

ASHLAND HIGH SCHOOL



Kelley St. Coeur
Principal

Erin Lachapelle
Dean of Student Services

Michael Grimes
Athletic Director

Lauren Carreiro
Dean of Academics & Activities

Brian Garrigan
Guidance Liaison

February 2, 2018

Dear Parent/Guardian of 9th Grade Student,

In response to the increase in drug and opioid use in Massachusetts, Governor Charlie Baker signed into law "An Act relative to substance use, treatment, education and prevention" (H. No. 4056). Among its many components, this law mandates that school districts annually conduct verbal screenings about substance use with two different grade levels.

In compliance with this new law and in order to help prevent students from starting to use substances, or to intervene with early use, Ashland High School will be conducting interview-based screening with all ninth grade students about the use of alcohol, marijuana, and other drugs. We will follow the Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) protocol developed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and will utilize the most commonly used substance use screening tool for adolescents in Massachusetts, the CRAFFT. (www.ceasar-boston.org/CRAFFT/)

Student screening sessions will be brief (approximately five minutes) and conducted confidentially by the school nurse or a guidance counselor in private, one-on-one sessions. **All** students will receive some educational material and a resource list at the time of the screening. Students who are not using substances will have their healthy choices reinforced by the screener. The screener will provide brief feedback to any student who reports using substances or is deemed to be at risk of future substance use. Results of the screening **will not** be included in your child's school record, nor will they be shared with any staff other than the SBIRT team.

Screening will be conducted during your child's English class in February. As with any school screening, you have the right to opt your child out of this screening. If you wish to exclude your child, please contact the school nurse, Maureen Wiencek, by email at awiencek@ashland.k12.ma.us or with a written note by Monday, February 12, 2018 at 8am. Screening is voluntary and students may choose not to answer any or all of the questions asked.

Research shows that parents' influence is the number one reason young people decide not to drink alcohol. One way to prevent youth substance use is to talk with your child about your family's thoughts and expectations regarding substance use. Together, schools and families **can** make a difference for students in Ashland.

Sincerely,

Kelley St. Coeur
Principal

Maureen Wiencek, RN
School Nurse