



November 18th, 2024

Dear La Sierra Military Families:

Fentanyl and the opioid crisis have continued to cause great concern in our community.

- Fentanyl, an opioid pain reliever that is 50 times as strong as heroin, is now being manufactured illegally by criminal organizations.
- This “illicit” fentanyl is mixed into street drugs like cocaine and heroin to make them more potent. It is also being pressed into counterfeit (fake) pills that look like prescription medications such as Percocet, Xanax, and Adderall.
- Youth and adults who purchase these drugs through social media or illegitimate online pharmacies may experience an opioid overdose, which can stop their breathing and lead to death.
- Fentanyl is synthetic, that is, it is formed from lab-made chemicals and not from naturally occurring ingredients. This makes the drug cheaper to manufacture and more profitable to sell illegally.
- Another synthetic drug, xylazine, is increasingly being added alongside illicit fentanyl. Xylazine is a strong veterinary tranquilizer. The combined effect of these two drugs on breathing and the heart can be extremely dangerous and further increases the risk of death.

La Sierra Military Academy holds the health and safety of your children as its highest priority. Out of an abundance of caution, we are proactively training our administrators and staff to recognize an opioid overdose and respond using the emergency medication naloxone, sometimes referred to by the brand name NARCAN®. When given right away, naloxone can stop opioids from acting on the brain and restore breathing.

We are supplying each of our school sites with a naloxone rescue kit that can be used in the unlikely event of an opioid overdose on campus. This kit will be kept in our health

office alongside the Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and epinephrine auto-injectors, which serve similar purposes in treating rare medical emergencies.

### **SIGNS OF AN OPIOID OVERDOSE**

**CALL 911** if you see someone who is:

- Unable to wake up or respond to you
- Breathing slowly or not at all
- Making gurgling, choking, or snoring sounds

Please see the [attached resource](#) for more information about fentanyl and counterfeit pills. We encourage you to discuss this topic with your family in an age-appropriate way.

If you believe your child is struggling with substance use, please reach out to the school administrative team at La Sierra Military Academy for support. La Sierra Military Academy is here to support you and your family, and we will provide additional resources and support to the best of our ability.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important outreach letter, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by calling the school site at (559) 733-6963 or via email at [jose.bedolla@tcoe.org](mailto:jose.bedolla@tcoe.org) Please take care.

Respectfully,

*Jose Bedolla, Ed.D.*

Principal, La Sierra Military Academy