



APOLLO-RIDGE SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Dr. Matthew E. Curci
Superintendent

January 11, 2019

Dear Parents/Guardians:

As a school system, we are committed to creating and sustaining a comprehensive, coordinated effort to improve the overall safety and well-being of our students, educators and administrators.

To do this, we believe this must involve community-wide programs and initiatives involving parents, teachers, administrators, local law enforcement, mental health & wellness professionals and elected officials to take meaningful action to protect our students.

In the coming days, you will likely hear via the media of the announced launch of the “Safe2Say Something” (S2SS) anonymous reporting system. This program, which is mandated under PA state law / Act 44, teaches students, teachers, and administrators how to recognize warning signs and signals, especially within social media, of individuals who may be a threat to themselves or others and *Say Something* to a trusted adult OR use its anonymous reporting system. Specifically, the program educates participants to:

- Recognize the signs and signals of at-risk behaviors – especially within social media
- Take every sign and signal seriously; act quickly to get help by talking to a trusted adult OR
- Report it anonymously through the S2SS Office of the Attorney General 24/7 Crisis Center, mobile app, or website
- Respond to and manage the submitted tip via school-based multi-disciplinary educator and administrator teams
- Sustain awareness

Our students often are aware of the problems their peers are facing, so we must empower them to know the danger signs and give them the tools to help each other with the assistance of trained and caring adults. As you know, most conversations are taking place on social media, therefore it is critical that we teach our students to be looking out for one another as these digital conversations are taking place. S2SS encourages them to pay close attention to text, video and photos while empowering them to act quickly to help a fellow student.

This program is being provided through Sandy Hook Promise (SHP), a nation-wide non-profit organization. SHP’s programs are in 50 states – with 10,000+ schools and over 5.5 million students and adults trained. They have a track record, reputation, and knowledge of how to work effectively with kids, parents, and teachers to improve school safety and culture. The program is age-appropriate and research-based.

We anticipate that S2SS will help stop school shootings, suicides, and gun threats; it will help reduce bullying and cyberbullying; help intervene upon cutting, drug use, racial conflicts, and other violent and victimization acts. **Even with the new S2SS system, we still encourage you to reinforce with your child the concept we have been stressing with them the last several years: *See Something, Say Something*. They never have to wait to report a troubling incident. These types of incidents can be reported to any school personnel. S2SS and 911 also can continue to be used by students should they feel a true emergency is occurring and police, EMS or fire need to be dispatched.**

This system will become operational beginning on Monday, January 14, 2019. In the following weeks we will be working to educate staff and students on the purpose of the resource and its availability. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call or email me directly or have a conversation with any Building Principal.

Sincerely,

Dr. Matt Curci
Superintendent