

Superintendent's Message

February 23, 2018

In recent days, the events in Florida, Orange Grove, and across the Coastal Bend have played out and many of us have been frustrated with a sense of loss, the disruption to the daily routine in our lives and the communication from the school that did not answer immediate and real concerns – is my child safe at school today?

Our children have been safe in our schools. However, we have received information on and have been made aware of certain threats that individual students made toward other students at the secondary level, after the terrible event that occurred in Florida last week. In each instance, one in writing on a desk, others were verbal to another student in their presence, we have determined through investigation with the local police department that the threats were either not credible or we lacked information as to the source of the threat. Regardless, all threats, made in jest or in anger, are not tolerated and consequences have been assigned. We have also moved to post the occurrence of the threats on our Districts' web site and Facebook page.

At the school board meeting on Monday, February 19, many parents attended and spoke during the public comments portion of the meeting. Clearly, parents were concerned about the safety of all children and the process for communicating information to parents in the event of threats made toward children during the school day. We take the comments and feelings shared very seriously and we have begun a review process going forward to examine our internal processes for acting on threats and then communicating to the school community. On Tuesday, February 20, another meeting was held with parents to gather more information and hear concerns. In both instances, please be assured that we were listening and recording the thoughts and requests that were expressed.

During the meeting on February 20, parents were asked to share thoughts and ideas in two ways: What do you like about your child's school and priorities for improving our schools. The many positive things you liked about your child's school included the respect you have for your child's teachers. We agree that there are so many wonderful and hard-working teachers in OGISD. Regarding priorities to improve what we do in our schools, the number one concern is educating children in a safe environment. We also acknowledge that communication between the school and home can be improved not only in terms of content, but also in the area of frequency. To this end, we have created a messaging system that we will begin using very soon to communicate more frequently and effectively. Included also were ideas around building safety that we will take very seriously in our review process. Finally, the parents present at the meeting encouraged school administrators to be consistent in the punishment of students who misbehave and to have zero tolerance for threats of any kind.

We are excited to provide a platform through which you will now be able to receive emails and texts from the school district and from individual campuses. We have not had this resource in OGISD prior to this time and it is important that we move forward to enhance our ability to better communicate. Frankly, it is long overdue. As I write this, communication, in all its forms, has moved exponentially faster so that we now receive information almost immediately, in real time. This feature has created an expectation many of us have to “know now,” whatever it is, especially in times when school safety and other emergencies exist.

We are asking you to enroll in our messaging system by confidentially entering your cell number and email(s) into a database that belongs to the school through which you will be able to receive timely information from your school’s principal regarding school events and issues and from the school district in times of emergency, hurricanes, snow, ice events, etc. This feature will certainly enhance our ability to communicate with you and we look forward to establishing this process. We certainly want to have 100% of our parents enrolled in the messaging system.

Sincerely,

Randy Hoyer, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Parent letter explaining how to sign up for the email/text process:

Dear Parents:

In order to better communicate with parents, Orange Grove ISD is pleased to announce the launch of our Blackboard MyConnect site! This site will enable you to manage your contact information and give you the option of installing the Blackboard MyConnect app for Android and iOS to receive push notifications for the messages that are important to you.

You can access our new MyConnect site by typing the following URL into the web browser on your device <https://ogisd.bbcportal.com/> – or visiting www.ogisd.net and click on MyConnect under News & Announcements.

Once the page is open, click the Sign Me Up! link to setup your account. Please note that in order to create an account you will need:

- ***An active email address.***
- ***Your student’s Student ID# (6 digit ID located on Student Report Card)***
- ***The phone number or email address that we have on file for your student.***

Once you have logged in, you can add any additional students you have attending OGISD by clicking your name in the upper right corner and selecting Contact Information.

We are very excited about our site launch and invite you to visit our new site and take control over your notification preferences.

OGISD School District