

# BRIDGEPORT EXEMPTED VILLAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT

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December 9, 2013

Dear Parents and Guardians:

We addressed the high school and middle school students on Monday, December 9, 2013 about the issue of sexting. Sexting can best be described as depicting and sending photos of a sexual nature over the Internet or via cell phones. On the back of this letter are Tips to Prevent Sexting.

Although there has not been any reports of this issue occurring in Bridgeport, the subject has been aired by local television stations as an issue in many schools, and we want to be proactive and use these concerns as a way to educate all of us about the dangers sexting can pose. We live in the digital age and have the ability to quickly send and receive information; however, this can make us incredibly vulnerable. The key message we want to get across to our students is that once something is in the digital world, it never goes away. Colleges and employers increasingly review the Internet to be sure that nothing in a person's past may affect their acceptance or hire. You never know if something electronically captured from your past may come back years later to negatively affect you.

Students at Bridgeport are educated every year on challenging online safety topics, such as, Cyber Bullying, Avoiding Online Creeps, Netiquette, and Online Status Messages. In these discussions, we talk about self-respect and respect for others. Students are also reminded of proper online behavior, communication, and safety.

Our goal at Bridgeport is to be supportive of our students and you, their parents. This is a difficult subject to discuss with our sons/daughters. I believe it is a difficult conversation worth having, as being informed is the best protection against mistakes being made while reminding your children that there are laws that govern their actions, and they could face serious consequences if they are caught.

Below are some links to resources that can help all of us become more knowledgeable about this issue.

<http://www.internetsafety101.org/sexting.htm>

<http://www.jwrc.org/KeepKidsSafe/OnlineSafety/SextingPrevention/tabid/200/Default.aspx>

<http://www.ikeepsafe.org/>

<http://www.childmind.org> (Search: **How to Talk to Your Kids about Sexting**)

Sincerely,

Rob Zitzelsberger, HS Principal

Anne Haverty, MS Principal

Lisa Clark, Technology Coordinator