

September 2019

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As you may already know, the Middle School adopted the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program in the 2012 school year. The goal of the program is to help us prevent and address issues of bullying, as well as foster a warm and inviting school climate. The Middle School has an Advisory Committee, made up of representatives from different grades and subject areas that work together to evaluate the program and make changes to better serve our students and school community. With the help of the Advisory Committee, our program has continued to evolve to meet the changing needs of our students.

Last week the Middle School had its first Advisory Day. Our bell schedule is altered on Advisory days. The Advisory Bell Schedule is available on the [Middle School Webpage](#). This year, our Advisory Class Meetings will take place weekly on Thursdays. The purpose of weekly Advisory Class Meetings is to increase school connectedness. The research shows that “improved school connectedness promotes improved classroom engagement and educational motivation; improves attendance; decreases bullying, violence and disruptive behavior; decreases substance abuse; and decreases involvement in early sexual behavior” (ESS The Power of School Connectedness, 2017).

Additionally, this year we will continue our implementation of mixed grade level Advisory Class Meetings. The purpose of mixed grade level advisories is to create a feeling of connectedness to the whole school. Research has found that “multiage grouping has been linked with enhanced student self-esteem, decreased behavioral referrals, formation of close communities, and social and academic continuity” (Daniel, L., 2007). Each advisory has a small group of approximately 14 students in it, which is about 4-5 students per grade level. The mixed grade level advisories will help students to develop empathy, caring, and understanding for their school mates.

We look forward to seeing how the advisory program will improve the middle school experience for our students. If you have feedback or questions regarding our Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, please contact your child’s School Counselor, Mrs. Brittany Beckley (last names A- K) or Mr. Mark Bernasconi (last names L-Z) or Ms. Andrea Pompey, Assistant Principal.

Thank you,

Maria A. Paese  
Principal

Andrea Pompey  
Assistant Principal