



Bethlehem Central  
School District

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Dr. Michael D. Tebbano  
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Dear Parents:

You may have noticed an article in this morning's Times-Union emphasizing safety precautions students should take when walking to and from school, particularly in light of recent reports of child abduction attempts in the region. At this time, it's important that we revisit this message in our community to be sure we are doing everything possible to keep students safe.

On Wednesday of this week, there were unsubstantiated reports of suspicious automobile activity both near the Elsmere Elementary School playground and while some students walked home from Hamagrael Elementary School. The district reported the activity to police, who are following up on the matter. To be clear, no students were harmed in any way on this day and the district is not alleging any abduction attempts. Yet, incidents of this nature always serve as a good opportunity to remind our students of necessary safety precautions when walking to and from school, or other locations in the community.

We have asked our staff members, in particular noon hour aides, to remain vigilant during recess and other times students may be outside. Please remind your children about the following safety steps:

- It is always best to walk to and from school in groups, whether it is with siblings, neighbors and even parents.
- Walk against traffic, as this makes it harder for students to be followed. Also, observe all stop signs, traffic lights and crossing guard instructions.
- If approached by a stranger, do not talk to them and run away. Within their walk route to and from school, make sure your children know safe places they can run to — whether it is back to school, a store, a friend or neighbor's house, or even an open office building.
- Finally, students should talk to an adult — parents, teachers and/or their principal or another staff member — about anything that makes them feel unsafe.

By working together, we can continue to ensure the safety of our students. I know of no higher priority. Please call my office or speak to your child's principal if you have any questions or information to share.

Sincerely,

Dr. Michael D. Tebbano  
Superintendent