

May 13, 2017

Dear San Dieguito Union High School District Families:

We were all shocked and saddened by the events of last Saturday morning at Torrey Pines High School. As the investigation unfolded, our worst fears were confirmed that one of our students was involved and it was his plan to end his life.

We appreciate the outpouring of care our community has shown for our students, our staff, our families, and for the officers of the San Diego Police Department. I am especially proud of the students and staff at Torrey Pines High School and Carmel Valley Middle School for their support of each other through this difficult time and to the team of counselors, social workers, psychologists, and administrators throughout the district who answered the call to help.

Principal Coppo has been in touch with the student's mother. She is grateful to our community and to the school for their concern and allowing her family to mourn privately. We will continue to honor her wishes.

While many look back at their middle and high school years as some of the best in their lives, we know this time can be emotionally difficult for many students.

Suicide is a complex matter and there is never just one reason behind a person's decision. In most circumstances, we can never truly know what led to the act, so rather than focusing on why a suicide occurred, it's important to reinforce the message that suicide is not a viable solution to one's problems and that help is available.

As you saw this week, we have many caring adults at all of our schools. It does not matter for what reasons a student might be struggling--it might be one thing or many--we have specialized staff and peer support who will continue to be available for anyone who needs assistance.

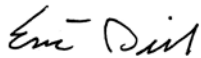
To all our families--student and staff--I encourage you to take time this weekend to be with people who care about you and talk through your feelings. For more information on suicide prevention for parents and educators, please visit the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) [resource page](#). This [link](#) will also provide some points on talking with children through tragic events. Should anyone need immediate assistance, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (8255) or text "START" to 741741.

Finally, the subject of the new Netflix series, “13 Reasons Why” has come up frequently this week. The series is based on a 2007 young adult novel about a 17-year-old girl who commits suicide and tells the story after her death through audiotapes. We want you to be well-informed about the content and potential impact of this show, especially because teens today often watch media by themselves on personal devices.

The National Association of School Psychologists strongly recommends that youth who are vulnerable, especially those who have experienced suicidal ideation, not watch the series. However, the series and the attention surrounding it does present an opportunity to have meaningful conversations with your child. NASP has prepared guidance for educators and parents as well as appropriate messaging for students which can be found [here](#).

As we work to return to normal, please do not hesitate to reach out to your school counselors, administrators, or trusted adults for help.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Eric Dill".

Eric R. Dill
Superintendent