



For Immediate Release

September 6, 2023

Contact: Mike Keckler
208-332-1591 (office)
208-866-5734 (cell)
Mike.Keckler@osbe.idaho.gov

MORE IDAHO SCHOOLS ENROLLING IN SCHOOL SAFETY TIPLINE PROGRAM

More than 300 Idaho public schools and charter schools are now utilizing the State Board of Education’s See Tell Now! confidential school safety tipline, making the program available in about one-third more schools than it was at the beginning of the last school year.

“This school year alone, we’ve signed up two new charter schools and ten more traditional K-12 schools,” Program Coordinator Chris Thoms said. “Schools are getting the word out about the See Tell Now! program and students are using it.”

With 309 schools now involved, See Tell Now! is nearing the halfway point in terms of it being available in all public schools throughout the state.

Last school year, more than 460 tips were phoned into See Tell Now! Of those calls, 27 involved students who were worried about their own mental health or that of one of their friends who had expressed concerning thoughts or even plans for harming themselves or others.

“Students know what’s going on with other students and being able to intercede and provide support early on in the process, is really what we are trying to do,” said Mike Munger, manager of the Board’s School Safety and Security program.

“We don’t want to wait until it becomes so severe that the concern becomes an emergency.”

Other calls made to the tipline last school year involved mainly reports of bullying and drug use or possession.

In 2022, the Idaho Legislature provided ongoing funding for the See Tell Now! program, meaning schools can participate free of cost. Outreach materials are provided and posted in prominent locations in the schools and distributed to students and parents.

See Tell Now is part of a national school safety network. When a call is made it goes to a call center and information provided is routed to school administrators. “See Tell Now! isn’t intended to keep students from taking their concerns straight to administrators, which is what we prefer, but it does give students another way to share what could be life-saving information,” Thoms said.

“What we always see in the aftermath of critical incidents at schools across the country is that there were warning signs,” added Munger. People, particularly students know about what is going on. The value in programs like See Tell Now! is being able to connect people who may have information, with people who have the ability to do something about it.”

More information about See Tell Now! is available at: <https://seetellnow.org/> or by contacting Program Coordinator Chris Thoms at: chris.thoms@osbe.idaho.gov

#####