



Monday, Oct. 28, 2019
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Just So You Know

The first through fourth grade elementary school I attended in Idaho was old, but safe. It burned coal for heat and didn't have any "soft fill" under the playground equipment. Kids had their falls and tumbles and bumps and bruises, and the occasional broken bone, but otherwise survived. And it is also true that one of the students in my class put his tongue on the monkey bars on a sub-zero January morning, necessitating a call to the fire department for tongue extraction.

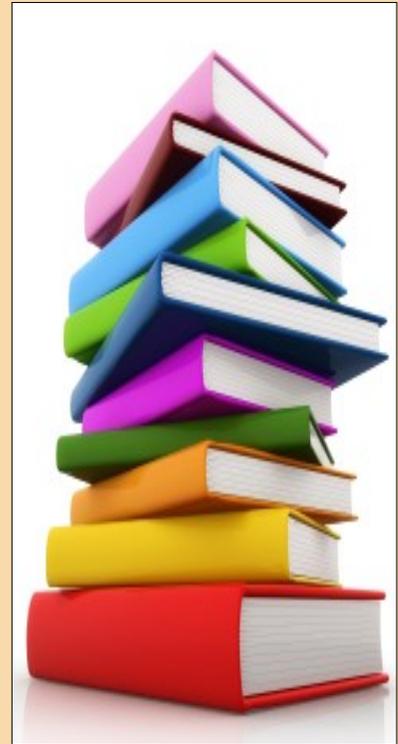
It was at that school, Abraham Lincoln Elementary, that I was first introduced to safety drills. We did periodic fire drills and nuclear bomb threat duck-and-cover drills. Those were the threats of that time, a period known as the Cold War. However, there was a day when a truck hauling a propane tank tipped over on the main city street near the school when the school was evacuated and ultimately everyone was sent home. Thinking about it now, that would have been what we call these days "reunification."

Some six decades later, we still have fire drills in public schools, and now we have gas-leak drills as well which would have come in handy back in the 50's with that propane mishap. In addition, we've added earthquake drills, knowing of the many fault lines in our state. That also would have come in handy back in the 50's as that part of Idaho experienced a large earthquake with the epicenter near the Idaho/Montana border, fortunately taking place at a time when school was not in session.

Today's reunification plans and drills are vastly different than closing school for a propane leak, although that is certainly part of reunification. The focus of drills and plans in schools of the 21st Century unfortunately deal with human threats rather than natural and accidental disasters. Today's schools plan and drill for active shooters, lockdowns, secure in place, bomb threat, evacuation to a secondary site, and doing so knowing there are dozens of scenarios for each.

While fire drills and duck-and-cover drills of the past were generally low key and contained within the school campus, a key point of today's drills is broad stakeholder involvement. Not only do plans and drills typically involve first responders, parents also have a significant role in such safe school measures. Reunification is a prime example of coordinating the many stakeholders of a singular school into a unified safety plan and drill designed to smoothly reunite child with parent in the event of a school emergency.

Schools throughout the district are currently publishing reunification plans, conducting reunification drills, debriefing on those drills, and modifying plans accordingly. To assimilate an actual emergency event, parents are being asked to participate by attending training meetings to learn reunification procedures, to follow those procedures during school drills, and to offer input to school officials regarding strengths and flaws associated with the drill. Because of this parent involvement, as well as the support of first responders, we are having great success with our drills. Parents of students in our school district are encouraged to be part of the solution to the many threats our schools face by participating in school informational meetings and emergency drills. Thanks...



Vision Statement:

"Education is a collaborative effort of home, community, and school. Students experience success on a daily basis and excel in performance through applying knowledge to real life situations. Schools are student-centered, guided by educators who possess excellent leadership and educational skills. Education expands beyond the classroom walls through the use of technology, and the curriculum meets the highest standards of an ever-changing world. Graduates are prepared to enter the workforce or continue their formal education at an advanced technical institution or a college or university. The Emery County School District believes that learning today provides leadership for tomorrow."

Superintendent Davis



CANYON VIEW MIDDLE SCHOOL: During National School Lunch Week members of the district office staff had lunch at Canyon View Middle School. Participants include Kerri Allred, Yvonne Jensen, Doug Johnson, and Korie Bouldin.

School board meets with association leadership

PRICE: Emery School Board members and Superintendent Davis met with leadership of the Utah School Boards Association at the Fall Regional Meeting at the Carbon District Office on Tuesday, Oct. 22.

Richard Stowell, executive director of the USBA, and McKay Jensen, president of the USBA, conducted the meeting which focused on 2020 legislative priorities, including:

- Fully funding student enrollment growth, including line item categories;
- 6 percent increase in the WPU to maintain current levels of services;
- \$5 million, as part of the 3rd year of a 5-year plan, to attain the 85 percent state support for to and from transportation costs;
- \$500,000, as part of the 3rd year in a 5-year plan to increase Necessarily Existent Small School (NESS) funding; and
- Allocate \$65 million in one-time funds for school building upgrades and technology inno-

vation.

The USBA also supports legislation “that utilizes assessment for the purpose of monitoring student progress and informing instruction, rather than testing students to evaluate educators, schools and districts.”

With respect to Utah tax reform, the USBA continues to support the State Constitution which designates income tax to public and higher ed. However, the organization is willing to explore all options considered as part of tax reform.

Darin Nelson from the Utah State Board of Education updated guests on the current state of testing and school grades. He said that the State Board has validated RISE data while urging the legislature to forego school grades based on 2019 testing issues.

The leadership emphasized the organization’s advocacy of public education and encouraged local board members and superintendents to tell their success stories and to use the USBE website as an informational source.

Youth Protection Seminars scheduled for November

HUNTINGTON: Two important meetings have been scheduled by the Emery School District in November to address the safety of our students. Known as “Youth Protection Seminars,” these meetings feature presentations on substance abuse, social and emotional health, internet safety, and bullying and hazing.

The seminars will be held on Nov. 7, at 6 pm, in the Green River High School Auditorium, and on Nov. 14, at 6 pm, at the Emery High School Little Theater. The seminars are open to the public. “We encourage parents and students to attend along with our employees and other stakeholders,” Superintendent Larry W. Davis said. “These seminars deal with timely issues that are of concern in all of our schools.”

The Emery School District will be combining resources with local agencies for the seminars which will feature several presentations with each lasting about 15 minutes. There will be time for questions and comments from the audience.

Youth Protection Seminars are required by state law originating from HB 289 passed in 2013. The law requires school districts “to offer an annual seminar to parents with information on substance abuse, bullying, mental health, and internet safety.” Additional topics can be added at the discretion of the school districts.

According to the superintendent, “Issues that our schools and

students face each year are not always the same, so we need to be flexible on what we emphasize in our seminars.” He pointed out that this year’s seminars will feature vaping as a “hot topic” which was not such an issue a year or two ago.

The mental health portion of the program will be presented by the Emery School District Social/Emotional Collaborative team which includes Jennifer Thomas, district social worker; Felicia Jeffs, elementary social worker; and Greg Daniels, secondary social worker.

The Emery County Sheriff’s Department will present on substance abuse, including the vaping crisis.

The hazing and bullying portion

of the seminar will be facilitated by Lance Whitesel, counselor at Canyon View Middle School and Green River High School.

Internet safety will be covered by the Emery School District IT Department and Supervisor Doug Johnson.

In addition, Superintendent Davis will highlight the local data from the 2019 SHARP Survey conducted among 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th graders last spring. The data covers a wide range of topics, including drugs, alcohol, tobacco, mental health, anti-social behavior, perceptions of school, and student support. The local data will be compared over time to state and national data covering the same topics and the same age groups.

Youth Protection Seminars

Presented by:

The Emery School District

Thursday, Nov. 7, 6 pm:

Green River High School Auditorium

Thursday, Nov. 14, 6 pm:

Emery High School Little Theater



STICKY NOTES:

Fall Academic All-State: The Utah High School Activities Association recently released the Academic All-Staters for fall programs. The Emery School District is represented by the following: Emery High School– Bron Gordon, golf; Brynne Urie, girls’ tennis; Jennifer Funk, girls’ cross country; Autumn Stilson, volleyball; Ashley Morgan, Katie Nelson, Kiri Cook, Sophia Huntington, and Teryn Allred, girls’ soccer. Green River High School– Samuel Corrigan, baseball.

Youth Protection Seminars: The Emery School District will be holding two Youth Protection Seminars in November. The first will be on Thursday, Nov. 7, at 6 pm in the Green River High School Auditorium, and the second will be held on Thursday, Nov. 14, in the Little Theater of the Spartan Center at Emery High School. Parents, students and all other stakeholders are invited to attend.

Solution Tree PLC Conference: Forty educators from the Emery District will be attending the Professional Learning Community Conference Oct. 28-29-30 at the Salt Palace in Salt Lake City. Each of the district’s 10 schools will be represented along with district office personnel. The conference features a distinguished panel of keynote speakers who will also be part of dozens of breakout sessions for the participants. The conference will contribute to the district’s advancement of its PLC philosophy and collaborative team network.



SILICONE SLOPES: Emery High CTE students have expanded their classroom experience to include field trips to technology companies throughout the state.

“Suicide Prevention” featured in EHS counselor presentations

Counselors Dayna Terry and Darline DeBry have spent a lot of time in Emery High School classrooms in recent weeks. The counselors have been presenting lessons on suicide awareness and prevention using the QPR (Question/Persuade/Refer) Program.

In introducing QPR, students are given statistics on suicide that illustrate the depth and breadth of the problem.

“Talking about suicide is a tough subject,” Mrs. DeBry told a class of 10th graders recently. “But you need to know that Utah is 5th in the nation for death by suicide.” She added that it has been estimated that with each suicide, 155 individuals are directly impacted. With 609 suicides in Utah in 2015, that is a lot of people who have suffered such a loss.

Noting that 609 deaths may not seem like a big number, Mrs. DeBry pointed out that Emery High School’s student body includes about that many students.

Through the QPR program, students learn that Utah is in the “Suicide Belt” which includes the Rocky Mountain states as well as Alaska, which has the highest suicide rate in the county. Students offered ideas as to why these states have such high suicide rates, but Mrs. DeBry concludes, “We can’t say that any one thing causes suicide. It is a combination of many things.”

Other data presented to the stu-



EMERY HIGH SCHOOL: Counselor Darline DeBry lead a 10th grade class in a “mindfulness” activity prior to presenting the QPR program.

dents indicate that males are more likely than females to commit suicide and in doing so often use extremely lethal means. Also, the elderly have a very high rate of suicide deaths. Using visual graphs, students are shown spikes in suicide rates beginning in 2011 which they conclude has a lot to do with the surge in social media. In 2012, suicide outpaced auto accidents as the number one cause of death among those 10-17 years of age.

In pointing out that “Highly rejected youth are eight times more likely to commit suicide,” Mrs. DeBry asks the students, “Can

we be kinder and more accepting of people?”

The QPR program outlines the following guidelines for suicide prevention:

Question the person about suicide. Do they have thoughts? Feelings? Plans? Don’t be afraid to ask.

Persuade the person to get help. Listen carefully. Then say, “Let me help” or “Come with me to find help.”

Refer for help. If a child or adolescent, contact any adult, any parent. Or call your church leader or a resource number.

**Emery School District
Mission Statement:**

***“The mission of the
Emery County
School District is to
provide a compre-
hensive education
that will prepare
students to take a
proactive and re-
sponsible role in an
ever-changing
world.”***

District Calendar:



Oct. 28-29-30: PLC Conference, SLC

Nov. 4: Utah Schools Superintendent Association Meeting, Sandy

Nov. 5: Association, Board, Superintendent Meeting, 7:30 am, District Office... Administrative Council Meeting, 8:30 am, District Office

Nov. 6: School Board Meeting, 5:30 work session, 6 pm general session, Canyon View Middle School

Nov. 7: Youth Protection Seminar, Green River High School, 6 pm

Nov. 11: Castle Dale Elementary Community Council Meeting, 3:30 pm

Nov. 12: Southeast Education Service Center Board Meeting, 10 am, and meeting with local legislators and school board members, noon, Carbon School District.

Nov. 13: Community Council training with USBA, 6 pm, Carbon School District Office.

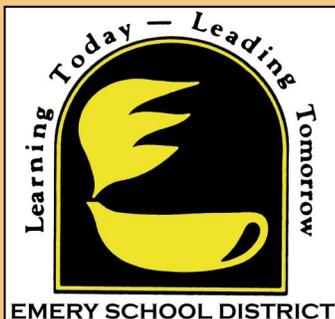
Nov. 14: Youth Protection Seminar, 6 pm, Emery High Little Theater

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District**

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CLEVELAND: A reunification drill was held at Cleveland Elementary on Oct. 24, as part of Safety Week. Above, students have computer time in the gym while waiting to be picked up by parents.