Dear Family,

Over the next several weeks, your child will be discussing bullying and harassment as part of Second Step® Middle School. Research indicates that bullying in middle school is associated with sexual harassment and gender-based harassment in high school and beyond. We are taking proactive steps to reduce occurrences of bullying and harassment at our school.

Second Step Middle School is designed to support your child in developing the knowledge and skills to help stop bullying and harassment. Students will learn the similarities and differences between bullying and harassment, how to recognize sexual harassment and gender-based harassment, their rights and responsibilities at school when it comes to bullying and harassment, and how to seek help if they or someone they know is being bullied or harassed.

Here are some key definitions your child will be learning:

- **Bullying:** intentional physical, verbal, or social aggression. It's often repeated over time and occurs when there's a real or perceived power imbalance.
- **Gender-based harassment:** aggression against someone based on their sex. This also includes aggression against someone because they do not conform to male or female stereotypes.
- **Harassment:** aggression against someone based on a real or perceived characteristic they have, such as their race, religion, sex, or gender. It's serious enough to create an unsafe environment and is a form of discrimination.
- **Sexual harassment:** when someone bothers someone else with words, actions, or pictures of a sexual nature.

We encourage students to report any instances of bullying or harassment they witness or experience to you and to trusted adults at our school. Please contact _____ at _____ if you need support in reporting or dealing with bullying or harassment. Additionally, if you have any questions about Second Step Middle School, please don't hesitate to contact me for more information. Thank you for your support as we work together to build a bullying- and harassment-free community.

Sincerely,