

Letter to the Cambria Community Addressing Recent Vandalism and Graffiti 7/23/24

Hello Cambria Families, Residents, Employees, and Visitors,

We, as a dedicated, diverse, and united group of Cambria, are incredibly concerned about the recent graffiti, vandalism, and criminal activity which is not representative of our values. We know that the vast majority of our residents are respectful, responsible, and not participating in these crimes. These crimes hurt our community and are not victimless. Law enforcement is actively working with us to identify those involved and enforce consequences. We want to make sure Cambria continues to be an inviting place where residents and visitors always know they are safe and welcomed.



Many signs and buildings have been tagged. You may have seen “CV” or “SSC” spray painted on a local sign or wall (this picture is an example). “CV” stands for “Cambria Village”. “SSC” is referring to individuals from San Simeon.

As a community, let’s commit to working together to stop these illegal and disrespectful incidents. So what can we do? Understanding the motivations behind vandalism is an initial step in creating a comprehensive deterrent strategy. Graffiti is a senseless act of destruction. It often stems from sources such as boredom, thrill-seeking, peer pressure, or frustration. It may also be an expression of socio-economic issues, lack of recreational spaces, or a cry for attention.

Cleaning up the graffiti is costly, and many of the repairs are paid by you, the taxpayers, homeowners, and business owners. If tourists are welcomed with vandalism rather than beautiful elements of our charming town, that could deter them from visiting. As we seek ways to mitigate the destruction, effective strategies are crucial in safeguarding public spaces and properties.

If you see something, say something. The vandalism will likely continue until individuals are caught and receive consequences. You can report incidents to the SLO County Sheriff’s Department at (805) 781-4550. Alternatively, SLO County Crimestoppers is another way to report anonymously at 1-800-549-STOP or through their website <http://www.sanluisobispocondy.crimestoppersweb.com/>.

Deterring vandalism requires us all to work together. By addressing the root causes, having a plan that includes reporting incidents and prompt graffiti cleanup, communicating with our children, and enforcing consequences, Cambria can work to eliminate vandalism while preserving the integrity of our community.

Sincerely,

Signed by:

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Jill Southern
CUSD Superintendent

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Matthew McElhenie
CCSD General Manager

What the COMMUNITY Can Do:

- Engage and welcome our youth - When children and teens are productive and active in their community, they are less likely to be bored and participate in destructive activity.
- Community involvement – Productive youth-focused opportunities or community cleanup efforts can instill a sense of belonging and discourage destructive behavior.
- Immediate reporting and clean up of the graffiti - Vandalism can inspire more vandalism if not dealt with quickly.
- Lighting and cameras – Appropriate lighting and cameras (Ring, for example) act as deterrents. Law enforcement confirms that cameras provide valuable evidence.
- Notify your neighbors and residents - This helps residents stay vigilant so that they can help prevent future problems. Emails, letters, or social media are all effective. The more people stand together against this, the less likely the vandals will continue.
- Timely reporting of incidents to law enforcement - If you see something, say something. The vandalism will likely continue until individuals are caught and receive consequences. You can report incidents to the SLO County Sheriff's Department at (805) 781-4550. [SLO County Crimestoppers](#) is another way to report anonymously at 1-800-549-STOP. Consequences such as fines, community service, or supervised probation can result.

What PARENTS Can Do:

- Speak with your children about the seriousness and consequences (which could include huge fines, criminal charges, probation, and community service). Let your children know they should report any instances of vandalism. Discuss with your child how criminal associations can affect their well being. Defamation or vandalism of any school premises in any form will not be tolerated. The school district has a policy that states graffiti "is now considered vandalism and those convicted face fines, imprisonment and the requirement to clean up the damage or perform community service. **Parents/Guardians may be liable to pay fines as high as \$10,000 and be required to participate in the clean up.** [PC 594-594.8]."
- Monitor social media use. Know who your children are spending time with. If you see your children including "CV" or "Cambria Village" in their social media or conversations, get involved and stop their attempts to find "belonging" through these connections. The vandals may be sharing videos of their crimes through social media.
- Monitor your children's clothing. Individuals wearing baggy pants hanging far below the waistline or predominantly RED or BLUE clothing may be emulating a gang-type wardrobe. Please do not purchase that type of clothing for your children. The schools of Cambria will be strictly enforcing dress code policies and will require parents to immediately bring appropriate clothing for their child to change into, if he or she violates the dress code at school.
- Counseling: If you are concerned about your child's behavior and are needing assistance or counseling, please contact the CUSD District Office at (805) 927-3880 or your primary care provider.

Carta a la comunidad de Cambria sobre vandalismo y graffiti recientes 23/07/24

Hola familias, residentes, empleados y visitantes de Cambria: