

Upper Dauphin Area School District

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Evan P. Williams
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Dear Upper Dauphin Area Families:

In our region there are five school districts (Halifax, Millersburg, Tri-Valley, Williams Valley, and Upper Dauphin) that participate in the Joint School Safety Task Force (JSST). The JSST works together on matters of school safety and provides mutual assistance in the event of an emergency incident affecting a member school district. The districts involved in the JSST 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, first responders, mental health & wellness professionals, and elected officials to take meaningful action to protect our students.

The school districts that participate in the JSST have coordinated a regional implementation of the "Safe2Say Something" (S2SS) system. This program, which is mandated for secondary students under PA state law/Act 44, complements our teaching 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. The Safe2Say Something program encourages students to talk to a trusted adult and instructs students how to use the 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
- 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 a school-based multi-disciplinary educator and administrator teams
- Sustain the curriculum and awareness via student clubs, and in-school activities

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, 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 teaches them what to look for in text, video and photos while empowering them to act quickly to help a fellow student.

The S2SS program is being provided through Sandy Hook Promise, 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

Our mission is to empower our students to be lifelong learners in order to reach their greatest potential.

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). Our hope is that S2SS will complement our programs to eliminate school violence, self-harm, bullying, and other serious issues.

Below is the anticipated schedule for the JSST schools to provide seminars or assemblies to students on the JSST program. If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call or email Brent Bell, School Safety and Security coordinator at bellb@udasd.org or (717) 362-6693.

JSST District	Anticipated Program Training Week
Tri Valley	January 16
Millersburg	January 29
Upper Dauphin Area	February 4
Williams Valley	February 18
Halifax Area	February 18

Sincerely,



Evan P. Williams
Superintendent