



January 5, 2024

Dear Families:

I trust this communication finds everyone excited for the new year and its possibilities. As we embark on the second semester, heading into the home stretch of another year, I want to take a moment to acknowledge some challenges we're facing as a school community and the opportunities we have to work together to make Mattawan the best it can be.

We have unfortunately been dealing with several incidents of student bullying, harassment, hazing, and race-based behaviors. These actions can take many forms, such as derogatory or hate speech, threatening or intimidating behaviors, negative social media posts, etc. While the vast majority of our student body worthily conducts themselves, it is disheartening to acknowledge that some of these student behaviors have occurred within our school community, as they are contrary to the values and beliefs we hold at Mattawan.

First and foremost, let me unequivocally state that such behaviors will not be tolerated and have no place in this school. We are committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment where all students, staff, and families are seen, heard, and valued. We take great pride in cultivating a culture that promotes respect, empathy, and understanding among all members of our community. It is important to note that while these behaviors will not be tolerated and will be met with appropriate consequences, we must challenge ourselves to grow as a community of learners.

Growth is essential for both our staff and students. In the coming days, we will provide meaningful and age-appropriate learning experiences for our K-12 students. The same is in the works for staff: avenues to come together to grow and excel in our roles. We are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment and look forward to working together to achieve our goals. We appreciate your patience and support.

Additionally, we are working to secure a consultant to support our initiatives to educate, train, and equip our staff and students and assist in our review of our policy and procedures, including student and athletic handbooks. Some initiatives may happen more quickly than others; some will take longer. We ask for your patience and support in the months ahead.

Coming together as a community is essential to address and overcome these challenges collectively. We encourage parents and guardians to talk about respect, kindness, and understanding with their children. By working collaboratively, we can create an environment where every student can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

Thank you for your commitment to the well-being of our students and the ideals that define Mattawan School. Together, we can ensure that our school is where every student feels valued and respected.

Sincerely,

Randy Fleenor, Superintendent