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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – November 5, 2015

Monroe schools one of first to put new safety system into use

MONROE, WA – With the help of a \$41,880 grant from the state's Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, students walked into Monroe's public schools this year with a new safety system in place to speed up the time it takes for police and other first responders to react to incidents at schools and provide additional information to assist in their ability to help students and staff when those responders arrive.

Made by Rave Mobile Safety, the new Panic Button app is used by authorized school staff, and incorporated and integrated into the existing Rapid Responder system, ensuring that both 9-1-1 and first responders have access to critical real-time situational intelligence.

"Monroe was one of the first districts in Snohomish County, and the nation, to test and implement this life saving application for all their district campuses," said Rich McQuade, Operations Coordinator for Snohomish County Police Staff and Auxiliary Services Center (SNOPAC).

Monroe's Safety/Risk Manager Jeff Beazizo worked much of the summer with Monroe Police and SNOPAC staff to set up the system in all schools and support facilities. All school administrators are up to speed on the process but training continues with staff. The system is expected to be fully functional by the spring.

The grant was part of a \$7 million safety grant distribution to 80 school districts in Washington State. Grant funds are available as a result of Senate Bill 5197, passed in 2013. The intent of the bill was to encourage school districts to develop new emergency response systems using "evolving technology." The countywide efforts adds a level of integration of the panic button system with Rapid Responder and the schools' on-site video system.

"Particularly in this day and age with the number of school emergencies on the rise it is our strong belief that being part of a standardized county wide approach provides significant advantages," said John Mannix, Assistant Superintendent for Operations. "Integrating our solutions in terms of training, common protocols, and increased support by agencies will improve first responders' ability to respond quickly and appropriately to our schools."

"Student safety is a top priority," State Superintendent Randy Dorn said. "We've all seen school tragedies play out across the country. While these projects won't eliminate safety risks at our schools, they will help us be better prepared. Many of the emergency response systems funded by these grants are first-of-their-kind."