

Sadie Halstead Middle School

We Believe & You Belong

Friday, August 30th, 2024

SHMS Families,

We hope your student is feeling acclimated to school and is enjoying being back to school. Please note that today we had an unexpected district-wide Lockdown Drill. There was NO emergency, but the students practiced with their teachers what they would do if we did have an emergency situation. Schools in Washington State are required to hold a minimum of one safety drill per month. Please talk with your child about their experience today and feel free to reach out to me with any questions or concerns.

Additionally, at the beginning of each year we review important procedures and protocols with all students. We know the physical and emotional wellbeing of your children is of the utmost importance to you. Like you, we also feel that our number one priority is keeping your children safe. To that end, it is very important that you take the time to read the following information as the topics below are not only important, they can be very impactful in our efforts to keep every student safe and you as parents supporting our schools in this endeavor.

Threatening language, Harassment intimidation and bullying (HIB), cell phone/device usage, and our districts' response are highlighted topics in this communication. These have a tremendous impact on the physical, social, and emotional wellbeing of our students, as well as the confidence which you, as parents and families, have in our schools' ability to keep your child safe. Thank you for your close attention to these details, and please reach out to us with any questions or clarifications. The following are procedures and protocols we cover at the beginning of the year as well as provide reminders throughout the year:

Threatening Language

Threat toward a student(s) and or school(s) - School Discipline: Any incident involving a serious and violent threat toward any student(s) and or school(s) will result in an immediate emergency removal from school, followed by a report to law enforcement for prosecution, and referral for threat assessment team processing. Upon completion of the investigation, the emergency removal/expulsion will result in a determined length of suspension. In addition, dependent upon possible prosecution, educational placement and safety plans will be implemented following guidance from any possible court rulings.

Student-to-student(s) threats - Parent communication: If a student threatens to physically harm another student or uses language suggesting they want to use a weapon to harm that student whether on or off campus, the school district will communicate only to the parents or guardians of the student(s) receiving the threat, and parent or guardian of the student making the threat. Communication to all parents within a school or the district will only take place if the investigation determined that the threat involved an unspecified group of students or staff or in the instance it is discovered that this specific threat was to be carried out in the school putting other students at risk.

Threats toward a school or large groups of students - Parent communication: If at any time we face a possible viable threat to a school or students within a school, our school district will first and foremost respond to that threat by implementing the standard response protocol to keep our students safe. Once the lockdown has been put into place we will proceed to inform parents. The communication will provide information regarding the nature of the incident as well as possible changes to student schedules and or student transitions to or from school. In a case such as this the school district will continue to provide updates to parents with regard to student safety.

Student handbook/Behavioral Expectations/Disciplinary Procedures

Student review: Next week we will continue reviewing expectations for behavior outlined in our handbook.

Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying (HIB)

Definition and resources for reporting: Our district policies and procedures define HIB as repeated, unwanted, and one-sided. We cover examples of this definition with students, but at the root of people who feel like they are being mistreated by others, our school wants to help remedy the situation and repair relationships. Students and families can make reports of HIB in several ways: 1) completing an HIB form and submitting it to the "Bully Box" outside the school office; 2) complete an anonymous report on our website (newportgriz.com → resources → parent resources → safe schools alert); and 3) call the school office. Reports involve contacting both the alleged aggressor, alleged victim, both families, and school staff for conflict resolution and mediation agreements.

Cell phones and personal devices "Away for the day"

Classroom and office procedure: Over the past few years, we have seen dozens of cell phone/personal device incidents which have substantially disrupted students' lives and educational experiences. For this reason, we expect students to keep their cell phone/personal devices away throughout the school day. If a student is found to be using their cell phone/personal device without permission from the office and their teacher, they will take their phone to the office for the remainder of the day. With repeat instances of cell phone use, family members/guardians may need to pick up their phone from the office. In this event, students will place their phone in an envelope as school staff will never take or look through a student's personal device. We also understand cell phone calls and texts are the most frequent and consistent way many families communicate with their child, and we're asking you to help your student refrain from using cell phones unless they are in the office. If you need to communicate with your child via cell phone, we ask that you call the office or your student comes to the office to use their cell phone in order to keep the school environment free of cell phone use.

Safety protocols:

Safety drills to prepare our students: Throughout the school year we will have drills once a month practicing how we respond to fire alarms, lockdowns, earthquakes, shelter in place events, and automated external defibrillator (AED) drills. Although these practice situations are led by adults, we also discuss situational awareness with our students so they can feel confident to respond for their own safety, in the event there is an actual safety event taking place. We also review the run, hide, fight protocol with students in the event of a dangerous situation on campus.

Each student's safety is of utmost importance to our families and our entire school community. Please contact me with any questions, thoughts, or concerns. I always appreciate hearing from our families because our partnership together positively impacts our Grizzlies!

Thank you,

Tony Moser
Principal

mosertony@newportgriz.com

Office: (509) 447-2426 ext. 2502