



Ask Dr. Rodriguez



Ten Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Edition #14 2024-25 School Year – Week of November 11, 2024

Questions are quoted as I received them directly from our community.

- 1. I'm a campus security and was breaking up a fight when I was threatened by a student who said he was going to get me. Nothing was done by the police or the school administration, what is it going to take to hold students accountable?**

When a threat is made, there are two simultaneous investigations that take place. One is conducted by police and the other by school administration. The SUSD Police Department enforces California Penal Code and requires certain factors take place before they can determine a crime occurred and can act. Penal Code 422 defines and criminalizes a threat requiring the following elements:

- A willful threat against another person with the intent of causing great bodily injury or death;
- The threat was made verbally, in writing, or through electronic communication;
- The statement is specific and intended to be understood as a threat, regardless of the intent to carry it out;
- There is a present ability to carry out the threat;
- A reasonable person would have feared for his/her safety or the safety of their immediate family.

The process does differ between juveniles and adults. While the district has a no tolerance approach for threats, juveniles will follow a different protocol due to education code and juvenile laws. If an adult makes a threat, they will be held accountable to the fullest extent of the law, up to and including an arrest. If the above elements are not met, the police do not have a crime and do not have the authority to take action. However, if the police do not have a crime there is still an administrative response that takes place. School administration investigates the incident and works with police to complete a threat assessment to determine the level of the threat. They then follow the SUSD Student Behavior Intervention and Discipline Matrix to address the disciplinary behavior of the student, including providing resources for the students such as counseling. Safety is a top priority, and we want to ensure that our staff and students feel safe.

- 2. I am a teacher and sometimes leave my school very late and don't feel safe walking to my car. Are we allowed to carry pepper spray for protection?**

Although California law does not explicitly prohibit the possession of pepper spray on a school campus, District Board Policy 4158 prohibits any employee to carry or possess pepper

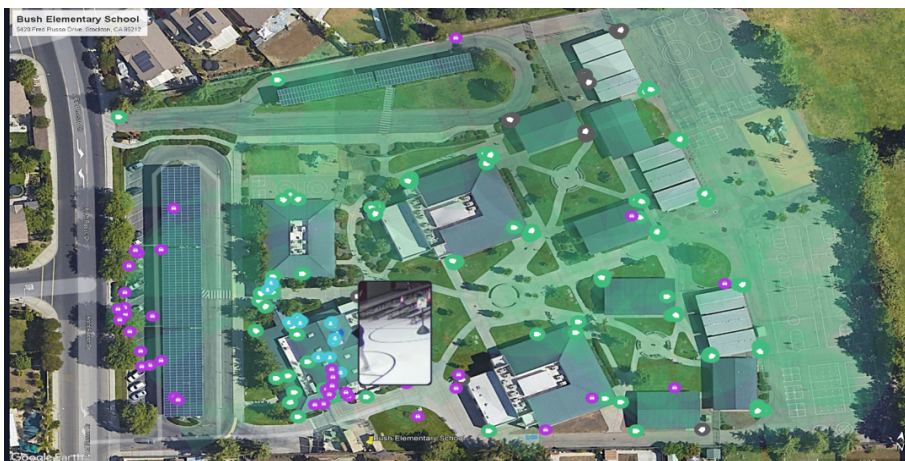
spray on school property or at school activities. This decision by the district not to allow adults to possess pepper spray on our campuses is due to the many risks associated with it such as accidental exposure, intentional misuses, and its ability to escalate violence and chaos during confrontations. Possessing pepper spray on a campus can result in discipline.

We understand your safety concerns and recommend several safety tips including:

- **Avoid Risky Situations:** make all efforts to leave the school site while there is still daylight, and when this is not possible, walk with a peer or larger groups.
- **Personal Alarms:** Personal alarms are great to alert of distress by generating a loud sound and light to be heard by others with the additional benefits that it can bring help, scare a perpetrator away, and cannot be used against you.
- **Report Suspicious Activity:** If you observe suspicious activity report it to the SUSD Police Department (933-7085, press #2) who operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week and can assist with any potential threats.

3. I keep hearing we are adding and upgrading our cameras, what is the difference between the new ones and the old ones?

The District is adding additional cameras to all of our sites to ensure adequate coverage to address our safety needs. The new cameras contain enhanced technologies that exceed those of our current cameras to include better zooming capabilities, clarity, alerts, and the ability to conduct an internal search with descriptors to track a person's footprint on our campuses. The new cameras also host a map feature that shows a blue icon for every person found outside of a building on campus and a purple icon for any vehicle identified on campus. This feature is extremely helpful for our emergency response when our schools enter into a lockdown. When in lockdown, this will provide law enforcement the ability to see who is roaming the campus and identify if they are a student/staff in need of help or a potential threat. Phase 1 of the camera project is currently underway with Taft and Bush being the first two sites to have this new technology. The remainder of the phase 1 sites will follow.



4. Will you be placing more of the new hydration stations in schools?

Using ESSER funds, we were able to place at least one hydration station in each school. When a traditional water foundation needs replacement, we plan to replace it with an hydration station.

5. Who are the service providers for the hot spots for the students?

The service providers for District mobile hotspots are Verizon and Kajeet. In terms of the process, students can check out the hotspots through their school library. Once the hotspots are checked out, library staff will notify the Technology and Innovation Department, and the Technology and Innovation department will turn on the hotspots through the service providers.

6. Are we doing any donations for Thanksgiving for our needy families?

Our SUSD Police Department and our Families in Transition (FIT) team will be collecting donations between November 8-November 17. Below is more information regarding donation locations and details.



7. I will be working the week of Thanksgiving when the children are not in school. Can I send them to any District program that week?

While SUSD/ELOP programs are open before and after school as well as during fall and spring breaks, our programs do not operate over Thanksgiving break. However, we are happy

to share that El Concilio community organization will be open to serving our SUSD students on Monday, November 25th, and Tuesday, November 26th. Enrollment is limited and is on a first-come, first-serve basis. Enrollment and communication will be between families and El Concilio directly. Below is a flyer with more information:



8. I received partial information that SUSD was giving out Rosetta Stone licenses to our newcomers. Can you give me more information?

Our Language Department Office is providing all 7-12th grade Newcomers the opportunity to use Rosetta Stone (RS) at home this year. Previously, it was only offered to newcomers in the after-school program (MASP) although we have replaced it with the Summit K-12 program. Since Summit K-12 will be the only program used during MASP, Rosetta Stone will be available for Newcomers to use at home this year. We will first begin offering RS licenses to newcomers in grades 7th - 9th. We will be monitoring the requests and student usage to assess their need, add additional licenses if we run out, and expand access to 10th - 12th grade levels before the end of November. Rosetta Stone provides immersive, interactive language learning with practice in all four domains of language. You can learn more about how Rosetta Stone works from [this short video](#).

Our students have access to:

- Curriculum for 25 languages
- Extended learning content
- Speaking practice with immediate feedback

9. When I can I apply for a specialty school for next school year?

The application process for registration for our specialty schools will open on the day of our Specialty School Fair. The fair will occur on Thursday, January 16, 2024 from 5-8pm at Cesar Chavez High School.

10. I mentioned we are going to do an Equity Audit. When will the Equity Teams begin?

Each school site has selected five members from their educational community. All 275 Equity Team members from all 55 school sites will begin the work together with a kick-off on January 24, 2024.