



Westhill CSD

Dear Westhill Families,

This is a message in which I am encouraging you to speak up on behalf of our students and community in a few areas. My intent isn't to be political, but if it comes across that way I'll take the criticism. These issues are just too important to not take action.

The events over the last several weeks in Buffalo and Uvalde have been incredibly difficult and emotional for all of us. The mix of anger, grief, helplessness and heartbreak are exhausting, but we can't just have the emotions without some action. Those innocent victims, their families, their communities and all of us deserve better. I encourage all of you to stand up and speak up for change that will help make our society and our communities better and safer. Gun reform, funding and availability of resources in our communities and schools for mental health supports, and practical resources for school safety are all things that our elected officials at the Local, State and National level should be supporting and advocating for. I have hope that things will get better, but I'm a realist. We need to remain engaged and vocal to keep the pressure on lawmakers if things are ever going to really change.

You can click on [this USA Government link](#) for information on how to reach all of your elected officials to voice your opinions on gun reform, mental health supports and school safety. In addition, you can [click here](#) to voice your specific concerns about gun violence directly to Congress.

The other topic that I would encourage all of you to speak up on is that of our School Lunch Program. Throughout the pandemic, the availability of breakfast and lunch for our students at no cost to them has provided a critical safety net during economic hardships. More students participated in eating breakfast and lunch in schools throughout the country over the last two years than at any other time. As we all know, nobody can be at their best when they are hungry. The federal nutrition waivers ensured consistent access to healthy meals for all.

Unfortunately, Congress and the USDA have opted to ***NOT*** continue child nutrition waivers as we head into the 2022-2023 school year. The result is that districts will no longer be able to offer free meals to all students. As we are all experiencing rising prices for everything, this will potentially put a significant financial strain on families. The timing of this decision could not be worse.

You can click on the link below to send a message to Senator Schumer, Senator Gillibrand and Representative Katko to extend the child nutrition waivers.

<https://cqrcengage.com/schoolnutrition/app/write-a-letter?5&engagementId=514121>

Thank you for your consideration of advocating on behalf of our students, staff and school community on these extremely important issues.

Continued Success,
Steve Dunham
Superintendent of School