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Good morning! I hope your Friday is a good day, and that you've had as engaging and as wonderful a week as have I! In fact, in my experience the start of school this year has been truly exceptional!

Actually, I can't thank you enough for such a smooth start to the school year! Our enrollment is up nearly 300 students, our federal AYP response was handled marvelously, and early indications are we may be able to post a 90% five-year graduation rate when all the data are in. *The start of this year was a remarkable effort carried out by consummate professionals, and you are among them.* Honestly, I find myself asking, "How can it already be mid-October and nearly Halloween?" When things go well, time just flies, and I thank you for your part in making the opening weeks of school so positive for over 19,000 students and their families.

Very soon, you will notice early work on three significant safety and security projects aimed at enhancing protection for students and staff, and the confidential information with which you and I are entrusted. Much of this work will take a year to fully implement.

The **first** school safety project is *RAVE 911* – an enhanced and expedited 911 system. This is possible because of an OSPI grant and a partnership. The partners are the Everett Police Department, Mill Creek Police Department, the Snohomish County Sheriff's Office and SnoPac 911. In this partnership, Everett Public Schools leads the nation in a roll out of *RAVE 911*.

The **second** school safety project is the final phase of the video security system funded in part by the 2010 Capital Levy. An additional \$800,000 for video security came from an OSPI Emergency Response grant written in concert with local law enforcement and emergency response entities.

The **third** project is the implementation of improved computer security measures to better protect confidential student and staff information.

RAVE 911 is a mobile device application (App) that you may **voluntarily** download to your Android or iPhone. The app connects immediately to 911. That immediate connection is available to subscribing school districts served by SnoPac 911 in Snohomish County. (Mill Creek, Bothell, Mukilteo and Lynnwood are served by SnoCom 911, which at this time has not subscribed.)

What is the benefit of *RAVE 911* for schools?

- When a 911 incident is reported with *RAVE 911*, designated responders on and off site simultaneously connect. This dramatically improves response time and reduces communications gaps.
- First responders get real-time, critical data such as floor plans and video feeds to use in their response decisions. Everett School Resource Officer Sergeant Tim Reeves says ... "The information response time is almost instantaneous and gives a level of communication to key

school and district staff along with first responders that simply does not exist now.”

Cascade High School and Penny Creek Elementary are the test locations for *RAVE 911*. Testing with our partners began in August and will continue into November before moving the system into other schools.

Although the timeline might be adjusted, based upon testing underway, watch for November *RAVE 911* training opportunities announced for interested staff. I am grateful for *RAVE 911* and the added safety and reduced response time it means for us in emergencies. *RAVE 911* doesn’t replace the option of direct phone calls to 911. It is an additional layer of security and connections for us and for those who respond to our calls for help. Stay tuned!

Equally as important as *RAVE 911*, but a bit further out on this year’s horizon, is the district’s **integrated, district-wide video security** project. For many years, high schools and other sites have used video security systems. However, this equipment is generally outdated and not integrated with the district’s modern, digital electronic systems.

Beginning last spring, we partnered with our three law enforcement agencies to help us design an integrated system. The school resource officers (SROs) met with each principal to determine potential camera locations inside and outside of schools. Inside locations are in interior hallways, offices and key gathering areas.

Available funding is enough for about 15 cameras for each elementary, 20 for each middle school and 30 for each high school – about 500 cameras across 26 schools. Throughout the project planning, we have partnered with our employee associations to plan and share details about the cameras and to solicit their questions and suggestions.

As the schedule and camera locations are finalized, you can expect that SROs and principals will share school site plans so everyone understands the scope of video security coverage.

Installation could begin late this month or in November. **The video security system and *RAVE 911* will be integrated.** “This means, in a worse-case scenario, if someone bent on harm were on a campus, first responders will get real-time information and live video feed of what is happening. This state-of-the-art access to information will enhance safety and speed up help coming to us during emergencies.

Recently, we asked an outside data systems expert to review our network and data security measures. The systems experts advised that we strengthen our data safety and security, including strengthening and regularly changing employee passwords. This process will be implemented over the next several weeks.

You will receive instructions from the information technology staff about changing your password to access major data systems. At the same time, the information department is working to integrate password use among more of our major software systems; this means you will have fewer user names and fewer passwords to remember to log on to more of our systems. Integrating more of the

major systems log-on access will take a few months to accomplish. In the meantime, we'll begin using stronger passwords across the district.

While we move ahead with these safety and security enhancement projects, schools will continue to hold emergency drills. When each of the emergency response systems is operational, you may expect that principals and site leaders will integrate *RAVE 911* and the video security into those drills so that we are well-practiced for unforeseen events.

As additional funding becomes available through levies, bonds, or legislative action to obey the Supreme Court's McCleary orders, we will continue to seek ways to improve safety and security where we work and learn together. Thank you for being a partner in our work to help keep schools safe places to learn, work and grow.

Again, my thanks for a terrific start of school and for what will certainly be a successful 2014-15.

Warmest regards, and please remember to layer up as the weather becomes more chilly!



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