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May 26, 2022

Dear parents and guardians:

It was with shock and great sadness that we learned of the tragedy in Uvalde, Texas. Events like this cause us to reflect on the safety of our own children and staff.

Prairie Spirit School Division's teachers and support staff are committed to providing a safe and secure school environment for our students. Each school has an emergency response plan which includes procedures for fire drills, lockdowns, evacuations and other emergencies. Schools regularly practice these emergency procedures during the school year.

Staff members in each school have received formal training in planning and coordinating emergency responses. We appreciate the support of our community partners, such as the RCMP and other emergency services.

It is common for children to ask questions or express anxiety about tragic events. I want to reassure you that these responses will be handled sensitively by our staff. The following advice may be helpful to you as you have conversations with your child.

- **Listen to your child**

It's important to listen to your child's concerns. Create an environment that allows your child to express feelings and ask questions.

- **Reassure your child**

Reinforce the caring and supportive relationships we share with one another. Remind your child that there are protocols in place to help us all be safe at school (e.g., fire drills, etc.) and many people who help keep us safe (e.g., teachers, police, firefighters, doctors, etc.). Some children may feel comforted by a regular routine and may not wish to discuss the events.

- **Allow your child to express emotions**

Children may wish to talk about the incident and/or draw, write cards or express their emotions.

- **Respond to media reports**

Consider limiting exposure to media reports, particularly for young children. With older children, take the opportunity to watch some media reports together, discuss what you see and hear and answer any questions your child might have.

- **Seek support**

If you feel that your child would benefit from more support, please contact your school's principal and arrangements will be made for your child to meet with one of our counselors.

- **Online support**

- Anxiety Canada is a registered charity that offers access to free online self-help and evidence-based tools to help manage anxiety in children, youth, and adults. [Home - Anxiety Canada](#)
- Child Mind Institute offers specialized supports regarding school shootings. [Child Mind Institute | Transforming Children's Lives.](#)

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your school principal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Bazylak', written in a cursive style.

Darryl Bazylak
Director of Education