

Are my kids safe at school?

We believe students are safe at school. The known threats made toward Ferndale High School have been resolved by the Ferndale Police Department. The Ferndale School District takes every threat seriously. We always involve the Police. We always take every precaution.

What is the current status at Ferndale High School today (Wednesday, October 24)?

Ferndale High School is open and classes are being held on Wednesday, October 24. We believe the campus is safe. Both of the known reported threats made during the week have been resolved.

Though the school is open, an option to keep students home was presented to parents and guardians of Ferndale High School students for Wednesday, October 24.

The option to parents and guardians read as follows:

We believe the campus is safe. However, if you wish to keep your students home today it will be an excused absence for this event and you do not need to call the school.

Why is there police presence at the middle schools today (Wednesday, October 24)?

Ferndale Police presence was sent to Vista Middle School and Horizon Middle School on Wednesday, October 24 as a precaution. There were no known reported and verified threats specific to Vista Middle School or Horizon Middle School. The police presence at the middle schools was a measure aimed to reassure students and staff.

Why didn't Ferndale School District communicate earlier regarding response to the threats?

When it comes to school safety, our community is telling us that they don't want a filter – they want information. We know this goes a long way in helping staff, families, and our community feel safe at school. Ultimately, that is our goal. We want to teach our students to report threats. We want to encourage our parents to report threats. We want to support law enforcement as they investigate.

When we receive word of a threat, we work directly with our Ferndale Police Department Team to move the investigation and verify as many facts as possible early on so that we can begin our updates and communication with staff, families, students, and community. We followed that pattern in this case and began communicating information as soon as it was verified.

What are resources for talking to kids about school safety?

When we talk about safety at school we include social, emotional, and physical safety. When any of those things are threatened, we want our students and families to have additional resources and support. We also want to provide resources to families looking to talk to students who may be worried or scared.

If you or your student is looking for support, we want you to know the following:

1. Our school counselors are available at all times. We recently expanded the number of Ferndale School District Counselors. We have a four-person counseling team at Ferndale High School and a designated counselor based at each Ferndale School District School.
2. As always, administrators at each of our schools are available to talk with you and to connect you with resources. Please reach out if you or your student(s) are struggling.
3. For parents who may want to talk with kids directly about their feelings around school safety, we offer the following article from the **National Association of School Psychologists**:
<http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/school-safety-and-crisis/talking-to-children-about-violence-tips-for-parents-and-teachers>
4. We will continue to make resources available as we collect them.