

Letter: LTUSD making school sites safer

To the community,

Our hearts go out to the families and victims of the inconceivable act of violence at Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla. We are deeply saddened over the senseless loss of so many lives.

In the wake of this tragedy, the district would like to ensure families and staff that district leadership, in partnership with local law enforcement, continues to make school safety a top priority. Each time a mass casualty incident (MCI) occurs in this country, the school site and district safety and security teams review and refine their security policies and procedures according to information gleaned from an incident.

Just this week, the district completed an active shooter event training facilitated by FBI Agent Glenn Norling. Additionally, the district maintains an assessment and list of recommended strategies for the safety and security of students, staff, visitors, and property, for each school site and will be making recommendations to the board of education for enhanced security measures.

In addition to performing regular lock-down, shelter-in-place, and evacuation drills at our school sites, the district currently:

- Employs one full-time school resource officer (SRO/police officer) at South Tahoe High School/Mt. Tallac;
- Employs three full-time campus security assistants at South Tahoe High School/Mt. Tallac;
- Maintains 52 active cameras on and around South Tahoe High School/Mt. Tallac.

- Employs one full-time and one part-time campus security assistants at South Tahoe Middle School.
- Maintains one on-call school resource officer at all schools.
- Maintains 24 active cameras on and around South Tahoe Middle School.

The district will soon be recommending the following security enhancements to the board of education:

- A full-time school resource officer at the middle school who will also support the elementary school campuses on-call.
- Additional part-time campus security personnel at the elementary campuses.
- Fencing and barriers intended to restrict entry and exit areas at the middle and high schools.
- New procedures for entry and exit at middle and high schools.
- Additional signage for visitor entry, wing, and classroom identification.
- 28 additional cameras to be installed at the middle school.
- 20 additional cameras to be installed at the high school.

However, beyond the aforementioned safety and security measures, LTUSD recognizes and firmly believes that the grass roots issue plaguing our country and our schools is mental health. The district intends to augment its existing counseling, intervention, and wraparound services programs, by adding social workers at the elementary schools, and by continuing to forge valuable partnerships with the Family Resource Center, Tahoe Youth & Family Services, Tahoe Turning Point, Live Violence Free, Mental Health, Barton Health, and our local law enforcement agencies.

With education, preventive intervention, treatment, and

enforcement, Lake Tahoe Unified School District is doing all that it can to ensure the safety and well-being of its students and staff. Please do not hesitate to contact the Office of the Superintendent with any concerns for your child or the safety of your campus.

Respectfully,

Jim Tarwater, superintendent Lake Tahoe Unified School District