



# BUCKEYE UNION DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

2024-2025

January 2025

We have come to the halfway point in the school year and I want to wish the entire community a Happy New Year! We have much to accomplish before the school year is over and we are well on our way.



David Roth, Ph.D.  
Superintendent

**WE ARE BUCKEYE**

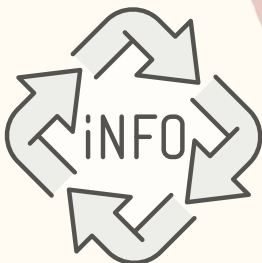
*Happy New Year!*

## District Mission

Working together with families, the community, and highly-qualified staff, the Buckeye Union School District ensures that each student masters the knowledge and skills needed to maximize their academic and personal success in a global society.

## District Vision

It is the Vision of the Buckeye Union School District to provide the highest quality educational program for all students, so that they fulfill their innate potential, become lifelong learners, and contribute to society as responsible citizens.



If you are a community member and would like to join our District-Wide mailing list, subscribe [HERE](#).

If you would like to give us an idea for future Buckeye Union District Highlights, please email us at [ksellwood@buckeyeusd.org](mailto:ksellwood@buckeyeusd.org)

**VISIT OUR  
WEBSITE**

## Quick Bits

- The [California School Dashboard](#) results show our students performed in the High Performance Range on the Spring 2024 Smarter Balanced Assessments in both English Language Arts and Mathematics.
- Our attendance metrics are showing positive trends. Currently, our districtwide chronic absenteeism rate is 8% (down from 9.7% last year), and our average daily attendance has improved to 96% (up from 95.7%). We continue working with families and students toward our goals of reducing chronic absenteeism to below 5% and increasing average daily attendance to 96.5% or higher.
- The Board of Trustees has approved the installation of cameras on school buses.
- In December, we welcomed newly elected board members Melissa Keyzer and Kirk Seal. Brenda Hanson-Smith has been appointed as Board President and Kirk Seal as Board Clerk.

## In Depth Focus

Earlier in the school year, much concern arose when a series of social media threats to schools emerged. Following these incidents, I began to convene a series of school safety meetings across the District. Joining me at these site level meetings was Lieutenant Jason Bloxsom from the El Dorado County Sheriff's Department. Thank you to Lieutenant Bloxsom for making himself available to speak with parents at each one of our 8 school sites. These meetings provided an opportunity for parents to hear about District-wide training and protocols and to ask questions. In addition to the summary below, we will be creating a webpage that memorializes these points for reference in the future.

### Approach To Threat Assessment

Unfortunately, we live in a day and age where reports of tragic instances of violence on school campuses are all too frequent. Although violence on school sites remains a very low probability, the consequences of any occurrence of violence would be catastrophic and thus we treat all threats with the utmost seriousness. By reacting swiftly and consistently in every instance, we aim to preserve the sense that our campuses are safe and to make certain that no threat of substance is ever overlooked.

### Threats are Assessed Using a Two-Tiered System.

**Level 1 threats are the first line of defense** and involve the principal interviewing all parties as well as contacting law enforcement and the District Office.

With the assistance of law enforcement, a determination is made as to whether or not a deputy feels the need to interview a student and/or visit the home. In some instances, a deputy may request to enter the home in order to assess whether or not the person making the threat is actively planning and/or has the means to carry out a threat. In instances where a threat is made on social media, law enforcement may make a search of the individual's online footprint as part of the threat assessment.

Fortunately, the overwhelming majority of threats made by students are a case of an emotional outburst and poor choice of words. Nonetheless, depending upon the assessment of the principal, school suspension is a likely outcome.

**In the event that a Level 1 threat assessment leads investigators to believe the threat has substance, it will be referred on to a Level 2 threat assessment team.** In addition, any threat where an individual is perceived to have a plan and the means to carry out a threat, a Level 2 threat assessment team will be convened. The Level 2 team is composed of trained individuals from across agencies such as the El Dorado County Sheriff's Department, the County Office of the District Attorney, representatives from Health and Human Services, and the School District Superintendent. Upon referral, the agency responsible for convening a Level 2 team is the El Dorado County Office of Education.

In the event a Level 2 team determines that a threat of substance exists, interagency support will be implemented to ensure the schools are safe.

## **The Challenges of Communicating Threats to the Public.**

If communicating information about a threat will improve safety and/or reduce a significant disruption, the community will be informed as soon as practicable. That being said, the following must be considered.

**First and foremost, it is our responsibility to secure the safety of our students and employees.** We will not be communicating until we have coordinated with all relevant agencies, including local law enforcement. If a situation of real substance existed, the site would be closed or locked down, and law enforcement would be present en masse. We would be looking for their direction regarding communication.

Unfortunately, student-initiated threats have always been an issue that has occurred on school sites. And, we are now living in a time when threats of any kind can cause real fear. When to communicate regarding a threat is a balancing act. If principals were to communicate to the community at large every single threat uttered by a student, regardless of age or circumstances, then we risk creating a false sense that schools are dangerous. We also run the risk that communicating threats with such frequency will fatigue the community in a manner that results in threats being ignored. One of the most important protective factors over schools is the willingness of the community to **Say Something, if you See or Hear Something**. Furthermore, school administrators do have to be mindful of the privacy rights of students, including those that engage in threatening behavior. Additionally, when and what to communicate must be coordinated with law enforcement or we risk putting out false information or interfering with an ongoing investigation.



Lastly, when a threat is communicated there is a tendency for teachers and/or principals to be flooded with communications of concern. When a threat that is without substance is communicated and principals are subsequently distracted from the core work of operating a school, resources are unnecessarily depleted. We need the focus to be on student learning and social development every day.

When threats are communicated, it is the case that some members of the public will want more details in order to feel safe. This may not be possible; however, do know this, if a real danger is perceived, a school would not open for the day or would be in a lockdown and law enforcement would be enmasse on site. If you hear that we are going about business as usual, then this is an indication that we and law enforcement perceive the site to be safe for all.

### **How We Prepare Students and Employees**

1. Every school year, each site will conduct at least 3 schoolwide active intruder drills.
2. Annually, the principal will invite a law enforcement officer to observe the drill and walk the campus.
3. Additionally, on a biennial basis, each school site will seek training from the El Dorado County Sheriff's Department Office of Emergency Services as a refresher and in order to ensure new employees receive training. This training is being provided in the current school year to all sites.
4. Administrators receive additional training. Over the years, these trainings have been provided by the El Dorado County Office of Education, the District Attorney's Office, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Homeland Security.
5. To begin every school year, school sites review their safety protocols with teachers, staff, and students.

The unfortunate reality is that remaining prepared for the worst is a necessary precaution in this day and age. Fortunately, we live in a community with protective factors such as many residents who work in law enforcement. We also have an engaged student and parent community that is quick to point out when something of concern is observed. If you are not aware of our STOPit, anonymous reporting app, please take a look: [STOPit](#). Stopit reports that are potentially life threatening will go directly to dispatchers at the El Dorado County Sheriff's Department.

I hope that providing this detail will provide some sense of security and please remember that there is nothing more important to every member of the Buckeye Union School District than making certain that every student, employee, parent, and community member that enters our school sites is safe each and every day.

## **e-Transportation Safety Message**

The following link provides information developed by the El Dorado County Sheriff's Office that will assist families with understanding the regulations associated with different types of transportation that students may be utilizing to get to and from school. Please be advised that the CHP intends to continue with its enforcement of these rules and regulations.

[Electric bike motorcycle and scooter pamphlet](#)

# Coffee & Conversation



The Fall coffee's have concluded and I will be making the rounds at each school site again this Spring.

Thanks to  
Camerado Springs  
Principal Shupe for  
this year's *amazing*  
Buckeye USD Video!

Click image to watch!



Begins February! 

Buckeye Union School District

# ENROLLMENT

**FOUR** YEARS OLD BY SEPT. 1  
TK (TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN)

**FIVE** YEARS OLD BY SEPT. 1  
KINDERGARTEN



**BACK TO SCHOOL**



NEW STUDENTS ONLY - ENROLL ONLINE  
[www.BuckeyeUSD.org](http://www.BuckeyeUSD.org)

