



Pocono Mountain School District

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Dear Parent/Guardian,

I wanted to remind you that while we added several new safety measures at our schools this year, the most important safety measure we can have in place at our schools is to foster a culture and climate in our schools where our students and parents feel accepted and comfortable reporting concerns to our administrators.

Last year, our parents and students reported several possible safety concerns directly to our teachers, bus drivers or administrators during school hours or to the police by calling 9-1-1 after school hours. These reports from parents and students allowed me, my administrators and our police to quickly investigate the possible threat, track down and interview others with knowledge of the situation, determine if the possible threat was credible or not and take action accordingly. Our parents and students also reported concerns they had regarding the health and wellbeing of other students, which allowed us to get help for those students.

I ask our parents and students to continue to be our eyes and ears in our community. We need you to continue to report to us any safety concerns or possible threats against our schools that you may hear about or see posted on social media. I hope you and your children will continue to trust us to act immediately to investigate and resolve any concern you report to us, whether it is a possible threat to our schools or a concern about the safety and health of another student.

If you or your child are uncomfortable reporting concerns directly to us, then please use Pennsylvania's new anonymous tip line, Safe2Say Something to report your concern. The state launched this new anonymous reporting system on Monday, January 14, 2019. Within the next few days, we will be training all students in grades 7 to 12 on Safe2Say Something, because not all students are comfortable reporting a concern to a teacher, staff member, bus driver or administrator. In addition, we will be posting more information on S2SS on our PMSD and school websites, including a direct link to the Safe2Say Something 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 Safe2Say Something Office of the Attorney General 24/7 Crisis Center, mobile app, or website

- Respond to and manage the submitted tip via a school-based multi-disciplinary educator and administrator teams
- Sustain the curriculum and awareness via student clubs, in-school activities and call-to-action weeks

Safe2Say Something is based on a three-step system:

- An anonymous tip is submitted via one of the following options:
 1. Website: <https://www.safe2saypa.org/>
 2. Tipline: 1-844-SAF2SAY
 3. Mobile App for Apple and Android Devices
- All calls and tips are received by the 24/7 S2SS Crisis Center.
 1. A S2SS Crisis Center analyst receives and reviews tip information.
 2. The tip is triaged and categorized as either life safety or non-life safety.
 3. The tip is then sent to school officials and law enforcement (as needed) via text, email, and/or phone call.
- School officials and law enforcement intervene and/or offer assistance
 1. School officials and law enforcement (as needed) investigate, assess, and intervene with reported at-risk individuals.
 2. School officials report their outcomes into the Safe2Say Something platform and close out the tip, ensuring accountability for every tip submitted.

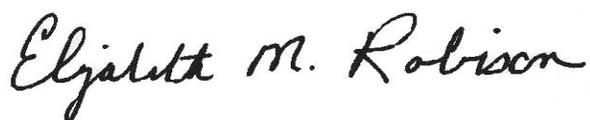
The Safe2Say Something program is being provided through Sandy Hook Promise (SHP), a nation-wide non-profit organization. SHP's programs are in 50 states – with 10,000+ schools and over 5.5 million students and adults trained. They have a track record, reputation, and knowledge of how to work effectively with kids, parents, and teachers to improve school safety and culture. The program is age-appropriate and research-based. They also have funding to provide and sustain the program at NO COST to our school (and all schools statewide).

We anticipate that Safe2Say Something may help stop school shootings, suicides, and gun threats; it may help reduce bullying and cyberbullying; help intervene upon cutting, drug use, racial conflicts, and other violent and victimization acts. Attached is a fact sheet on Safe2Say Something for you to review with your child.

While Safe2Say Something is an important new tool and resource available in Pennsylvania for anyone to use to report a safety concern through an anonymous reporting system, I hope you and our students also know that you can report your concerns directly to our school administrators, guidance counselors, teachers, staff, bus drivers, coaches or directly to me and my Cabinet during school hours for immediate action. If there is a concern after school hours, you may always contact the police through the 9-1-1 system.

If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call or email me directly.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Robison
Superintendent of Schools



Program Overview

In 2018, the General Assembly passed Act 44 mandating the establishment and use of the “Safe2Say Something” (S2SS) anonymous reporting system by every Pennsylvania school entity by January 14, 2019

S2SS is a life-saving and changing school safety program that teaches students, educators, and administrators how: (1) to recognize the signs and signals of individuals who may be at risk of hurting themselves or others and (2) to anonymously report this information through the S2SS app, website, or 24/7 Crisis Center Hotline. The following provides an overview of how the program works and will be implemented in schools:

- S2SS works through 5 easy steps:
 1. A tip is submitted via mobile app, website, or by calling the PA based 24/7 Crisis Center
 2. The tip is then triaged by the Crisis Center to gather enough information to act on it
 3. The tip is delivered to the impacted school and, as needed, local law enforcement via 911 County Dispatch
 4. The school and, as needed, local law enforcement assess and intervene with the at-risk individual
 5. The school then closes out the tip and reports actions taken as a record for their school
- The Office of the Attorney General (OAG) has established S2SS and will manage and maintain the program. The OAG, in partnership with Sandy Hook Promise – a leader in anonymous reporting systems, is building out the app, website and PA-based 24/7 Crisis Center platform.
- OAG Crisis Center analysts are being trained to receive and triage tips to: (1) ensure there is enough information to act upon, (2) conduct 2-way anonymous dialog with tipsters to gather missing information, (3) categorize the tip into life-safety or non-life safety for ease of prioritization by recipients, and (4) deliver the tip to the impacted school and, where needed, its local law enforcement via 911 County Dispatch.
- The S2SS platform allows the official users (Crisis Center analysts, school entities and 911 County Dispatch) to view and act against tips using their PC or mobile device. Additionally, the platform allows for real-time 2-way dialog with a tipster and the viewing and sharing of attachments (such as screen shots and videos) that a tipster has submitted. The platform permits communication between the official users on each tip, allowing for up to the second information sharing and action that all see and read at the same time – as one of the MOST critical pieces of information needed for a life safety issue is a child’s address. This address must be passed to 911 Dispatch to pass to the local jurisdiction to act upon. This exchange can take seconds helping to act quicker to save lives.
- A district, charter school, cyber charter school, private school, nonpublic school, intermediary unit, and/or area vocational-technical school must have an assigned S2SS Lead to coordinate the establishment and training of a 3-5 member team who will have the responsibility to receive and act upon tips. Additionally, the team will help maintain and sustain S2SS long-term in partnership with Sandy Hook Promise local coordinators, who will in turn support the efforts of the S2SS Lead. Training for S2SS Leads is 3 hours, while team members require 2 hours. Both require a minimum of 30 minutes of un-interrupted practice time to learn the system ... 45 minutes if you may be technically challenged.



- County-based 911 dispatches must have an assigned S2SS Lead to coordinate the setup and training of their personnel to action against life safety tips. Dispatchers will use the S2SS platform to view and act upon the tip, conduct 2-way dialog with a tipster, communicate with the school team, and act against the tip by dispositioning to local police jurisdictions. Training of S2SS Leads takes 2 hours and is delivered by external experts and requires a minimum of 30 minutes of un-interrupted practice time. Dispatch team / personnel training will take 2 hours, including 30 minutes of practice time.
- At the conclusion of school and police investigation and intervention (as needed), all tips will be closed out by school personnel only. Districts, charter schools, cyber charter school, private school, nonpublic schools, intermediary units, and/or area vocational-technical schools can then run reports to analyze the types, times, etc. of tips received and, over time, view trends to demonstrate where change is taking place or is needed.
- Students, educators and administrators have the opportunity to be trained post January 14, 2019 to recognize the signs and signals of individuals who may be at risk of hurting themselves or others along with how to use the S2SS anonymous reporting system to submit tips of the signs and signals they observe. Training takes 1 hour and will be made available via an interactive training video, the downloading of materials to self-lead and/or direct S2SS certified trainers (where availability exists).
- S2SS will be sustained via support by Sandy Hook Promise's School Outreach Coordinator, in-school awareness materials (at no cost), annual training of new incoming classes and educators/administrators, and, critically, establishment of in-school student clubs (existing or new clubs) to empower students to create sustained change.
- S2SS is mandated to launch January 14, 2019 – therefore trainings for school and dispatch officials will take place in December, followed by a statewide test to ensure all are ready to go LIVE. Finally, students will be trained (starting January 14) given that “once you train, you are live and students will start submitting tips”.
- As reference – The OAG has partnered with Sandy Hook Promise (SHP) to rollout the S2SS program. SHP is a national non-profit committed to creating safe schools and communities through their four evidenced-based *Know the Signs* intervention programs. To date, SHP has delivered its programs to 10,000+ schools and trained 5+ million youth and adults in every state resulting in countless suicide, school shooting and firearm threat interventions and countless bullying, drug use and other acts of violence and victimization interventions.