[the use of this template is optional and should be modified as needed by local districts]

[add your own local letterhead or normal communication headings]

Did you know that 50% of adult Americans do not know how to swim and 54% of Americans cannot swim well enough to save themselves? Drowning is a leading cause of death for children. “It only takes a moment. A child or weak swimmer can drown in the time it takes to reply to a text, check a fishing line or apply sunscreen. Death and injury from drownings happen every day in home pools and hot tubs, at the beach or in oceans, lakes, rivers and streams, bathtubs, and even buckets. Learning to swim reduces the risk of downing by 88%, but even skilled and strong swimmers can drown.

**Water Safety Education for Families**

According to A.C.A. 6-16-158, each public school district and open-enrollment public charter school shall provide to a parent, legal guardian, or person standing in loco parentis to a public school student information on the important role that water safety education courses and swimming lessons play in saving lives. Water safety means age-appropriate education that is intended to promote safety in, on, and around bodies of water and reduce the risk of injury or drowning.

**State and National Resources**

Water Safety Education

* U.S. Army Corps of Engineers / National Water Safety Program (www.pleasewearit.com)
* U.S. Army Corps of Engineers / Bobber the Water Safety Dog (www.bobber.info)
* American Red Cross / Water Safety (www.rdcrss.org/3uai7FW)
* Arkansas Game and Fish Commission / Boater Education (www.agfc.com/boatered)

Swimming Lessons

* American Red Cross / Swimming Safety (www.rdcrss.org/swimsafety)
* Every Child A Swimmer / Low to no cost scholarships (everychildaswimmer.org)

**Local Resources**

Water Safety Education

* (add local opportunities for water safety education courses)

Swimming Lessons

* (add local swimming lesson providers)

If you have any questions about these topics, please reach out to (parent coordinator or other contact info) or one of the organizations listed above. The Red Cross believes, and [school district] agrees, that by working together to improve water competency – which includes swimming skills, water smarts and helping others – water activities can be safer… and just as much fun.