

News Writing

2019 Central Texas Invitational Meet

You are a reporter for the Leaguetown **Press**, the student newspaper of Leaguetown High School. From the given information, write a **news story** as you would for the high school newspaper. You may use statements attributed to individuals as **direct or indirect quotes**. You may not change the meaning of a statement. You have **45 minutes**. Do not write your name or the name of your school on this sheet or entry. **Put your number on your paper.**

Leaguetown High School is located in Central Texas and has 2,300 students enrolled in grades 9-12. In November, Safe-T, a company that specializes in school safety, made a presentation to the school board about its school safety products, including a personal alert device (PAD) for teachers. The PAD is a key fob that teachers wear around their necks. Teachers can alert school security by pressing and holding a red button on the front of the fob. When the alert is activated, school security receives an emergency alert with the teacher's location. Safe-T also showed the school board several other safety products, but the board liked the PADs the best. It voted unanimously to purchase a PAD for each high school teacher and administrator. The PAD system will cost \$70,000. The district will pay for the system with funds from a safety innovation grant that it received in September.

Teachers and administrators will receive training on the PADs on Jan. 7 when they return to school from the winter break. Teachers will begin wearing the devices to school the following day. Leaguetown is the first school in Central Texas to use the devices. Two schools in the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex piloted the devices last spring.

You are writing for the issue of the Press to be distributed this Monday, Dec. 9.

■ MORRIS RONDALL, superintendent

"With school shootings on the rise, our district and community wanted to ensure the safest campus possible, and these PADs will help us get there. The high school is a large campus with four separate buildings and two parking lots. That's a lot of space for our two resource officers and seven high school administrators. The PADs will help our team get to situations faster and more efficiently.

"The PADs will be helpful in other emergencies — whether it's a medical emergency, an altercation, a safety hazard, suspicious activity or any situation where a teacher doesn't feel safe or needs help. We want our security and administrators on the scene as fast as possible. The quicker our response time, the better the results.

"The training on Jan. 7 will take about two hours, and then each teacher and administrator will be issued a key fob. We will store the key fobs in the main office where the chargers will be located. Teachers will pick them up in the morning and drop them off after school.

"I spoke with the superintendent of Northton ISD last week. His schools started using the PADs last year, and his teachers love them. He said the PADs gave both parents and students peace of mind and helped in several non-shooting emergencies."

■ **FRANCIS RICKMAN, social studies teacher**

“I have mixed feelings about the PADs. On one hand, I am glad the school board is trying to make the campus a safer place, and I do think the PADs will help. On the other hand, I am not thrilled about having to wear it every day. It doesn’t sound like a big deal to drop off your PAD every afternoon and pick it up every morning, but it will be on some days. I have two children in kindergarten, and I take them to school every morning, which means I am always rushing to be ready for my first period class. Stopping by the office to pick up the PAD is going to take time — something I don’t have much of in the morning. I asked if another teacher could pick mine up, but the principal said everyone has to sign his or her PAD in and out every day. That’s going to be a pain. I also am not thrilled about the cost if we lose it. It’s too expensive for any teacher.”

■ **JASON VIRGIL, parent and president of the PTA**

“The PTA supports the purchase of the PADs 100%. We believe they will improve school safety and help our teachers when different emergencies arise. We would like the administration to expand the use of the PADs to include after school activities, though.”

■ **DEAN BROWNE, athletic director**

“The coaching staff is eager to get their PADs, but we are a bit frustrated that we can’t wear them to our after school athletics. Last year, we had a student collapse on the field during after school practice. It would have been much quicker for us to push a button than to send students inside the building to call 911.”

■ **EDEN METZLER, principal**

“Most of our staff is excited about the PADs. Some teachers have shared some concerns with me. Several staffers, especially coaches, want to use the PADs for after school activities, but we don’t keep our security that late in the day. We will not have anyone monitoring the emergency calls. We simply don’t have the people-power or the money to make that happen. Coaches and teachers should use their cell phones for emergencies after school. Plus, we plan to lock the storage room with the PADs 30 minutes after school ends. We don’t want everyone in the school to have keys to that room. The equipment is too expensive.”

■ **ANDREW NEGROS, sophomore**

“I support any measures to make the school safer. My cousin is a student at Sante Fe High School. She wasn’t injured in the shooting, but she described that day to me. She heard everything and saw several of the students who were shot. Honestly, I am a little scared to come to school sometimes. My mom says schools are still safe, and I want to believe that. But it doesn’t feel like that when you see what is happening around the country. I am glad the teachers are getting those emergency alert buttons. I think our school should do even more — maybe metal detectors or banning backpacks?”

■ **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Teachers who lose their fobs will be responsible for replacing them. A new fob will cost \$599.