

Smithton Jr. High Parents/Guardians:

Over the course of the past few months there has been an increase in reported concerns and incidents regarding student language and negative interactions. The culture and climate of a school is the foundation for a productive learning environment. Each student and staff member is entitled to come to school feeling safe and supported.

Administration will be visiting junior high homerooms December 4 through December 11. Our conversations with the students will be focused on the following topics:

- Expectations on communication (verbal, written, etc.) specifically related to what is considered bullying and/or harassment (Handbook pgs 6-8; 38-39, Board Policies 7:20 *Harassment of Students Prohibited* and 7:180 *Prevention of and Response to Bullying*)
- How does social media and phone apps impact the learning environment and how the school responds?
- The impact our choices make on others and potential consequences
- Resources available to all students and how to report concerns

In addition, we will be partnering with our local law enforcement to deliver a presentation to our junior high students at the start of the second semester. Our School Resource Officers will speak to our students about the realities of our technological society. The message will be based upon facts and statistics that directly impact our students. This presentation will also be offered to parents at an evening event. More information will follow with specifics of the presentations (date, times, presentation outline, etc.).

We encourage you to have an open conversation at home about these topics. We recognize that these topics may be difficult to navigate but the more we communicate the better the learning experience we can provide for all students.

Suggested resources you can access from home:

<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/>

<https://www.cybersmile.org/>

<https://www.stompoutbullying.org/parents-page>

<https://parentandteen.com/important-conversations/>

Sincerely,

Dr. Courtney Castelli

Mrs. Stacy Belosi