

Dear Parents,

One of the things I think about often is how to best keep the children who attend our school safe. In this letter, I will give you information about the safety of your children and what we are doing as a staff to be as prepared as possible to keep your children safe while at school. Specifically, I will talk about our enrollment in the SafeUT program, the Rave Panic Button App, and upcoming presentations for students on how to keep them safe.

SafeUT: I am very pleased to let you know we are now enrolled in the SafeUT program provided by the state of Utah. This program enables parents to have access to counselors trained to deal with crisis intervention and emotional support. Some of the issues the center helps people with are suicide prevention, depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues including dealing with loss or grief. Since the beginning of the school year, we have had an increasing number of students who need assistance dealing with emotional issues. What has been the most alarming to me is how many children as young as age 7, either are having thoughts about suicide or are hearing it from someone they care about. To participate in this program, simply download the SafeUT app on your phone.

RAVE Panic Button App: I am very grateful to our school board who recently approved the purchase and installation this application on each employee's cell phone. It enables immediate communication in the event of an emergency, such as an intruder or medical needs. We are just starting the process of getting this installed and running.

Upcoming children's presentations on keeping themselves safe: Lauren Davis from the Utah Family Support Center will be coming to our school over the next few weeks to present to students what they can do to be safe. This presentation will only be shown to your child with your permission to do so. If you do not want your child to participate, there is nothing for you to do. If you feel this would benefit your child please sign and return the attached permission form to your child's teacher. The faculty and staff have seen this presentation and it was approved by the school board. We feel it would be very beneficial to our students. Parents are invited to attend with their students.

Last of all, I wanted to share an experience I had earlier this week. I was in a classroom observing a lesson. Comments and discussion in class peaked my interest and I proceeded to do some research on my own. I was able to acquire knowledge on a subject I did not know much about and it was gratifying and added joy to my life. This is what education does. It creates a thirst for knowledge and as knowledge is gained the desire for more increases. It is like a good book that is impossible to put down. Elin Nordegren said, "*Education is one thing no one can take away from you.*"

I appreciate all you do to help us instill in your children a desire to gain knowledge.

Sincerely,

Mr. Porter