

BIG SPRING SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Big Spring School District is an equal opportunity education institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, or disability in its activities, programs, or employment practices as required by Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504.

For information regarding civil rights or grievance procedures, or for information regarding services, activities, and facilities that are accessible to and usable by handicapped persons, contact the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Title IX and Action 504 Coordinator.



STUDENT ASSISTANCE TEAM

BIG SPRING MIDDLE SCHOOL Student Assistance Program

The Big Spring School District Student Assistance Program consists of specially trained individuals in the High School, Middle School, and Elementary Schools who work to identify issues that pose a barrier to a student's success. The issues could be related to mental health concerns, attendance, discipline records, changes in academic performance or substance use. If you have a concern about a student please contact a team member or complete a referral form.

We encourage students to refer a friend if there are concerns.



THE STUDENT ASSISTANCE TEAM

1.  **What is the Student Assistance Team?** We are a team of educational professionals who want to see every student be successful. Our job isn't to get students into trouble or

diagnose them, but if there are things going on in their life that make getting to school or getting good grades unusually difficult, we want to provide resources to help students find ways to tackle those obstacles. Some obstacles that we may be able to help students with include substance abuse, stressful relationships at school or at home, mental health issues including thoughts of suicide or depression, etc.

2. **Who makes referrals?** Anyone can refer a student. A teacher who observes physical or behavioral changes in a student might make a referral, but students often are the best observers of their friends and classmates, so they make referrals. Oftentimes, a parent or community member is concerned and makes a call to the team.

-  3. **Why should I refer someone?** There are many signs that might raise concern, but the most obvious may be bragging about the use of alcohol or other drugs, coming to school under the influence, always feeling tired or sick, a drop in grades, a loss of interest in activities, sudden gain or loss in weight, sudden changes in friends, work habits, or appearance, as well as talk of suicide, or even an "I don't care attitude".

4. **What happens to someone who makes a referral?** Nothing. That person might be asked for more information, but you will remain anonymous to the student and parent when you make a referral.
5. **How do I make a referral?** The most discreet way is to fill out a form in the counseling office and give it to a school counselor. You may also talk to one of the members of the team and get his or her help with the referral.
6. **If I make a referral, what happens to the person I refer?** The first thing we do is try to validate what the referral says, whether it came from a student, teacher, staff member, coach, or parent. Then, we contact the student's parents. *The referral source remains anonymous.* We relate the concern that has been expressed and offer our support. We speak to the student to obtain permission, also.
7. **When a referral involves drugs, are the police involved?** No, not when a referral is made. The objective is to determine and help to resolve problems that exist. Police involvement occurs when a student violates school substance use policies.
8. **Can the Student Assistance Team make someone go into therapy, or another program?** The Team does **not** make those decisions. Participation in the program is voluntary and the parents can refuse help at any time. It is extremely rare that a student ends up in any kind of placement as a result of a referral to the SAT Team.

TRAINING: The members of the team have participated in intensive training approved by the PA Department of Education to identify students experiencing difficulty due to drug and alcohol or mental health concerns.

Members of the BSMS SAP Team:

- Mrs. Nace Principal
- Mr. Fry, Assistant Principal
- Mrs. Fulker, School Counselor
- Mrs. Craig, School Counselor
- Ms. Doll, School Nurse
- Ms. Winesickle, Home and School Visitor/Social Worker
- Mrs. Zinn, Teacher
- Mrs. Magee Teacher
- Mrs. Creek, Teacher
- Mr. Nerone, Teacher
- Ms. Shover, Teacher
- Mr. Spears, Teacher
- Mr. Deutsch, Teacher
- Ms. Hocker, School Psychologist
- SRO Chelsea Nelson
- Mr. Chad Acker, Cumberland/ Perry Drug & Alcohol Commission
- Ms. Antionette Mandich, Teenline