



Bellevue Elementary School District

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www.mybellevue.org

DATE: November 6, 2023

TO: Bellevue School District Staff and Families

RE: Notice Regarding Recent Measures to Extend Protections to Staff and Students

Dear Bellevue Staff and Families,

Student and school safety is our top priority, and we would like to take a moment to inform you of a sensitive and important matter regarding recent measures to extend protections to students and staff. On October 30, 2023, School Board Member Jason Vassar submitted personally written materials to the district administration and Director of the Tuolumne Joint Powers Authority. The nature of the documents contained numerous statements of a concerning nature, namely, referencing threats to kill children, kill people, denigrate humans, and incite violence, with distinct anti-government rantings. No statement, however, was directed towards any specific person or entity at Bellevue, rather, the statements reference generalized acts that extend beyond the boundaries of the Bellevue School District.

In response, and out of an abundance of caution, our district administration along with the Tuolumne JPA promptly took action by reporting to law enforcement. As a result, law enforcement took Mr. Vassar into custody for a 5150 hold as a danger to himself and/or others. In addition, Bellevue Elementary School District filed a Temporary Emergency Restraining Order, which was granted on Friday evening, November 3, 2023, and which includes the above stated facts. The Temporary Restraining Order has been issued, out of an abundance of caution, to protect the following individuals:

Bellevue Elementary School District Students

Bellevue Elementary School District Employees

Bellevue Elementary School District Board Members

We understand that this notification is alarming and deeply concerning. We want to assure you that Bellevue School District is taking all necessary measures, within our power, prioritizing the safety and well-being of our staff, students and community, including obtaining the restraining order and planning for the potential for increased security measures on campus in the future. We are working closely and jointly with the Tuolumne County Sheriff's Office, the Tuolumne County Superintendent of Schools Office, and the Tuolumne JPA about any developments or changes as it pertains to this matter.

Our Governing Board President, Carrie Petersen, and I are working closely to determine next steps as it relates to Mr. Vassar's position on the School Board, as we must adhere to specific processes to ensure school governance is conducted in a manner that best supports school safety. We will continue to keep you informed about developments related to this matter, as they become available for us to share.

We extend our respect and support to Mr. Vassar's family during this challenging time as they are an integral part of our school family.

Should you have any questions, you may contact me directly, and I thank you for your support and consideration in this matter.

Carmel Portillo

Superintendent-Principal

Bellevue Elementary School District