



MONROE TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Monroe Township Middle School
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Dear Parents and Guardians of MTMS,

We have come to understand that some concerns about the school have arisen on social media and we would like to put your minds to rest. We want you to feel secure and safe sending your child to school here at MTMS. To that end, we would like to assure everyone that we are in the business of student safety and education, we take every issue and concern that comes in seriously and we make sure it is addressed appropriately. We have taken great strides to teach our students about proper behavior, and we meet in both formal and informal ways to spread the message that harassment, intimidation and bullying is never ok and that all students should be treated with respect and kindness.

The following are the steps we have taken this year alone in establishing our expectations of student behavior and to get the anti-bullying message out:

- Administration met specifically in the beginning of the year with each grade as a group to discuss expectations specifically stressing that bullying would never be tolerated and that we expect all students to treat their peers respectfully at all times.
- In the 6th grade the anti-bullying specialists did a yearlong lesson with the students to distinguish the difference between conflict and bullying. They also reviewed the definition of bullying and who to go to if they felt they or other students were being bullied.
- In the 6th and 8th grade an outside group came and presented, "Bully Bystander: A Portrait in Apathy." Our 8th grade students were chosen to role play different bullying scenarios for 6th graders so that they could better understand how to handle these situations.
- In the 7th grade we contracted Camfel Productions to present a program called "Worth It" to our students that demonstrated how their decisions affect others both positively and negatively. Peer pressure and bullying were among the topics discussed.
- In the 8th grade, "Steered Straight" came in to present a conversation about good decision making and how individual choices and how you treat someone else can have consequences in your life.
- In the 6th grade we partnered with our local police officers who presented our LEAD program that takes time to address cyber-bullying and good decision making.
- We ran Rachel's Challenge which is a program that teaches what the results of bullying can be. It is aimed to show where bullying can lead and how it affects the victim. We have 100 students, 6th through 8th grade, who have spent the year to work on ways to promote a positive climate
- We offer a Friends of Rachel Club open to all students. They also work on promoting getting positive messages to peers and partner with students who need peer support.
- We offered a parent night to educate parents specifically about the effects and impacts of bullying so that a dialogue could be opened with their children.
- Our 6th and 8th grades meet yearly with Holocaust survivors in formal assemblies to hear about the horrible effects of intolerance and to encourage acceptance of those who may be different than us.
- Our child study team runs "circle of friends" groups to assist those students who need more support and guidance in social interactions.

It is our hope that this provides a comprehensive picture of our efforts to get the anti-bullying, tolerance and acceptance message out to our students. We will always address any issue we are made aware of in a timely manner. As a matter of practice, if you should ever need assistance after hours, please contact the main office and leave a message on a main line. Also, follow up with an e-mail to one of the administrators and we will get back to you the next morning.

We thank you for your understanding.

Mr. James Higgins
Interim-Principal, Monroe Township Middle School