

# #mustangSAFE

#mustangSTRONG

## Nixon-Smiley CISD Safety Newsletter

At Nixon-Smiley CISD, we are very aware that you trust us with your children's well-being. With that in mind, as with every district in the nation we are enhancing our safety plans and protocols to ensure a sense of comfort for all staff, students, and parents. We are committed to creating a culture of safety beginning with our new hashtag: #mustangSAFE.

The overall goal of the NIXON-SMILEY CISD safety program is to protect lives, mitigate the effects of a disaster, be prepared to respond to emergencies promptly and properly and restore normal services as quickly as possible.

With this newsletter, Nixon-Smiley CISD is excited to announce the plan to all staff, students, and parents. More to come! In the meantime stay #mustangSTRONG #mustangSAFE

Below you will have three ways to contact Nixon-Smiley CISD about safety. We care about your safety and are listening!

830-582-1536 Ext. HELP (4357)

Follow us on Twitter @mustangSAFE

Go to the Nixon-Smiley website ([www.nixonsmiley.net](http://www.nixonsmiley.net)) and fill out the "Let's Talk" safety form.

Hope to hear from you!



## **How dangerous are our schools? Schools are not dangerous as recent event have made it seem. In fact statistically, schools are safer than a home!**

Schools are not dangerous places. The perception that schools are dangerous is a misconception generated by a series of extreme, high profile cases that are not representative of most schools. In fact, very few serious violent crimes take place at school. From the standpoint of violent crime, students are safer at school than at home. Moreover, schools have become even safer in recent decades.



Bullying, teasing, and harassment are common problems that deserve attention in every school, too (Cornell & Mayer, 2010).

Schools are extremely safe, but they are not crime-free and we have an obligation to keep them as safe as possible. To keep schools safe, it is important to recognize what kinds of crimes are likely or unlikely to occur, and to base decisions on facts rather than fears.

Schools are safer today than they have ever been. You are more likely to be struck by lightning 7 times vs. being shot by an active shooter on campus (SafeSchools, 2018)

## **School Safety MYTH — SCHOOL VIOLENCE IS INCREASING**

Facts: The rate of violent crimes in U.S. public schools has declined substantially since 1994 (Robers, Zhang, Morgan, & Musu-Gillette, 2015). The serious violent crime rate (per 100,000 students) in 2018 was less than a third what it was in 1994.

The drop in serious violent crime is not unique to schools. There has been a broader decline in serious violent crime in the United States since the mid 1990's.

On top of that schools are increasing security measures every day.

## **METAL DETECTORS Pros & Cons**

Risk-Reduction Tool

Using metal detectors at the main entrances of schools generally serves to reduce the risk of students, staff or any other visitor entering the premises with a gun, knife, bomb or other dangerous metallic object. According to National School Safety and Security Services, metal detectors may be a necessary tool in school districts with a history of chronic weapons issues and related violence such as shootings.

According to the Keep Schools Safe Initiative, metal detectors have limited utility as a physical security measure in schools. Having students pass through metal detectors as they arrive in the morning disrupts the school program because staff require time to check the students. The staff must also be trained in the proper use of the equipment or they could end up either allowing students, staff and visitors through without properly checking them or detaining them on false alarms. Stationary metal detectors cannot be used effectively in school buildings that have multiple entrances that cannot be closed or staffed by adequate security personnel. **Metal detectors are 67% effective** in locating a possible weapon (FBI).

Costly

Metal detectors are costly to purchase and install, and they require other related expenditures such as staff to conduct the searches, training and equipment maintenance, according to a National Institute of Justice Research Report. The purchase price for a metal detector may run up to tens of thousands of dollars. Detectors are also not self-operating because although the equipment produces some type of alarm signal, a trained staff member is still required to investigate the source of the alert and to verify whether it is a weapon or other object. As a result, the school has to hire and train numerous staff to check students as they arrive.

**"Invest in your people, not products."**

## Bulletproof Glass Pros & Cons

**Bulletproof glass** (also known as ballistic glass, transparent armor, or **bullet-resistant glass**) is a type of strong but optically transparent material that is particularly **resistant** to being penetrated when struck. Like any material it is not completely impenetrable.

It is not the thickness that makes the glass bullet resistant. As the bullet resistant glass has multiple layers of materials designed to absorb the shots, the impact will spread over a larger surface area and the bullet is slowed down before it can penetrate the glass.

The bullet-proof glass improves the safety in the work environment. Staff at counters can lock the doors and feel completely, secure, These can make it more difficult for the burglars trying to access your property once everyone has gone home

The bullet-proof glass can be costly and you are paying for the idea that it is "bullet-proof", but experts will tell you there is nothing full proof about it. It is resistant and will slow the bullet down. Stopping penetration completely is a myth.

Experts again agree

**"Invest in your people, not products."**

## Why not a buzzer system?

You may have read or seen on social media that some local school districts are investing in the "new buzz" for school safety.

Interesting choice of words considering the system is a buzzer system that forces visitors to "buzz in" before entering. The intended purpose is to give office staff the ability to keep the front doors of the campus locked and screen those who enter. Individuals who want access to the building must show their ID and state the reason for visit. This seems like a great idea, right? In fact, several have asked why Nixon-Smilely CISD is not embracing this approach.

Here are some facts from the experts on what works in school safety:

- 77% of schools stop utilizing the system within the first three years of operation (school safety center, 2016)
- The effectiveness of the system is an estimated 33% because most individuals who want to get into schools can show legitimate purpose for being on campus despite their ill-intent at the time of the events
- 97% of all active shooter cases involving schools are individuals who are *already* on the campus or who already have access to the school (FBI, 2017).
- A buzzer system would have been 100% ineffective in the recent school shootings including Parkland, Florida and Santa Fe, Texas. Sandy Hook Elementary had an elaborate "buzz in system" and monitored cameras. The gunman shot the glass out beside the door and walked right in.

With those facts in mind, Nixon-Smilely CISD has opted to spend our resources on empowering our staff and students in crisis strategies based on advice from legitimate school safety experts. We are very cautious of products or strategies that seem to be marketed by opportunist commercial companies playing on fear

We believe: "Invest in your people, not products."

