



HIDDEN VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

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April 1, 2024

To whom it may concern:

It is my pleasure to share my positive experience with Mr. Joel Feldman as he thoughtfully shared with our students the heart-wrenching experience of losing his daughter due to distracted driving, its multifaceted impact, and ways to mitigate distracted driving among drivers of all ages.

In early February 2024, Mr. Feldman visited with our students and used his skills as an attorney, counselor, parent, and professional to engage students on the topic of distracted driving. Mr. Feldman's presentation included the expected statistics and videos, but he also sought to reach students through numerous questions, dialogue, and roleplay. Mr. Feldman went beyond the usual "this is bad so don't do that" lecture-experience and, instead, helped students develop greater capacity toward avoiding distracted driving whether driving or being driven by others. Mr. Feldman helped students to think more concretely about the implications of distracted driving and how to prevent it from occurring in a way palatable to his teenage audience. In particular, I found his honest acknowledgement of his own shortcomings as a driver prior to the loss of his daughter both genuine and valuable in establishing rapport with students. He presented to our students as a dad whose life was turned upside down due to distracted driving and, as a result, has committed himself to meaningfully helping as many as possible avoid the same experience. Mr. Feldman's presentation was a tough one, to be sure, but numerous students connected with his message and quickly sought him out just after. Additionally, bracelets were given to many of our students with a large number signing a pledge to end distracted driving banner just after Mr. Feldman's presentation.

In conclusion, I hope you will consider affording time for Mr. Feldman to share his message with your student body. I am confident you will find the experience to be time well spent and positively influential for your students. Gratefully, Mr. Feldman left me thinking more deeply about this matter as both a parent and school administrator.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Josh Whitlow".

Josh Whitlow
Principal
Hidden Valley High School