



Nome Public Schools

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Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the importance and value of prevention activities in shifting social norms around domestic violence and sexual assault. My name is Shawn Arnold and I am the Superintendent for Nome Public Schools.

Alaska Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault has provided us with the training to teach kids about healthy relationships which have been shown to decrease acceptance of physical aggression, among many other findings. Without funding, fewer communities will now be able to provide resources through this organization such as the Alaska "Fourth R" Evaluation Project's curriculum, school lessons aimed at identifying and reducing risky behavior.

Other programs cover self-esteem awareness, bullying, healthy relationships, dating violence, sexual assault, sexual harassment, coping mechanisms, among other topics. These programs educate and build awareness about these topics in a way that is not done through any other curriculum. If we do not have such programs, I would be very concerned that our students would not have the exposure they need to this information in order to be well-informed young people, able to identify when something is not right in their peer relationships and feel empowered enough to speak up about it and know who to go to when they need help.

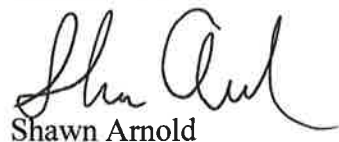
The prevention activities have a direct impact on the work educators do because students, after being exposed to the information, are more knowledgeable and feel encouraged to report incidents that they previously either did not realize should or could be reported or did not feel courageous enough to do so.

We often speak of those lifetime skills we want students to have when it comes to being able to read and write and make informed decisions and be productive contributors to society. But, how can our young people really contribute to society at their fullest potential if they are not also emotionally healthy?

Prevention activities in shifting social norms around domestic violence and sexual assault makes students not only academically prepared, but emotionally prepared for real world as well.

Please feel free to contact me if you need further clarification or information. I can be reached at sarnold@nomeschools.com or 907-443-6191.

Thank you for your time and consideration.


Shawn Arnold