



DR. MICHAEL J. MARTIRANO  
Superintendent of Schools

## St. Mary's County Public Schools

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November 14, 2011

Dear Parents and Staff:

Over the last several weeks, our daily news has been dominated with very disturbing information about allegations of abuse of children by the former assistant football coach at Penn State University. I, like many, have been horrified, disturbed, and greatly troubled by the victimization of children at the hands of an adult, who, in a position of power, allegedly took advantage of young helpless children and allegedly engaged in abhorrent acts of abuse which are not only unconscionable and egregious, but sick and wrong. As a society, we must react and be called to action. Children are in a group represented as the weakest in society and as adults we must do everything to protect them. Every adult who works in the St. Mary's County Public School System participate in Mandatory Child Abuse and Sexual Harassment Training. Our staff is required to report any and all acts of child abuse and suspicions of child abuse to the police, to Social Services, and to the supervisory ranks of the school system leadership. We take this part of our job very seriously. Even if the suspicions are unfounded, we must act on our gut instincts and report behaviors that are perceived as wrong. When it comes to protecting children and keeping them safe, every adult and individual in our community has a moral obligation to act. Children who are loving and trusting by nature can never be victimized by troubled individuals who want to cause harm to them.

As your superintendent, it is my primary role to keep children safe in our schools. It is the focus of my daily work and our staff is ever vigilant in our approaches. However, we must enlist your help and mobilize all individuals in our community to action. If you suspect that any child is in danger, act on your instincts and call the authorities. Do not wait. Our children are our most precious resource and we must do everything to keep them safe. Don't be silent if you suspect a child is being abused or neglected in any way, shape or form. You must be called to action so that further harm is not inflicted. Our children are counting on us to keep them safe. Everyone has a responsibility to do so.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael J. Martirano".

Michael J. Martirano, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools