



**SANDRA "SAM" HIMMEL – SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

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*"Where Learning is the Expectation  
And Caring is a Commitment"*

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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Warning to Parents: Beware of Dangerous Social Media Trend**

The Citrus County School Board wants to make sure families are aware of a disturbing and potentially dangerous social media trend. It is called the Momo Challenge.

It begins with receiving a notification on a social media network like Facebook or WhatsApp. This challenge encourages students to do different actions and different challenges, which can become dangerous, even going as far as suggesting they commit suicide.

A few of our elementary schools have reported some students viewing this Momo challenge on the school bus before they arrive at school. Several students have reported to their teachers of being scared and nervous of the videos and possible retaliation by this so-called Momo. Your child's school counselors and administrative teams are aware of this most recent social media and internet concern and will monitor the situation in their buildings.

We want to ensure parents that YouTube kids, Facebook, and several other social media apps are blocked from use in our schools. However, administrators are learning that students are watching videos related to the Momo challenge on cell phones on the bus, as well as on devices at home.

Superintendent Himmel says watching something like this can be detrimental, especially for the younger students. "They're very impressionable. Adults are able to sort out fact from fiction, but many younger kids can't make that distinction," says Himmel.

As always, we encourage parents to monitor their child's technology use.

**What parents can do:**

- Consider age appropriateness for children's use of technology, time spent on social media and overall reminders of family expectations for making good choices.
- Ask your child if they know about the challenge and engage in conversations about safe technology use.

- Children should never respond to unidentified messages on social media and parents should advise their children to never share personal data, photographs or phone numbers on the internet

### **About Citrus County Schools:**

Citrus County Schools serves approximately 15,000 students in pre-school through grade 12 across 22 campuses. We are where learning is the expectation and caring is the commitment. We provide exceptional academic, emotional and civic growth to every student, every day. Our passionate educators empower students to take charge of their academic and personal success. The school district spans the cities of Inverness and Crystal River and incorporates communities such as Beverly Hills, Citrus Springs, Floral City, Hernando, Holder, Homosassa, and Lecanto. Want to learn what makes us one of the best school districts in the Sunshine State? Connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#), or visit [www.citruschools.org](http://www.citruschools.org).