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**Gregory-Portland Independent School District**

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## **Gregory-Portland ISD Strengthens Campus Safety Through Strategic Planning, Partnerships, and Investments**

**Portland, Texas** — Gregory-Portland Independent School District (G-PISD) continues to make student and staff safety a top priority through comprehensive planning efforts, strong partnerships with local law enforcement, and targeted investments supported by voter-approved bond funding.

This announcement underscores the district’s ongoing commitment to strengthening transparent, timely, and meaningful communication with students, staff, families, and the greater G-P community.

As part of the planning process for the district’s replacement campus for T.M. Clark Elementary, which is being constructed on Billy G. Webb, G-PISD conducted a traffic impact study to assess campus access, circulation, and emergency response needs. While the study did not initially identify the need for an additional access point based on projected traffic volumes and established safety criteria, the City of Portland required construction of an emergency access road as a condition for issuance of the school’s final certificate of occupancy.

In response, the district evaluated and proposed alternative options to address the City’s requirements while balancing cost and feasibility. Following review by the City of Portland, the alternatives were not approved, and the district proceeded with construction of the emergency access road on Cedar Road as required. The project was subsequently included in the district’s 2025 Bond Program, which was approved by voters, allowing the district to meet the requirement while continuing progress toward completion of the campus.

“Safety is always a top priority for Gregory-Portland ISD,” said G-PISD Superintendent Dr. Michelle Cavazos. “This project reflects thoughtful planning and collaboration with our community partners to ensure we are creating safe, accessible environments for our students, staff, and families. We are proud to continue making strategic investments that support both our schools and the community.”

In addition to infrastructure improvements, the district is expanding its partnership with local law enforcement agencies to further enhance campus safety. Beginning in the 2026–2027 school year, all Portland-based campuses will have a dedicated Portland Police Department officer assigned during the school day. Stephen F. Austin Elementary School located in Gregory will also have a dedicated Gregory Police Department officer assigned during the school day, supported through an approved Interlocal Cooperation Agreement.

To support this initiative, the district had included \$750,000 in the Bond 2025 program for School Resource Officer (SRO) vehicles and equipment upgrades. As part of this investment, G-PISD has purchased eight new police vehicles, which will be fully equipped and ready for use in the upcoming school year.

“The addition of the emergency access road and expanded law enforcement presence allows more effective and efficient responses in critical situations,” said Michael Thieme, Senior Director of Safety and Support Services. “These improvements strengthen our ability to support first responders and ensure a safe environment for our students, staff, and community.”

Together, these initiatives highlight G-PISD’s ongoing focus on safety, responsible investment of resources, and collaboration with local municipalities in support of student success and community well-being, aligning with the district’s Balanced Scorecard Priority 4.1 to improve operational processes and Priority 4.4 to enhance safety and security.

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