



Christopher S. Winters
Headmaster
Greenwich High School
10 Hillside Road
Greenwich, CT 06830

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Over the past few months, there has been a spike in the number of students being arrested for possession of marijuana and possession with the intent to sell both on school grounds and throughout the community. We are not sure if the increase in the number of arrests is a result of increased marijuana use by our students or the result of better surveillance and enforcement by our security and the Greenwich Police. Regardless, the situation is not acceptable.

Substance abuse and risky behaviors are problems that exist beyond Greenwich High School. They are community-wide issues that will only be addressed effectively with a community-wide response from parents, schools – public and private – Town agencies and departments (Police, Social Services, etc.), religious and community organizations, and the students themselves. The District hopes to engage the collective community in a discussion about and action towards addressing these issues.

Greenwich High School has a zero tolerance policy for drug possession or drug use on campus. The intent of this letter is to inform you of additional steps we will be taking to enforce our zero tolerance policy and to educate our students about the dangers and consequences of drug use. Our ultimate goal is to educate students to make healthy and safe choices regarding illicit substances and to ensure that these substances are not brought onto the GHS campus.

On the enforcement side, we are working in partnership with the Greenwich Police to bring the canine unit onto campus. The Greenwich Police have a State of Connecticut certified canine. The dog can detect any illicit drug. We will use the dog to sniff cars in the parking lot. If the canine detects an illegal substance in the vehicle, the student who drove the vehicle onto GHS property will be subject to a search of his/her person and belongings by a GHS administrator. Parents/guardians should be aware that the person to whom a car is registered is liable for anything in that car, even if their child is the primary user of the car. We will use the canine to sniff lockers and any other locations we believe may have been used to hide drugs. We will continue to use the dog in random searches for the remainder of the year.

Alongside this stepped up enforcement, we are planning additional education for our students about the dangers and health implications of drug use. Each grade will have an assembly where Greenwich Police and GHS educators will help students understand the potential implications of drug use and of bringing drugs on campus. We will use these assemblies to highlight other risky behavior that some students engage in: sexting (the practice of sending sexually explicit pictures of oneself or others via cell phones), bullying, date violence, and alcohol consumption.

Please know that our ultimate intent is to deter students from engaging in high risk behavior. Our Vision of the Graduate calls for students who “conduct themselves in an ethical and responsible manner,” and who are “responsible for their own mental and physical health.” We will work with you, the parents or guardians, the students and other partners to ensure that GHS is as free of illicit drugs as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chris Winters". The ink is dark and the handwriting is fluid and legible.

Chris Winters
Headmaster