

PRAIRIE HOME R-V SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Jordan Hoecker

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Melody Paulson

Principal

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October 21, 2025

Subject: Update on Today's Evacuation

I wanted to provide an update regarding our evacuation today due to the potential presence of natural gas.

Earlier today, an employee detected what appeared to be the smell of gas near the furnaces on the high school side of the building and I was immediately alerted. After checking the area, we initiated an immediate evacuation of the entire building and shut off the gas lines to the furnaces.

We quickly contacted 911, followed by Ameren, and our furnace repair vendor. The fire departments and the sheriff's department arrived promptly to assist and begin checking for leaks.

Students were safely escorted to the playground area until buses were moved so students could be sheltered in the bus barn from the wind. We soon began transporting our youngest students to the Methodist Hall, followed by our older students. Everyone remained there until the school building was cleared for re-entry.

The fire department first checked the building and found no detectable gas levels, giving the initial all-clear. We then waited for Ameren to arrive for a second inspection. Their readings also showed no gas detected inside the building. Upon further inspection of the furnace units, a small leak was located in the control unit of one furnace. Ameren's meter detected less than 50 parts per million near that part inside the furnace — far below the lower explosive limit for natural gas, which is 50,000 parts per million. While there was no immediate danger, this did confirm the source of the odor. That furnace has been shut off, and the necessary part has already been confirmed and ordered by our furnace repair company. Repairs are expected to be completed within the next couple of days, at which time we will be able to use that unit again.

I would like to extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to everyone involved today:

- Our fire departments and sheriff's office for their swift and professional response
- The employee who promptly reported the concern, ensuring our students' safety
- The Methodist Church for graciously allowing us to use their space during the evacuation
- And finally, our staff for keeping students calm, organized, and safe throughout the event

Thank you to our parents and community for your understanding and support. The safety of our students and staff will always be our top priority.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jordan Hoecker'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Jordan' being more prominent.

“LEARNING TODAY FOR A BETTER TOMORROW”