



# School Talk

## WEEKLY UPDATE!

October 23, 2020

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### [Second Step Child Protection Unit](#)

Dear APS Family,

As you may know, all elementary and middle school counselors are using the **Second Step** learning program in your child's classroom. The Second Step program teaches children important skills for getting along with others and doing well in school and community. We currently use both the main program and the Bullying Prevention Unit. Using these lessons helps our school be a safe and supportive place where everyone can learn.

As an natural extension of supporting our students with bullying, we recognize the sad fact of child abuse as one of the largest public health crisis facing children (ages 0 to 18) around the world.<sup>1</sup> For the past three years, elementary counselors across the district have incorporated the Second Step Child Protection Unit. Again this year we plan to deliver one grade level specific lesson to K-5 classrooms before winter break; students will learn ways to help them decide if something is safe or not: specifically, about safe, unsafe, and unwanted touches, and rules about touching private body parts (we define this to students as the area covered by swimsuits.) They'll also learn to say no to unsafe or unwanted touches, and to tell an adult if someone breaks rules about touching private body parts.

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Students will also practice asking an adult for help, telling an adult about an unsafe situation, and being assertive to get out of unsafe situations.

Our families are of course, the most critical part of safety for their children, therefore we work to provide you all with more information and training:

- If you have any questions about the Child Protection Unit or the Second Step program, please contact your student's school counselor. You are welcome to review with the school counselor the lesson(s) used. The Counseling page on the APS website contains additional details about our Second Step lessons. Please note, APS employees and volunteers receive annual training on these issues.
- New this year, we are encouraging caretakers to participate in Adult focused prevention efforts so you can better support your children. Please click this link for more information: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0A45ACA829A6FD0-stewards1>

Ways to get help or support now:

- For a situation where you suspect or know a child in Arlington is or may be in danger please call Arlington Child Protective Services (703 228 1500) they are available 24/7.
- If you need additional help or support for a child outside of Arlington or for something that happened in the past anywhere, these 2 hotlines offer trained mental health professionals 24/7:
- The Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline – 1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422- 4453)
- Darkness to Light – 1-866-FOR-LIGHT (866-367-5444) or text LIGHT to 741741

Thank you for helping us to make our school a safe and supportive place where everyone can learn.

The above message is also available, translated here:

[Español](#) [عربي](#) [Монгол](#) [አማርኛ](#)

### [MPSA Garden Day](#)

The ACMPTA is hosting a **Garden Day** at MPSA. Wear your mask and participate in socially distant gardening. This Sunday from 2-4PM, we will be mulching and working on the raised beds. Children are welcome but the PTA asks that you sign up here so they know how many people to expect:

Remember to bring your water bottle!

*\*Note: There is no access to the school, therefore no immediate access to a bathroom.*

### [Calling 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Graders for Safety Patrols](#)

If your 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> grade child is interested in our virtual Safety Patrol program, please e-mail [Kia Haynes](#). The program will consist of fun & informative self-lead activities/tasks (every two weeks) geared towards safety, virtual meetings once a month, and a small independent project. **Everyone who signs up for the virtual program will be accepted.** Should we get back to school and safety patrols be allowed to

perform duties, their progress with the tasks and their independent project will help us determine who gets to receive a patrol belt and a post.

If your child was a safety patrol last year, do encourage them to participate this year.

### Annual APS Calendar Survey for the 2021-22 School Year Now Available

The Draft APS Calendar for the 2021-22 School Year is now available, along with a survey seeking community input. The survey will be open through October 30. The final calendar proposal will go to the School Board as an information item at the November 17 meeting, and for approval at the December 3 meeting. [Take the survey and view details online.](#)

### Apply to the APS School Resource Officers Work Group

Community members interested in working with staff who will review APS's relationship and operations with School Resource Officers (SROs) can apply to join a 48-member Work Group through Nov. 9. Applications can be completed [online in English and Spanish](#) or on paper using [an online application in Amharic, Arabic, and Mongolian](#) and following instructions for returning the completed form. APS will gather community feedback, as well as recommendations from stakeholders to the School Board and Superintendent, on the future of this relationship. For more information, visit [www.apsva.us/engage/schoolresourceofficer/](http://www.apsva.us/engage/schoolresourceofficer/).

### Reminder: 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Parents: Middle School Info Night is MONDAY

Join APS for **Middle School Information Night** on **Monday, Oct. 26, 2020 at 7 p.m.** The event will be virtual this year and families will be able to watch the event live on [Livestream](#) the night of the event. Families unable to watch the event live will be able to view the event recording after the event.

Families of students entering middle school in the fall of 2021 will hear an overview about APS middle schools, school options, application deadlines and procedures, school-based information sessions, available student resources, and more. The link to the updated Middle School Guidebook for Families will also be shared with families the night of the event.

### Upcoming Dates

- Monday, 10/26 – **Middle School Info Night**, 7PM
- Tuesday, 10/27 – **Teacher Work Day**, Asynchronous Day for MPSA Students
- Wednesday, 10/28 – **Teacher Work Day**, Asynchronous Day for MPSA Students
- Thursday, 10/29 – **Coffee Chat with Principal Genove**, 9:30AM

 **Keep in Touch**

- MPSA on APS: <https://montessori.apsva.us/>
- MPSA on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/MPSArlington>
- MPSA Library on Twitter: [https://twitter.com/MPSA\\_Library](https://twitter.com/MPSA_Library)
- Principal Genove on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/CSGenove>
- Arlington Montessori PTA: <http://acmpta.com/>
- Arlington Montessori Action Committee (AMAC): <http://www.arlingtonmontessori.org/>