

Witness Statement: Seth Dewart

Source: Email to HISD Administration, March 6, 2025

Forwarded to Steve Kaminczak on February 2, 2026

Original email from: Seth Dewart (Seth.Dewart@houstonisd.org) **Original email to:** William Mader (William.Mader@houstonisd.org) — HISD Administration **Date of original email:** March 6, 2025 at 9:51 AM **Subject:** "Teacher fell Jan 30, 2025"

Statement (verbatim from March 6, 2025 email)

According to Raptor, this would have been before 9:10 A.M. Likely 9:00 - 9:10 AM.

On the day of the fire drill, January 30th, there was a dense throng of people (students, staff) leaving the 600s wing and B wing and nearby areas through the doors outside the Lecture Hall, facing the curve in the front parking lot. I saw Steve Kaminczak in the crowd, either going through the doors ahead of him or already outside. I probably was holding the door open around that time, but I don't recall. I was ahead of him, probably just outside the building near the same exit doors, when someone must have exclaimed or drawn my attention to Kaminczak's fall. I did not witness the fall, but did see him on the ground, and likely helped him up as needed. He was on the ground for a bit (more than a few seconds), and that would be visible if we have cameras on those double doors.

As we were in the middle of a fire drill, everyone continued to exit once Kaminczak was walking again. Someone discussing it later (I cannot recall who) said he must have tripped on a bunched up loose carpet mat, the black ones that are less than 2'x3' (roughly doormat size) that had bunched up near the double doors as everyone shuffled through. I am sure the doormat was there, because it was still bunched up after we came back inside. I could have confused the timing, but I remember flattening the carpet with my feet, or maybe witnessed someone else doing the same.

Ms. Canady may have been nearby, as well as Officer Turner or one of our officers, and Brooks and Sanders may have been nearby as well (Sanders behind perhaps), but likely not as near as I was. Turner or one of our police officers was likely behind him, and may have been able to witness a fall more directly.

Sincerely, Seth Dewart

Updated Statement (February 2, 2026)

Dewart added clarifications (noted "in red" in original):

- Changed "I did not witness the fall" to "I did not **closely** witness the fall, but did see him walking just before, then moments later on the ground"
 - Added "probably five to eight feet away" for distance
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Evidentiary Value

1. **Confirms DOL: January 30, 2025** — written by a third party to HISD admin in March 2025
2. **Confirms fire drill** — corroborates claimant's account
3. **Confirms time: ~9:00-9:10 AM** — per Raptor system (HISD's own tracking)
4. **Confirms cause: loose carpet mat** — bunched up near double doors
5. **Confirms hazard persisted** — mat still bunched when they returned inside

6. **Confirms HISD was notified** — email sent TO William Mader (admin) on 3/6/25
 7. **Names additional witnesses** — Canady, Officer Turner, Brooks, Sanders
 8. **References security cameras** — "visible if we have cameras on those double doors"
 9. **Already forwarded to OIEC Ombudsman** — Belinda Person received 2/2/26
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Chain of Custody

- Original: Dewart to Mader (HISD), 3/6/2025
- Forwarded: Dewart to Kaminczak, 2/2/2026
- Forwarded: Kaminczak to Belinda Person (OIEC), 2/2/2026