



FAIRFAX COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

FRANKLIN MIDDLE SCHOOL

3300 Lees Corner Road
Chantilly, Virginia 20151

September 6, 2011

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Facebook, Twitter, and other social networking sites are having an adverse effect on the educational environment of students at Franklin Middle School.

Over the past several years, more and more students are accessing and participating in various social networking sites outside of school. As you may know, the sites provide opportunities for our students to post information about themselves, about other students, post photographs, and graphics, etc... Some of the time spent accessing the sites is at the expense of time that could be used for academic requirements. More disturbing is that these sites provide a forum for students to degrade, slander, bully, intimidates, and/or harass other students. When this occurs, these issues are usually brought to the school by the students involved and invariably, impact the academic atmosphere at Franklin MS. Administrators, counselors, and teachers spend a great deal of time taking statements, counseling students, mediating, responding to parents, and attempting to settle issues initiated on Facebook and other social networking sites that have nothing to do with school. Unfortunately, the postings are discussions on these sites repeatedly affect the school culture. Needless to say, the experience adversely impacts the students involved as well as the academic and social environment at Franklin MS.

We strongly suggest you as a parent/guardian do one of the following:

- (1) Our first recommendation is to eliminate your child's ability to use these sites.
- (2) Secondly, if you elect to continue to allow the freedom for your child to participate, we then recommend you closely monitor how much time they are on the site and when they are on the site.
- (3) You are strongly encouraged to educate yourself about the site, have the password to your child's site, and regularly perform surprise inspections of your child's site.

While social networking sites can be a positive way for adults to communicate and network, most middle-school students do not possess the social skills and maturity to handle the variety of content that exists on websites such as these. They also don't fully comprehend that once it is written and posted, it is there for the world to see.

Let's keep our children safe,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sharon Eisenberg".

Sharon Eisenberg
Principal