

March 20, 2009

Dear Parents:

Being a young adolescent today is not like it was a few decades ago. The impact of technology, the media, the explosion of information, communication, population mobility, economics, and a restless multiethnic society has transformed human development for our country's children today. Recognizing that adolescents are moving into ever-widening worlds they need to be encouraged to manage their lives - and to discover, sustain or change situations and systems in which they find themselves. As fledgling idealists they have come to believe in democracy - not as represented by political parties but as their right to participate and influence decisions and common goals. As educators and parents we need to welcome these indicators of their development rather than leap to constantly control their ideas and opinions. The young adolescent's new behaviors, judgments and resistance are emerging out of their very natural quest to develop independence.

Looking at children's development as an on-going process that is interactive with many daily systems means that we must learn how to challenge and support each child's explorations and interests into worlds beyond "self." It means helping young adolescents to move beyond their childhood perspective of "me" to identifying with others as "we" in recognition of the common good of their community. Young people who fail to do so continue to live throughout most of their adult lives in small ego-centered worlds centered on "me and mine." The primary identification with self can be a straight road to living in loneliness, intolerance, conflict, alienation, periods of despair and failure, and becoming involved with high-risk behaviors. This does not mean that there is a moral or "lack of character" problem. It tends to indicate a failure to develop beyond the "me" stage of early childhood. It can be a failure to grow socially, emotionally, and spiritually as an adolescent and to become a responsible and caring human being.

Steve Goar

Principal, McGinnis Middle School

Here are some other bits of important information:

We have completed CSAP Testing

Spring Break runs the week of March 23 -27 with students back in class on March 30th

There is no school on April 10th due to Good Friday

The Science Olympiad team will be going to the state competition on April 11th

There is an early release day on both April 15th & 29th

The Odyssey of the Mind teams will be going to the state competition on April 18th

The 9-news Health Fair will be here April 17th and 18th

NWEA testing will begin on April 23rd and run through May 7th