



District announces new Director of Safety & Security: James Bass

Sept. 18, 2025, Durango – Starting Sept. 22, James Bass will serve as the new Director of Safety and Security for Durango School District, bringing a strong background in both emergency management and law enforcement. The former director in this role left the district in early September to return to his family in Florida.

Bass began his career with the district in March 2024 as a Security Specialist before assuming his current leadership role. Bass rotated to all schools in the district, but spent the majority of his time keeping staff and students safe at Durango High School, Escalante Middle School, and Miller Middle School.

“As someone who has spent nearly a year working in school security here in Durango, I can tell you this community should feel reassured,” said Bass. “Our district has strong partnerships with the Durango Police Department, La Plata County Sheriff’s Office, and our School Resource Officers. We use nationally recognized systems to train staff and students. Our goal is simple: Prepare in a calm, consistent way so that in an emergency, everyone knows exactly what to do. We want students to feel safe—not scared—and our practice drills, staff training, and clear communication all support that.”



Before working in education, Bass held multiple leadership positions with the New Mexico Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, including Emergency Operations Center Director, Logistics and Operations Manager, and State Coordinator for the Law Enforcement Support Office.

A retired United States Air Force member with more than 22 years of service, Bass holds a bachelor’s degree in Homeland Security and Emergency Management, along with associate degrees in Emergency Management and Criminal Justice. He is currently pursuing a master’s degree in Homeland Security and Emergency Management.

With a career dedicated to public service and safety, Bass is committed to fostering secure and supportive learning environments for all students and staff. Originally from Boardman, Oregon, he is a proud husband, father of two, and avid outdoorsman who enjoys fishing in his free time.