



May 13, 2016

Dear SLO County Education Community,

One of the highest priorities for all San Luis Obispo County school employees is to assist in the responsibility of preserving the lives of our students in emergency situations. Under State law, all government employees are **DISASTER SERVICE WORKERS** and may be called upon in the event of a disaster. Specifically, the California Government Code (Section 3100-3109) states, in part, that: "All public employees are hereby declared to be Disaster Service Workers subject to such disaster service activities as may be assigned to them by their superiors or by law." In the event of an emergency, all school district employees are expected to provide service. (Public School Employees as Disaster Service Workers http://www.slocoe.org/?page_id=11)

You are all familiar with your district's emergency response procedures and have been trained in your duties during emergency situations. Additionally, some employees may be released from their assigned duties so that they can be reassigned to assist other agencies or organizations in carrying out other emergency response duties. Employees acting as Disaster Service Workers will be assigned duties within their scope of training, skill, and ability. Examples of Disaster Service Worker responsibilities include:

- Safeguarding students at school sites or other designated evacuation centers.
- Assisting administration in responding to emergency situations.
- Registering people at a shelter or other emergency facility.
- Translating for non-English speaking individuals.
- Acting as a messenger at a designated site.
- Serving food to emergency staff or to vulnerable populations.
- Answering phones.

We cannot determine in advance how long you may need to stay in a Disaster Service Worker status, or if you will be called upon to respond to an emergency situation after normal school hours. In some situations, you might be assigned to do disaster service work closer to your home. For example, assisting city workers in the community in which you live. In the event of an emergency after normal school hours, we will let employees know through established communication channels where they should report.

I also want to assure you that I share your concern for the security of your family, and every effort will be made to allow employees time to check on their families. It is possible, however, that some employees may be required to remain at work, or immediately report to assigned emergency locations, following a disaster. With this in mind, I encourage you to take some basic steps that can help to ensure the safety of yourself and of your family.

Thank you for your continued service and commitment to serving the public.

Sincerely,

James J. Brescia, Ed.D.
County Superintendent of Schools