

NEWS

FROM THE MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Phone (612) 668-0230
Fax (612) 668-0235

MEDIA ADVISORY
September 11, 2009

807 N.E. Broadway Street
Minneapolis, MN 55413

MEDIA CONTACT:

Heather Hyvare
MPS Communications Associate
Phone: (612) 668-0233
Mobile: (612) 290-6019
heather.hyvare@mpls.k12.mn.us

Matt Laible
City of Minneapolis Communications Department
Phone: (612) 673-2786
matthew.laible@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

MPS, City and police to launch citywide violence prevention tool

Tip line enables young people to anonymously call or text information regarding potential violent threats

MINNEAPOLIS – On September 14, Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) Superintendent Bill Green, Minneapolis City Council Member Don Samuels and Minneapolis Police Chief Tim Dolan, along with Minneapolis Blueprint for Action co-chairs, will announce the launch of an anonymous, city-wide tip line for youth with an event beginning at 10:00 a.m. at Southwest High School.

The three community partners hope that the tip line will serve as another step toward violence awareness, education and prevention within the community. The national *Speak Up* campaign was created in 2002 by PAX, a nonprofit organization working to prevent gun violence among children and families. With the *Speak Up* program, PAX strives to give young people the opportunity to play a critical role in keeping friends, classmates and the community safe from violence.

Minneapolis will be the first city to utilize PAX's innovative text messaging technology. The texting service allows students to send an anonymous text message to the hotline and communicate with a crisis counselor via text. Professionally trained crisis counselors respond to texts and telephone calls 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Counselors will compile a report of circumstances from calls or texts and will send the report to MPD and MPS district emergency management staff, if necessary, for further investigation.

The program has been utilized in locations across the country, including Los Angeles, New Mexico, Pittsburgh and San Francisco. Fall program launches include Knox County, TN.; Little Elm, TX.; New York City and Minneapolis.

A public awareness campaign including outdoor advertising, television and radio public service announcements will begin within the next month. Please visit www.speakup.com for more information.

- WHAT:** City leaders and Southwest student council members will distribute *Speak Up* tip line stickers and wallet cards to the students of Southwest High School during passing time. Project experts from MPS, the City of Minneapolis, MPD and PAX will be available for interviews.
- WHEN:** Monday, September 14, at 10:00 a.m.
- WHERE:** Southwest High School link
3414 West 47th Street; Minneapolis, MN 55410
Limited parking is available. Please enter through the main entrance, Door 3.

###