps to Reinforce School Safety**

1. Be a visible, welcoming presence at school, greeting students and parents and visiting classrooms.
2. Conduct a formal review of all school safety policies and procedures to ensure that school safety issues are adequately covered in our school crisis plans and emergency response procedures. (These reviews are conducted at least annually).
3. Review communication systems within the school district and with community responders. This also addresses how and where parents will be informed in the event of an emergency. (evacuation procedures)
4. Connect with community partners (emergency responders) to review emergency response plans and to discuss any short-term needs that may be obvious in response to a current crisis.
4. The ESD provides crisis training and professional development.

#### **School Safety Prevention Measures**

1. Limited access to school building (designated entrance with all other access points locked from the exterior).
2. Monitoring of the school parking lot (an assistant who oversees students exiting the bus and people entering and leaving the school).
3. Monitoring and supervision of student common areas such as hallways, cafeterias, and playgrounds.
4. School-community partnerships to enhance safety measures for students beyond school property (don't be afraid to call the school if you see something unusual).
5. Monitoring of school guests (report to main office, sign in, wear badges, report unfamiliar people to school office).
6. Creating a safe, supportive school climate that provides school-wide behavioral expectations, caring school climate programs, positive interventions and supports, psychological and counseling services, and violence prevention programs (bully-proofing, social skill

- development and conflict mediation).
7. Encourage students to take responsibility for their part in maintaining safe school environments.
  8. Promote compliance with school rules, reporting potential problems to school staff, and resisting peer pressure to act irresponsibly.
  9. Threat assessment and risk-assessment procedures and teams for conducting the assessments. (ESD)
  10. School preparedness drills (intruder alerts, weather and fire).
  11. Presence of security cameras

### **Heppner Elementary & Heppner High School**

In response to recent school related tragedies, the Heppner School Safety Committees have been discussing and continuing to revise/update our school safety plans.

In addition to our regular monthly fire/evacuation drills for staff and students at both schools in Heppner, this month I will also describe the other means of communicating our safety plans to staff, students, parents and other community members. At Heppner High School the safety plans were last updated and reviewed during the spring of last school year. It is my understanding that the HHS safety committee was responsible for the revision process and it was communicated and reviewed by staff and site council prior to being reprinted. At HES the safety plans have been in a continuous revision/updating process since the spring of last school year. The HES safety committee reviews and discusses the planned revisions/updates at our monthly meetings and they have also been shared and discussed with the site council and parent-teacher clubs.

Recently, I have shared and discussed portions of our updated plans on a couple of occasions at the Heppner Chamber Meetings. I have also been working with the Morrow County Sherriff's Office doing walk-throughs of both buildings to give them a better understanding of our building(s) logistical layouts so that they are more familiar with our school facilities. As a district in the past couple of months we have also held two separate meetings to discuss different scenarios through round table discussions on how we can be more prepared in the event of an actual emergency, in cooperation with county-wide emergency responders and school officials.

I am also scheduled to meet with Morrow County Court officials this month at their next Heppner meeting to discuss a "memorandum of understanding" to use county buildings at the fairgrounds and the Sherriff's office building for off-site evacuations.

We will continue to seek opportunities to increase school safety awareness with all stakeholders as we continue to improve of our school safety plans to best meet the needs of our students at both Heppner Elementary and Heppner Junior/Senior High School.

I would like to end this month's report by again thanking each of you for your support of Heppner Schools, and your commitment to all students of the Morrow County School District.

### **Irrigon Elementary & Irrigon High School**

Both Irrigon Jr./Sr. High School and Irrigon Elementary School have instituted several changes since the tragic events at Sandy Hook Elementary in December. Our primary focus has been on building security and lock down procedures. In both buildings, all exterior doors are now locked. At IJSHS, the most notable change so far has been the locking of the outside door to our PTE building. This has been a challenge for us in that we now have to escort students who are late to class, need to go their locker, etc. to the building to let them inside. Thankfully this door is within line of sight of the office, so we are getting quotes for the installation of an electric door release that allows our office staff to remotely open the door when students arrive at the other building. If the device works well, the district may explore the possibility of latches and cameras for the main entrances of every school in the district. At IES, the doors to the courtyard/playground are now locked at all times with staff who supervise recess letting students in and out.

In both buildings, we are exploring ways to more quickly and safely secure classroom doors from the inside that do not require staff to open their doors and lock them from the outside. Devices like jamb-locks are promising solutions, but because of cost and availability they may take time to put in place.



In regards to our lockdown procedures, we are still looking at ways to secure rooms better. Currently, we have asked staff members at both schools to lock their doors and leave them open so that in case of an emergency they can simply be pulled closed.

At IJSHS, we are exploring the purchase of window blinds for the larger uncovered windows. At IES, we are looking at window applique material that “frosts” the windows for the library and lower exterior windows. At both schools we are also planning to make simple roll-up window covers that are tied or strapped at the top and can drop to cover the window with the pull of a single cord in an emergency. These covers would be installed over the windows in each classroom door.



During a lockdown, our procedures are designed to keep students away from windows and doors so they are not visible to the outside. At IJSHS, many of the windows are small and or higher on the wall, making it relatively easy for students and staff to hide in the rooms. At IES, it is possible to hide from either an internal or an external threat, but not both – fortunately, from the outside, as long as there is daylight and the lights in the classroom are off, it is nearly impossible to see into the classrooms from the outside.

The issue of communicating with the office has also been a concern during a lock down drill as most phones and computers are within sight of the windows or doors. At IES, new batteries were ordered for all of the radios, each was reset and tested, and each classroom now has a radio stored with their emergency kits. At IJSHS, radios are on order for each classroom. Both buildings also have rechargeable radios for daily use that are assigned to specific staff members. Those staff members have also been assigned specific roles to facilitate communication during emergencies. IJSHS and IES each have a designated channel, and the radios can be changed to channel 1 to communicate with law enforcement and EMS.

We have also updated our fire drill procedures to help with the clearing of the building. Our previous practice relied heavily on just three people to clear the building which has worked well until one or more of us are out of the building. Staff have been given redundant procedures to ensure the building is cleared even if other members of the staff are absent during an emergency.

We learned last year that one of the most challenging aspects of a crisis situation is in how best to communicate with parents and patrons. In an actual emergency, it is difficult to get accurate information out quickly, so we have taken the opportunity to give out critical bits of information, such as explaining how we would respond and how we would release students back to their parents in our newsletters and in public forums like site council and booster club meetings. Our staffs have discussed our emergency plans with students and reiterated the need for diligence. We are also in the process of submitting an article to the Irrigon Irrigator outlining some of our emergency plans and evacuation procedures.

We will continue to keep the safety of our students at the forefront of our decisions and our communication. Using best practices learned from local law enforcement and the Federal Emergency Management Agency we feel planned and prepared, and we will continue to do whatever we feel is necessary for student safety.

## **Riverside High School**

### Riverside Safety Plan:

It is the paramount duty of the state to educate all students and provide them a free an appropriate education. Equally as important is the safety of our students. For this reason, Riverside has done lots to assure the building is safe and conducive for learning.

### The following takes place at Riverside to assure safety.

1. At the beginning of the year, all staff is provided an in-service on the emergency plan that includes:
  - \* Evacuation
  - \* Fire Drill Procedures- Primary and Secondary locations
    - \* Accountability of all students
  - \* Lock Down Procedures

- \* Armed Intruder
- \* Active Shooter

Students are also taken through reminders and **monthly drills** to keep the process fresh and current.

On December 21, MCSD Administrators met with District officials, Sheriff's dept. and the Boardman Police Dept. to discuss the unfortunate incident at Sandy Hook Elementary in Connecticut.

We have since met again with Boardman Police, Boardman Fire Dept and the Sheriff's Dept to run through scenarios. The intent is to provide practice for administrators as we prepare the buildings for safety from an armed intruder.

We have teamed up with Boardman P.D. to do unannounced intruder drills to measure our level of readiness. Last week we had a Detective from Hermiston come to the building and walk the halls. He came in unannounced, walked the halls and after 5-10 minutes in the building he was approached by a Riverside employee. This drill provided us valuable feedback and adjustment have been made to assure safety.

The Boardman Police Dept. has a copy of our Emergency Plan, our building layout and recently was given access to our camera system. In addition, we have provided P.D. an office at Riverside to do their chartering etc. The plan is for high of visibility.

In addition, Riverside administrators meet with a Boardman Officer every Monday to discuss weekend activity involving students and upcoming events at the school.

At Riverside, we have locked all exterior doors except the main entrance. We are working on a buzz in system for the front door.

In the meantime, we have provided our secretaries with an additional 19" monitor to watch the front entrance. We are trying to maximize our camera system to alert us from intruders.

We will continue to do drills, provide professional development to our staff and inform our students and parents regarding building safety.

We are working diligently with our police dept., fire dept. and the Sheriff's dept. to assure a coordinated effort and a quick response time in case of an actual incident.

## **Sam Boardman Elementary School**

**Safety Committee** Our safety committee is made up of one teacher from each grade level, a specialist, custodian, two educational assistants, secretary and principal. We meet monthly to ensure the safe operation of the school. We address safety concerns, review monthly drills, survey accident/injury reports, and make determinations for training. Monthly safety minutes document our process and ensure progress. These minutes are emailed to all staff and are posted on the community and staff bulletin boards. This year our Safety Committee developed a logic model, team norms and a Safety Notebook to make better use of our time.

A major function of our Safety Committee is to ensure all staff are well informed and review regularly our basic emergency response procedures. There are two valuable resources at our disposal that ensure the best possible response:

- **The Emergency Flip Chart** – a grab and go clip board is located in every room of the school and includes emergency procedures, red/green status cards, and a current class list with

parents' names and phone numbers. Emergency responders (Police, sheriff and fire department) have copies of our Emergency Flip Chart.

- **S.B.E's Emergency Plan** – a handbook outlining emergency procedures and assigned roles for the Crisis Team is included in every staff notebook. This handbook provides an overview of responsibilities and procedures, as well as detailed narratives for major drill procedures. Drill schedule, inventories, and additional resources are part of the handbook.

Committee members make recommendations to address safety concerns for the following: for reminders to go in our morning announcements, for topics for our "Safety Corner" on the weekly schedule, training videos and face-to-face training. The Emergency Flip Chart and S.B.E's Emergency Plan are revised continuously and new editions are distributed at the beginning of each year. Changes in these resources are highlighted at our S.B.E. All-Staff Inservice.

Safety Committee members must know their individual responsibilities on the Crisis Team as well as the procedures for partnering with the community in the event of a school-based incident.

**Sandy Hook Elementary School** The District responded to this tragedy by coordinating a meeting with emergency responders and administrators to talk through issues, concerns and solutions. The District communicated with patrons by preparing a letter and posting it on the District web-page. This letter was read to all staff when they returned from winter break. We communicated this important message to parents by attaching it to our Buccaneer. We also attached a letter giving parents ideas on ways they could help restore their child's trust and confidence in school safety. In the Buccaneer, I let parents know I would be available at both Positive Action Parent Meetings and at Site Council to describe our emergency preparedness procedures and hear their concerns. Meanwhile I met with teacher teams, secretaries, educational assistants, cooks, and custodians to create a list of their concerns and recommendations. The safety committee reviewed the list and made recommendations at our January Safety Meeting. The team also committed to discussing future school-based tragedies to ensure the best procedures for the safety of all the students and staff.

## **Windy River Elementary**

### **Report to Morrow County School Board**

February, 2013

#### **Windy River Elementary School, Boardman**

School Safety:

Windy River Elementary School is taking every precautionary measure to keep our school safe. As a result of recent school shootings across America, WRE has decided that:

- We have put bright colored paper over the doors and windows. This gives us some coverage so that would be intruders from the outside can't just see who is in our classrooms. Other things have also been done to keep our children safe.
- We now lock all classroom doors. There are curtains in many windows on the inside of the school.
- We are asking parents and patrons to walk on the sidewalk if they walk to the school and to not walk between the fence and the school building.
- To show ID if they are picking up their child early. And if they are to have some else pick up their child, make sure that they are on our computer list, and that they have ID too.
- When they come to school, and if they are going inside the school, make sure that they have a visitor's badge. All doors are locked; the only entrance is to the front office.
- Our school staff has already gotten three more Intruder trainings. We are learning many things about school safety.
- The WRE school safety committee meets monthly. Here we are discussing and making changes as we see to make our school safer.
- As Principal, I have talked with parent groups, individual parents with concerns, staff, and school newsletter communication about school safety at Windy River. Our work with the present level of total school safety is rising to be our highest concern.

## **Assistant Superintendent Report**

### **MCS D Safety Measures at our Schools**

All Morrow County School district conducts fire drills on a monthly basis and also completes other safety drills such as lock down and shelter in place drills. These drills typically take place on at least two occasions each school year.

In 2011-2012 school year MCS D administrative team met with Morrow County Sheriff head safety officer and Boardman Police to discuss emergency procedures and update/revise all school emergency plans and present all plans and building maps to them .

Due to Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy on December 21, 2012 our district administrators and top police and sheriff officials within Morrow County once again met to review our emergency plans with a focus on our school security, lock down/intruder alert drills and how our schools can be better prepared to deal with armed intruders.

The outcome of this meeting led us to increase our communication, security, and proactive planning when it comes to conducting evacuation, intruder alert, lock down, bomb threat, as well as shelter in place drills. Our first table top drill was conducted on Wednesday, January 23. In attendance was MCS D Admin team, Morrow County Sheriff, Morrow County EMS, Boardman Police and Boardman Fire Department. The focus of the meeting was responding to a bomb threat and a goal for our district is to ensure our emergency response system is aligned to FEMA Incident command system guidelines.

We plan to complete a variety of table top exercise with Morrow County Safety Officers and school officials every 6-8 weeks for the remainder of this school year. During the 2013-2014 school year we will look to conduct a armed intruder scenario with district staff in conjunction with emergency responders (fire, police, sheriff).

### **Safety Measures we have in place in Morrow County School District:**

- Comprehensive Emergency Plans developed in conjunction with input from our local law enforcement agencies. All organizations have building blueprints and access into our school buildings.
- We conduct safety drills on a monthly basis (such as fire, lockdown, shelter-in-place, etc.) including at least 2 lockdown drills every year.

- Table Top First responder EMS drills every 6-8 weeks to help us plan, update and review our safety/emergency protocols
- Plans are in place to have Video surveillance in all school buildings before the 2013-2014 school year. All cameras will have web based electronic access control where first responders and school officials have access to the cameras via the internet.
- All Elementary schools currently have a single access point at the front door next to the main office and all schools require that visitors sign in at the main office to account for who is in our building. We also require families, approved custodial guardian to check out students from our schools and will verify prior to releasing students.
- Evaluate and Improve security in all building exterior and interior doors.
- All schools have security alarms when buildings are not occupied motion detectors, door alarms and glass breakage alarms protect public property and ensure that no hazardous materials can be placed in our schools.
- When visiting our schools, please sign in at the office, wear the badge issued to you, and sign out and return the badge when you leave.

## **Management's Discussion and Analysis**

### **Financial Highlights**

There have been no significant financial highlights from the last board meeting. The state funding is still expected to be at \$6.15B with PERS reforms.

### **Future Financial Planning**

The district has been in communication with the Bank of Eastern Oregon, the Oregon Department of Energy, and Columbia Basin Electric to start researching some additional funding sources to address our immediate need for HVAC infrastructure at Heppner High School. The district is looking at both short-term borrowings and long term borrowings. The goal of the borrowings would be to stabilize the district cash flow needs with project demands and timing. The goal for the district would be to borrow at the lowest possible interest rate and have flexible enough terms to be able to pay down or pay off the loan in a short period of time - based on funding. The other goal would be to only initiate projects that would have estimated cost reductions (i.e. energy savings) to service the debt.

### **Current Financial Issues and Concerns**

The most significant financial concerns are funding the immediate need for infrastructure and maintenance to the district buildings: HVAC, roofing, painting, electrical, etc. The goal is to establish a project plan for each of the buildings with possible financing sources. The School Board will then aid District Administration in finalizing the path for these projects. The projects will be categorized based on need, savings, and timing.

### **Maintenance**

The district has now met with Ameresco, Johnson Controls and Oregon Department of Energy to help in identifying the top priorities and possible solutions from a project management standpoint and financing. The district is reviewing its' options in the following areas:

1. Prioritizing Projects
2. Cost of Projects



3. Energy Savings from Projects
4. Tax Credits
5. Financing Options
6. BPA programs

Over the next month the district will be analyzing and preparing a recommendation to be reviewed and approved by the School Board.

The Irrigon Elementary School drainage project is progressing and the expectation is that the project will be completed by the end of February (if everything continues to go as planned).

The district is still planning the Windy River boiler replacement (warranty replacement parts) for the spring break time period. The key consideration for the timing will be weather in Boardman – to ensure that there are no freezing temperatures forecasted.