



Keller ISD Safety & Security Update

Keller ISD Superintendent Dr. Rick Westfall <no-reply@kellerisd.net>

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Keller ISD Families and Employees,

Our District has long been a leader in the effort to keep students and staff safe. Over the years, we've adopted aggressive security protocols, implemented innovative training, and invested in industry-leading hardware to secure our campuses and facilities. We've also worked closely with our law enforcement partners to ensure we have the personnel we need to discourage anyone who might want to do harm to our schools and respond quickly to any perceived threats.

Over the past several months alone, KISD administrators and the Board of Trustees have worked to find ways to further expand our efforts by increasing armed security on campuses across the District. We've doubled the number of school resource officers on our campuses this fall, and we now have SROs at our secondary campuses, providing coverage of all of our intermediate, middle, and high schools. Those additional SROs complement the 23 in-house security specialists, including four mobile response units, that we already have in place. And still, our work continues as we look for ways to increase security at our remaining 26 campuses that do not currently have officers.

As part of these efforts, the Board held a [special workshop on November 3](#), at which the administration presented three potential options to expand security: hire additional SROs; contract with a third-party security firm; or adopt a more stringent version of the Guardian Program – a Texas Department of Public Safety-certified program that would allow teachers and other officials to carry guns in schools. Considering either of the latter two options would require changes in District policy related to the possession of firearms on campuses.

The administration previewed a potential policy change at [Monday night's Regular Board Meeting](#) that allowed the Trustees to engage in public discourse about the possibility of implementing a Guardian-like program. Contrary to some misinformation that has been shared in the news media and on social media, this was simply a preview item, and no action was taken. This was one step in the process of considering these additional security layers.

I know there are many concerns that have been expressed about the District even considering this option. I want to clarify just a few misconceptions that have been shared. If such a program were to be implemented, KISD would consider strict procedures with safety measures that go above and beyond standard Guardian training and protocols, including:

- Strenuous selection criteria;
- Law enforcement-level psychological evaluations for applicants;
- Gold-standard training and coordination with local law enforcement; and
- Other safety measures like ongoing training, gun safes, and trigger locks.

Additionally, participation in the program would be 100% voluntary, with a strict selection process, and few applicants will be chosen. We recognize such a program would not be for everyone, and would look for applicants who have a background in law enforcement and military, or those who have a demonstrated comfort with safely handling firearms. Measures would also be taken to run the program as a pilot program, rolled out slowly, and tested extensively.

The next step in exploring future safety options will be to collect feedback from our stakeholders. In the coming days, we will share a survey opportunity that the administration and Board of Trustees will use as we consider the best course of action moving forward. I encourage you to please take the time to complete the survey and provide your feedback, and also be sure to let your friends and family know how important providing this vital input will be in this decision-making process.

Should the Board pursue the policy changes as previewed Monday night, the vote to implement such changes could occur as early as the December 12 Regular Meeting. If approved, the administration would, at that point, begin the process of developing the details of implementing such a program.

The safety of our students and staff is our top priority, and I want to assure you that, no matter the direction our security efforts take us, we will work tirelessly to establish safeguards around our programs that are of the highest standards. Again, Keller ISD has long been a leader in the effort to keep our students and staff safe, and we will continue to be leaders by ensuring that any security program we implement is beyond reproach.

Thank you for your continued support of Keller ISD, and please be on the lookout soon for that opportunity to provide feedback on this topic.

Dr. Rick Westfall
Superintendent
Keller ISD
