

COUNTY OF SUFFOLK



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Steven Bellone
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Dear Superintendent:

As you are aware from your work, substance abuse, specifically heroin, is a growing problem throughout Suffolk County. While this problem is complex, I believe that by partnering together, we as a community can battle this growing epidemic and help safeguard a positive future for our children.

The key to tackling this challenge is awareness. While there are many programs that are being implemented in our schools, parental awareness is critical. Substance abuse thrives when parents look the other way because they think it can't happen in their community or it can't happen to their child. That is why Suffolk County partnered with the Rocky Point School District to create a pilot Public Service Announcement (PSA) program entitled "Not my Child" as part of the County's overall Substance Abuse Initiative, which I have made a priority to enhance.

This short video features parents who can speak firsthand to the tragic consequences of substance abuse and the reality that it can happen in any family and in any community. Importantly, the PSA provides parents with potentially lifesaving information on what to look for and the resources to seek help. In an effort to provide this information to as many parents as possible, Rocky Point made the PSA available to all parents PRIOR to their ability to read their child's report card on the parent portal. Linking the viewing of the PSA to the ability to view the report card was key to significantly raising awareness amongst parents. Not only was this pilot program well received in Rocky Point, but many of the parents proactively used social media, including Facebook, to share the video with their friends and loved ones.

We would like to build on the success in Rocky Point and make this resource available for parents throughout Suffolk County. The PSA "*Not my Child*" is now available to all school districts and we hope that you will link it to the parent portal for the 1st marking period report card viewing.

As Suffolk County Executive and a father of three, I know that we can save lives together, but awareness is the critical first step. I hope that you will partner with Suffolk County and make this resource available to parents in your school district.

To view the PSA go to: <http://www.suffolkcountyny.gov/substanceabuse>. I have also attached additional packet of information about the PSA. Please contact Lisa Santeramo at 631-853-5187 to implement this model in your school district.

Sincerely,

STEVEN BELLONE
Suffolk County Executive

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