

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The purpose of this letter is to address concerns about the increasing use of social networking sites by young people. Internet sites such as MySpace.com and Facebook.com are popular among middle and high school students because they provide students with a free forum to express themselves and network with other young people.

These sites, however, also have the potential of being explicit, provocative and inappropriate. Many of the sites do not confirm the ages or identities of the people who create accounts. They allow young people to post personal information, communicate with strangers, and even arrange to meet the strangers in person. Recent news reports of these encounters indicate the more disastrous outcomes of these meetings.

We are taking the following steps to ensure our students understand the consequences of posting information on these sites.

1. We will remind students about our Acceptable Use Policy and continue to prohibit these types of sites from school computers.
2. We will post pertinent information on our district Internet site (<http://www.neisd.net/safety/internet/>) and speak with faculty and staff about the implications of these sites.
3. We will also talk with parents at upcoming parent and community meetings to make sure parents understand the risks associated with these sites, how to talk with your children about these sites, and how to help protect your children from them.

The two most important things you can do as a parent are to educate yourself about the risks associated with the Internet and talk about these risks with your children. The resources that are posted on our district Internet site will help you in this endeavor as we work together to ensure the safety of our students at school, at home and in our community.

If you do not have access to the Internet from your home, please visit your local library or the library at your school. If you have any questions about this matter or have suggestions for additional resources, please contact us at edtech@neisd.net or 210-804-7020.

Sincerely,



Richard A. Middleton