APS Honorable Mentions

It turns out that Mark Rosario and Mike Marquez weren’t just in for retirement, after all. They couldn’t trade their current jobs working with students as Albuquerque Public Schools Police officers for the world.

The two officers are assigned to Cibola High School, where they are charged with keeping an eye on some 2,400 students. They handle everything from thefts and students skipping class—which can be an issue at Cibola because of an adjacent skate park—to fights and weapons brought to campus. While a lot of their workload involves patrolling the hallways, Rosario and Marquez meet students, and the relationship they build helps students become aware of potential problems before they become realities.

“If helps that students know us,” Rosario said, adding that even kids who have been in trouble with them will come up and say hello between classes. “You have to mix in a personal approach.”

Rosario, a retired Barnsville County sheriff’s deputy, is an acting sergeant (with APS in charge of a security detail) that includes five campus security aides. There are also two Albuquerque Police Department officers assigned to Cibola. The two APS officers are referred to as School Resource Officers, or SROs. Rosario and Marquez, a retired ADA detective, are sworn officers who treat the same incidents and charges the same way.

Both officers are responsible for outside safety, which includes the skate park, in Cibola’s case, while the campus security aides (CSAs) help with traffic flow before and after school, and walk campus during school hours.

In all, 41 officers and 67 CSAs make up the APS Police Force, led by Chief Bill Reed. Reed took over the department one year ago after retiring as a captain from BCSO. His new force responds to an average of 1,200 calls per month.

“Our job is to provide a safe educational environment and protect students, staff and the facilities,” Rosario said.

Reed is always looking for more officers and CSAs. Competition for qualified staff is tight, and APS is unable to offer the same pay rate as APD and BCSO. Reed has two lieutenants, who direct officers to one each for the east and west sides of the district. They oversee the APS sworn officers assigned to most high and middle schools. The remaining officers are available to cover the rest of the schools when calls come in. Officers are armed, and while the deciding officers allow their weapons in school was controversial, the hopeful outlook is that they will be safe.

Reed, in his introductory remarks, said teachers can decide which sites are appropriate to visit, as long as they are open and welcome, and that they have the assistance needed if he’s being asked to help. Teachers are urged to work with parents, students and friends who need support.

APS Power Hours

Keep an Eye on Students Online

The age of technology offers unlimited opportunities for students to discover the world outside of school. They can explore outer space, oceans and current events, or simply access reference materials for reports or answer teacher questions. While the potential from the Internet is phenomenal, inherent risks are monitored by Albuquerque Public Schools, and parents are urged to keep an eye on students’ surfing habits.

‘I don’t understand that, adult supervision is the most important part of students using the Internet,’ said Dale Alexander, director of APS Core Technology and Communication. ‘There are no technological substitutes.’

School computers have filters in place, but teachers are expected to monitor what students are looking at. Websites with obscene themes are blocked as required by the Child Internet Protection Act, but some sites parents might expect to be blocked, are not. Alexander said the district uses a legal approach to filtering because teachers use a number of sites thought of as legitimate by educational standards. The more teachers can make a video on part of a class project and post it on YouTube. Teachers may post videos on the popular site, and schools have a legitimate reason to access them.

Alexander said teachers can decide which sites are appropriate to visit, as long as they watch what the students are viewing. Game websites are not automatically blocked, either, because teachers often are educational games during lessons. Parents should check their students’ teachers if they have any questions about classroom computer use.

Students are expected to use computers for classroom-related purposes. The APS Student Internet Acceptable Use Policy states, in part, “The goal in providing these resources is to promote educational excellence in the Albuquerque schools by facilitating resource sharing, students’ use of technology, communication with the support and supervision of parents, teachers, and support staff.” It is just a small part of the policy, however. The policy also prohibits violation of copyright laws, vandalism, revealing passwords and using APS resources for commercial purposes.

Alexander said parents can protect their students by knowing what students are viewing, and viewing the internet. Parents can access ‘Introduction to Internet Safety,’ online courses provided by the New Mexico Attorney’s General Office for teens and for parents of students at all ages. Go to learnbc.com. We don’t need to log in; just click on the link to the program.

By learning how technology is used, teachers can protect the students who will use them. Students can take advantage of educational opportunities on the Internet, and keep them safe.

Celebrate the 8 essential goals toward better education for the Albuquerque community!
With 136 schools in APS alone, it is widely expected that these kind of situations. The state fire marshal is required by law to perform fire safety inspections on schools, and we are working with county and city fire departments to make sure that happens, and to make sure any problems uncovered are addressed.

Our teachers and staff at schools are thoroughly trained to handle lockdown situations. From reports I’ve received, they do a great job in calmness when a lockdown happens, and that keeps students calm. Kids take their cues from around them. Teachers handle things professionally, and students respond in kind. Students should be reminded that they should always tell a teacher, principal or other official when anything seems unusual at school.

In New Mexico, public schools are required by law to conduct 13 fire drills per year, which is just part of a larger plan to keep schools safe.

APS schools work with the district’s maintenance and operations staff to ensure safety procedures are followed. Custodians test the lights in school exits monthly, for example. They check sprinkler heads and other sprinkler equipment month by month. They also clean all exhaust vents on the buildings.

School resource officers keep an eye on the parking lot to see that no cars are parked in fire lanes. Brightly colored curbs serve as a safety measure.

“From a safety point of view, we make sure fire lanes are painted,” Dufay said, and “we make it clear to the public that they drop-offs, APS cars, delivery trucks. There is no parking allowed in the central control panel for the fire safety system at West Mesa High School. The panel receives signals from all alarm stations and sprinkler heads in the building.

The largest project related to fire safety is the required every school year as an initial inspection and a follow-up to check to see if any repairs or changes have been addressed.

Inspectors look for violations such as furnace and boiler rooms and electrical closets being used for storage. Those may not be a big deal, but there may be a small improvement for the overall safety of the building.

What the state fire marshal doesn’t have the personnel to reach every school, as they are assigned to high schools and middle schools. Students and parents may recognize them as the ones they see in blue around campus. They are a security personnel who work directly for APS Police.

CSAs also are assigned to high schools and middle schools. Students and parents may recognize them as the ones they see in blue around campus. They are a security personnel who work directly for APS Police. They do not have the same authority as the officers, but their training and their jobs allow them to do their jobs.

All high schools also are at least one APD officer or sheriff’s deputy, depending on whether the school is in a rural area or in a city or urban area. They have the most direct connection to the school, the most direct connection to the police, and the most direct connection to the students. They can run a lockdown very quickly, and they can make sure the school is safe in their classrooms instead of exposed to the elements.

When schools are locked down, students are kept safe in their classrooms instead of exposed to the elements. The school is safe in their classrooms instead of exposed to the elements. The school is kept safe in their classrooms instead of exposed to the elements. The school is kept safe in their classrooms instead of exposed to the elements.

The state fire marshal agreed. The state stopped it in because it bears ultimate responsibility. The state could also use more personnel to cover so many schools, and Dufay said that the number of personnel has increased over the years. The state fire marshal said that the number of personnel has increased over the years.

As dire as it sounds, the state public Education Department requires that every school have a “current” inspection. They require that all of the company~-inspected to cover all of the schools.

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As part of the inspection process, the state fire marshal has an agreement with local officials to do inspections, called fire risk assessments. This agreements are different among schools. Albuquerque Fire Department, Bernalillo County, Los Ranchos, Corrales and Kirkland Air Force Base. The city and county fire departments cover most of the territory.

In case of an incident by learning more about the safety from your school this year. The NM Department of Health offers some school safety tips. Parents put themselves at risk by being out in the open, and officers have to stop what they’re doing to clear “an extended lockdown” like at La Cueva High School last spring. APS may step in to take charge of the situation. Reed said that they will operate under a "unified command" if several agencies are involved.

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Schools do a terrific job maintaining order. The APS Police have a lot of ground to cover, and, though some issues have not been entirely resolved, Reed says they are no less valuable.

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I hope you find this issue of School Matters informative, and I encourage you to take some time to discuss safety with your children. Let’s all make sure that students feel safe, and that we work together to keep them safe.

APS Police know the territory and the students

A Message From Superintendent Winston Brooks

APS Maintenance & Operations crew members David Cardabaq, left, and James Cook inspect the central control panel for the fire safety system at West Mesa High School. The panel receives signals from all alarm stations and sprinkler heads in the building.

Albuquerque Public Schools Health & Wellness Department and APS Police work together to maintain a safe school environment – from prevention/intervention to response/recovery. Albuquerque Public Schools also coordinates efforts with local authorities to help ensure the best possible care for your children in the event that an incident occurs during school. Should an incident occur during school hours, APS has a detailed incident response plan. In addition, school administrators and staff review and update their site safety plan each year. This fall, each APS site will develop an expanded safety plan.

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know them. The officers assigned directly to schools do a terrific job maintaining order. The connections they make with your children make things go more smoothly and prevent potential problems. I’m proud of the work they do.

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