

Rockville Centre Union Free School District



South Side Middle School

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MATTHEW GAVEN
Superintendent of Schools

SHELAGH MCGINN
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Dear Parents,

It appears that we are constantly in a battle over the positive and negative impact of the technological world in which we live. Currently, our dilemma is in regard to the need for cell phones for communication versus the temptations of the extraneous features available with them that include cameras, text messaging, filming videos, etc.

We have experienced an increase in incidents where students are calling their parents when they do not feel well and asking them to pick them up to take them home. **This is a violation of district policy.** If a student does not feel well, they must be seen by the Nurse. The Nurse will determine whether the ailment requires a call home and/or leaving school. If the child wishes, the Nurse will call the parent and discuss the situation. There are many reasons why this rule is so important. First and foremost, if a child has contracted a contagious disease the Nurse must be aware so that the proper authorities can be notified and other parents can be alerted if their child came into contact with the infected child. Secondly, there have been occasions where a student requests to go home "ill" rather than attend a class that they may not enjoy or are not prepared to attend.

Students are not allowed to use cell phones for calls or for texting during school hours. Please do not attempt to reach your child via their cell phone during the school day. If a phone is visible, it will be confiscated and you will be asked to come to the school to discuss the situation and pick up the phone. Also, be aware that the Middle School cannot be held responsible if the phone is lost or stolen.

Another issue that has come to our attention is that some students are using their cell phones to record negative events and disagreements between students. If we discover that a cell phone or district issued device has been used to record or photograph any negative activity between students, there will be very serious disciplinary consequences. We are asking for your cooperation in enforcing these policies. We also urge you to take inventory of the photos and videos stored on your child's phone and email. Our students have access to extremely advanced technology but at this age they do not always possess the mature decision-making skills that are necessary to use this technology responsibly.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation in this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Shelagh McGinn
Principal