
International Baccalaureate and Spanish Language Program at Franklin Elementary2 messages

Kathleen Barry <barrygirl7@yahoo.com>

Mon, Jun 7, 2021 at 11:11 PM

To: Public Comment <publiccomment@mcpsmt.org>

Dear Chairperson Diane Lorenzen, and MCPS Board Members Jeffrey Avgeris, Grace Decker, Nancy Hobbins, Vicki McDonald, Koan Mercer, Wilena Old Person, Jennifer Vogel, and Ann Wake,

I am writing to thank you for listening to and addressing our concerns about the loss of the IB program and our Spanish teacher at Franklin Elementary. I sincerely appreciate the decision made to retain both for an additional academic year while further research is conducted.

With gratitude,

Kathleen Barry

Franklin Elementary Parent

Franklin School- IB and Spanish

Robyn Szczukowski <jakerobyn03@gmail.com>
To: publiccomment@mcpsmt.org

Tue, Jun 8, 2021 at 11:16 AM

Dear Board of Trustees,

My name is Robyn Szczukowski and I have been a part of the PTA at Franklin School for 9 years. Thank you for listening, reading, and being an influential part in reinstating our Spanish teacher, Profe. Anderson. We were also given a rightful place at the table to have a proper IB review process in the upcoming school year for Franklin School. I remember when our former Principal Shattuck brought the idea of IB to the PTA and the parents/teachers were so excited and motivated to embark on this journey. My two daughters and son were so excited to have Spanish as an elective at Franklin. The benefits of Spanish in schools can enhance a child's letter recognition and sounds along with impulse control/focus skills, as well as opening a child's eyes to a melting pot society of something greater than themselves.

After Assistant Superintendent Mr. Lodge's email, we were so thankful for this wonderful news and opportunity. However, we realized our Spanish program and IB is only guaranteed for one more year and next year we might be in the same position of losing our Spanish program and stopping IB. I realize IB accreditation is very expensive per school and funding is running out quickly. Is there an option to keep Spanish as an elective for all Elementary Schools like Russell, Rattlesnake, Lowell, Chief Charlo and Jeanette Rankin School who were not mentioned in the IB review report? By at least having 5 electives(Art, Spanish, Library, Music and Art) in these schools, it would increase more prep time for teachers and this would improve the equity between all the schools. We are so appreciative of the wide benefits of Spanish for our children and would love for other schools to be given this opportunity. We would love some guidance on how to receive more funding for Spanish in all the schools in the district to be continued for years to come. Possibly having traveling Spanish teachers for the low income schools such as Franklin, Lowell and Russell School.

Russell, Lowell and Franklin are Title 1 schools with low enrollment. By having IB in these schools or Spanish as an elective, it could improvement the enrollment rates in these schools. We truly just want the best for our Missoula students and we want them to strive in life by being open to all cultures. This could be a beautiful beginning in gaining cultural relevant pedagogy in all of our Missoula County Public Schools. I also learned from the informative presentation from Mr. Lodge and Mrs. Guess that the district would like to have continuity between the levels of schools across IB learning, so a student can be in an IB program from Elementary to High school. Spanish Education could be a chance to have equity with continuity between schools and schools can become more informed about the IB training, in the end this change could affirm diversity and multicultural educational school reform. Thank you so much for reading this letter and for your dedication to our community of learners.

Respectfully,

Robyn Szczukowski
Franklin Parent
Franklin PTA Treasurer

Sent from my iPhone

Missoula Fentanyl Warning: Resources

2 messages

Jon Epstein <jonepstein33@gmail.com>

Tue, Jun 8, 2021 at 7:54 PM

To: publiccomment@mcpsmt.org, javgeris@mcpsmt.org, gdecker@mcpsmt.org, dlorenzen@mcpsmt.org, vmcdonald@mcpsmt.org, kmercer@mcpsmt.org, woldperson@mcpsmt.org, jvogel@mcpsmt.org, awake@mcpsmt.org, rwatson@mcpsmt.org, jccourtney@mcpsmt.org, jcmiller@mcpsmt.org, rrettig@mcpsmt.org, kpalmer@mcpsmt.org, kmritchlin@mcpsmt.org, mayorstaff@ci.missoula.mt.us, Jen Epstein <jen.epstein@comcast.net>

Hello Missoula Education Leaders,

I am writing to you as I noticed in the news tonight that Missoula is currently experiencing a rash of incidents, including and 18 year old's death, involving fentanyl in fake pharmaceutical pills, likely bought over social media. I am not selling anything and have no political agenda. I am just interested in helping and saving lives in your community. Please read this.

I live in Portland, Oregon and my 18-year-old son recently died from this exact same thing. Our community lost multiple teenagers to this recently. This is happening nationally but many are unaware that unsuspecting youth, often with no history of drug use, are buying what they think are harmless pain killers, Xanax, etc very easily and cheaply via social media...and are getting deadly fentanyl and dying.

We worked with our local public school district to quickly raise awareness and get instructional material developed for students to reduce the risks. The school district has made the material free for all other schools to use. I understand your last day of instruction is already upon you, but there is lots of valuable content you can provide to families and students right away through email and social media....**you can save lives if you take action.** And don't just trust me, talk to your law enforcement agencies and health departments and they will tell you the same thing.

You may find more information in the attached letter, the links below, and the explainer from Beaverton School District.

<https://www.beaverton.k12.or.us/departments/communications-community-involvement/fake-and-fatal>
<https://www.songforcharlie.org/tools-for-teachers>

Please feel free to respond to me if you have questions. Note I am merely a parent who unfortunately has become far too knowledgeable about this...I am not an education, public health, or law enforcement professional.

I'm sorry you are going through this. I know you care deeply about students and their safety and hope you find this helpful.

Regards,

Jon Epstein
Portland, OR



Deaths from fake pills are surging across the country and right here in our own school district. In the past 18 months, we have lost several students — teenagers who had hopes and dreams and plans. These teenagers had families who loved them and are still coming to grips with their losses.

Here is what's happening: teens are purchasing what they think are OxyContin, Percocet or Xanax pills via social media, but drug dealers are selling fake pills with the cheaper, stronger and more deadly synthetic drug called fentanyl. Fentanyl is up to 50 times more potent than heroin and 100 times more potent than morphine. Fentanyl is odorless, tasteless and colorless. Teens never know what they're getting. One pill can kill them. One pill.

The Beaverton School District just sponsored a fentanyl awareness campaign, entitled "Fake & Fatal: One Pill Can Kill." We'll promoted resources on our district website. We did a social media blitz. Our administrators received specific fentanyl training. We hosted a virtual "[Community Conversation about Fentanyl: Fake & Fatal](#)" which was viewed by over 6,500 people. Next week, our staff can attend an optional professional development session where fentanyl information will be shared. And our secondary students will be getting information in their health classes over the next month.

This message is critically important for our students and parents/guardians to hear.

Our Communications & Community Involvement team has spent a fair amount of time developing resources to support this campaign. We'd like to make those resources available to you, in hopes of spreading the message further.

- [Video](#) that shares the story of a BSD student who died from fentanyl poisoning in December 2020 and includes a heartbreaking interview with his parents. This video has been viewed by 43,000 people and counting.
- [Website](#)
- [Social media posts](#) with associated text, graphics and video clips
- [Logos](#) for Fake & Fatal campaign (English & Spanish)
- [District-wide message](#)

We hope that you find these resources helpful. If you have questions, feel free to contact me at Shellie_Bailey-Shah@beaverton.k12.or.us.



Letter to State Education Leaders- May 2021.docx

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May xx, 2021

Dear State Education Leader,

I am reaching out to you about an urgent crisis that is affecting students and their families across our nation. Young people are dying in alarming numbers after taking pills they think are safe medicines, but which turn out to be counterfeits made of fentanyl. If you are unaware of this issue, I encourage you google your state name and 'fentanyl', note the resources on page two of this letter, and/or read this CDC press release*: <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2020/p1218-overdose-deaths-covid-19.html/>

Until recently, like most parents across the United States, I was unaware of how this next wave of the opioid epidemic might affect me. Then in December of 2020, our family was unexpectedly struck by tragedy. Our 18-year old son Caley died of fentanyl poisoning while home from college over Christmas break. As is becoming more common, Cal was a 'regular' kid who showed no evidence of having drug use issues. He made a poor choice by experimenting with a prescription pill he thought was safe, and paid for it with his life. Kids and young adults often make poor choices as they grow up. They should have the opportunity to learn from them, they should not die from them.

In the wake of Cal's death, I have learned that the drug landscape has changed dramatically since fake prescription pills made of fentanyl began flooding the US market a few years ago. Young people today are used to taking prescription pills, and often even share pills. Drug traffickers exploit this demand by pressing realistic counterfeits designed to look exactly like legitimate Xanax, Oxycodone, Percocet and other familiar brands. To maximize profits, they use the powerful opioid, fentanyl, as the active ingredient. Then, they falsely advertise their fake pills on social media to our youth.

My husband, Jon, and I are determined to warn others about this new and deadly threat. To educate our community about this issue, we worked closely with our local school district, Beaverton School District (BSD) in Oregon, to create a thorough fake pill awareness campaign. The resulting Fake & Fatal campaign was rolled out to our community in April/May 2021, and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. As we suspected, most families did not understand how easily young kids are being lured by drug dealers in their social media communities to buy pills online, and that the consequences can be deadly.

It was immediately obvious to us that the Fake & Fatal awareness campaign was exceptional - unlike any other learning material about fake pills available today. In fact, there is almost no content available on this topic, as it is a relatively new phenomenon. In the interest of saving lives, BSD has graciously made their content available to be freely used by school districts across our nation. All of the material around the Fake & Fatal campaign is now available online for others to use in the existing form, or to modify to make their own... no strings attached. This includes content and teaching material such as lesson plans and teaching aids.

Now as I try to spread this awareness campaign across our nation, I need your help.

I am asking you to do ONE thing... please share this letter and resource page with the appropriate party in all of the schools districts in your state. Of course, it will be up to each individual school district to decide if/how they will disseminate this information to their communities, but we would like to be sure they are aware of this problem and the educational resources that are available to address it.

If you are willing and able to share with the school districts within your home state, please let us know by contacting the person from your home state who sent you this letter by Wednesday, June 30. If you are not able to do this, would you please let us know your suggestion for the best way to reach each school district in your state with this information so we can do it ourselves? If you have other information such as contact information for key groups spearheading efforts such as this in your state, please share those with us so we may contact them.

I thank you in advance for your support. With the loss of Cal, we are living every parents' worst nightmare. We hope to prevent other families from having to go through this experience, and while we know we can't save everyone, we know making this learning material available to everyone will help educators across the country to warn their communities quicker than if they had to develop their own materials from scratch, and it will save lives.

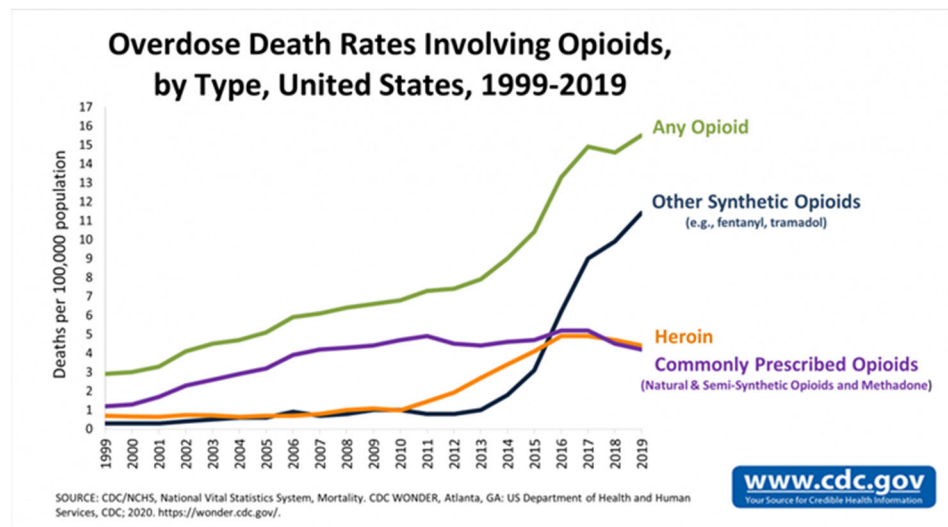
Thank you for your consideration,
Jennifer Epstein
jennifer@songforcharlie.org

X

CDC Recommendation:

- *Harm reduction organizations:*
 - *Partner with public safety and public health to obtain and disseminate the latest information on local drug supply and overdose trends.^{51,52}*

Source: <https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/2020/han00438.asp>



Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/data/analysis.html>

*For additional state detail on this CDC press release, click here:
<https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/2020/han00438.asp>

Fake Pill/Fentanyl Awareness Middle School/High School Campaign Material Available for Free



ONE PILL CAN KILL

Beaverton School District Fake & Fatal Campaign:

www.beaverton.k12.or.us/departments/communications-community-involvement/fake-and-fatal

This website is an example of a successful fake pill awareness campaign that was created by Beaverton School District in Oregon. Free resources that are available for other school districts to use and modify as needed include:

- Complete middle school and high school fake pill curriculum, including lesson plans, teacher guide, and other resources.
- Recording from community conversation
- Presentation from community conversation
- Cal's story video
- Free graphics and market campaign material



Song for Charlie:

www.songforcharlie.org

Song for Charlie (SFC) is a family-run nonprofit charity dedicated to raising awareness about 'fentapills' — fake pills made of fentanyl. SFC partners with experts, educators, parents and other influencers to reach the most vulnerable group: young people between the ages 13-30. SFC's programs highlight the emerging dangers of self-medication and casual drug use in the fentanyl era and encourage healthier strategies for coping with stress."

SFC has a webpage where districts can share their educational material. If you have material that you think would be helpful for others trying to educate kids/young adults about the dangers of fake pills, please post them here: xxxxxx (add SFC Webpage)



Public Comment <publiccomment@mcpsmt.org>

Please unmask our children

Lara Hammond <laramurat@gmail.com>
To: publiccomment@mcpsmt.org

Tue, Jun 15, 2021 at 7:56 AM

I would like to express my strong support for unmasking our children for the school year 2021/2022.

My children have worn masks for more than 1000 hours this year. All of the parents I have talked to agree that children have suffered enough this past year. Please drop the mask mandate or change it to be optional, allowing the decision to be made at the family level.

At this point, I am more concerned about the negative effects of long-term mask wearing than I am about Covid. **The virus does not appear to be targeting those younger than 12 years old. Influenza kills more young children than Covid does, and we have never required mask-wearing or flu shots to attend school. The CDC has stated children are more affected by Influenza than by Covid.**

Now that vaccine access is widespread to 12 and older, it is time to allow our young children to breathe and socialize with friends normally.

Please be open to this request. I appreciate your help and support with this. Thank you.
