



SLATE VALLEY UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

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March 23, 2021

Dear Slate Valley Families,

We have been through a lot this year and over the last four years as a Slate Valley Community. In the past four years we have experienced a threat to school safety and COVID-19. As a result, anxiety has increased for some of our staff, students and community members. The safety, social and emotional wellbeing of students, staff and our community continue to be priorities for Slate Valley as we move towards recovery.

As we move forward with recovery from the pandemic, we are also faced with the potential release of a person who threatened staff and students at Fair Haven Union High School. In 2018, the individual who threatened FHU was adjudicated as a youthful offender, a designation for a defendant under the age of 22 and facing charges within the adult criminal justice system. Youthful offender status only follows an individual through their 22nd birthday, which this individual will turn this year. In some cases these individuals are reintegrated into the community or area prior to the regulation of their youthful offender status. When someone is adjudicated as a youthful offender, information about that individual's whereabouts, treatment, or possible consequences cannot be shared. In this case the Department of Corrections and Department of Children/Families have joint oversight of this individual until his 22nd birthday which is in August. I pride myself on being able to accurately communicate when I have knowledge of matters which may impact our community, but in this case I don't have any additional information. I have repeatedly asked for the information and have been denied access to the information. I have been left to assume there is a likelihood that this individual could return to Vermont in the very near future. If I did have the information, you would have the information as well.

Although I know I don't have specific information on this one individual, I do know that we have been doing great work in terms of school safety and we will continue to be vigilant as a school community. If at any time you have concerns directly related to this individual or any safety concern, please contact local law enforcement. They take these calls very seriously and will promptly look into concerns.

I am fully aware of the anxiety that this may cause some of you on top of COVID-19. However, I felt the need to bring it to your attention as I believe you have the right to know as much as possible. Again, the safety, social and emotional wellbeing of students, staff and our community are the priorities for Slate Valley.

Below you can find contact information for those agencies or individuals you can contact if you are in need of support:

Students can contact their school counselors and other school support by calling the individual schools. To access community based support for mental health issues, please call Rutland Mental Health (for intake appointments) at 775-2381 or the Crisis Line at 775-1000.

Families/Community Members may also contact Rutland Mental Health (for intake appointments) at 775-2381 or the Crisis Line at 775-1000.

As in the past, we encourage community members to report any suspicious or concerning behaviors that may have a negative impact on schools within the District to your local law enforcement agency:

Fair Haven Police Department: 802-265-4531

Castleton Police Department: 802-468-5012

VT State Police Rutland Barracks: 802-773-9101

We are all in this together and we all need to do our part to take care of one another.

Sincerely,

Brooke Farrell
Superintendent