School District of Spring Valley

Home of the Cardinals

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October 22, 2018

Dear Students,

As you learned last week, you will now have access to the **anonymous reporting app** called StopIt. Today you will receive our **school code** during 8th hour. You may download the app onto your personal devices from the App Store or Google Play, if your parents allow this. Middle school students, please be sure to check with your parents for permission. You will also have access to this reporting tool with an icon on the school computers.

As I reviewed in last week's assembly, it is still greatly preferred that you use our usual reporting options: (1) Report directly to a trusted staff member or adult, or (2) Email Mrs. Cipriano, Mr. M. Ducklow, or Mrs. Bauer, depending on the issue. StopIt is a third option for reporting <u>serious</u> school issues and should be used only when the other two options are not possible. Serious school issues are those in which someone's safety is at risk, in which someone's behavior puts others at risk, or in which someone is doing something illegal (in school or school related). Small issues, including "mean" behavior, are most effectively handled by the nearest adult. Parents and adult community members should always use the first two options for reporting. StopIt is intended to keep <u>students</u> anonymous when reporting.

StopIt allows anonymous reporting, and it allows two-way communication between the person reporting and the school StopIt response team. StopIt does not require you to create an account or sign in, so there is no way to track you. As I mentioned at the assembly, I asked two of last year's seniors to look into the way that StopIt functions in order to keep students anonymous. They were satisfied that anonymity will be protected. If you are concerned about the level of anonymity, their advice was to: (1) Report from a computer at the public library, (2) Report from home using cellular data, or (3) Report from home using Wi-Fi. If you have concerns about the anonymity of StopIt, please see me and I will try to answer specific questions based on the information that the students researched last spring.

All reports should be submitted in good faith. **False reports are unacceptable <u>and put people at risk</u>** by diverting staff time and resources that could be focused on real issues. Anyone submitting an intentional false report could face school discipline or police follow up. While StopIt does protect the reporter's anonymity,

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other information sources may provide a way to identify a false report. You can be blocked from the app for nuisance reporting.

Please note: If your report involves an issue that requires **immediate attention** in order to keep people safe, **please call 911 right away**. We will only be monitoring StopIt during regular school hours.

Another function of the StopIt app is to **send notification alerts** to everyone who has signed up for participation as a part of Spring Valley MS/HS. This would function much the same as the Skylert notification to parents. I am not sure if we would have time to utilize the StopIt notification alerts to students during an actual emergency, but it is a nice option to have.

As I mentioned at last week's assembly, we ran a trial pilot with a couple of high school students. We did this in order to answer the questions brought up by students. Here are the issues that we explored:

(Q1) Do the messages disappear like SnapChat or store in the device like text messages?
(A1) The messages stay in your app, much like a text message conversation.

(Q2) How can I control notifications?
(A2) Notifications can be turned on and off in your device settings, the same as most other notification functions.

(Q3) How do I know that my report has been successfully submitted?
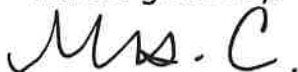(A3) You will receive an automated message in the StopIt app.

(Q4) What happens after a report?
(A4) One of our school staff StopIt response team members will follow up.

If you have more questions, feel free to ask or to email me

A letter will be sent home to parents, explaining this new anonymous reporting tool.

Have a great day!

Mrs. C.

Mrs. Cipriano