



John Read Middle School  
Jennifer Desmarais, Principal  
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January 9, 2023

Dear 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Parents:

Part of the health curriculum at the 5<sup>th</sup> grade level includes concepts about family life education.

Growth and development is a maturing process with physical, mental, emotional and social aspects. Mrs. Collentine will begin this unit by explaining each body system and ask students why they think our bodies must change. As students explore a scientific explanation, the teachers will introduce adolescence as a period of time when many physiological changes occur. Within this concept, the students will discuss an increased awareness and concern about friendships, personal appearance and fitting in with others. Students will define and describe behaviors that communicate care, self-respect and respect for others. Our lessons will focus on each individual's right to understand his or her own body. A positive attitude towards the changes, and good health and hygiene is encouraged through respectful discussions.

The content of this unit is based on state and national health education standards and the students will remain in their co-ed class sections throughout the instruction. Mrs. Collentine is a CT certified health educator. Instruction will consist of discussing a video entitled, *We're Growing Up!* and other supporting materials. You are welcome to contact Mrs. Collentine and discuss the material and preview the video.

While student participation in this health unit is highly recommended, you may choose to exempt your child from this instruction according to Board of Education Policy 6144.1. This policy states that "*if the religious belief and/or teachings of a student or his/her parents or guardian are contrary to the content of a school subject, the student may be exempt from participation.*". **If your child currently has Health (Semester 1), and you would like to receive such an exemption, a parent or guardian must present a written request to Mrs. Collentine by January 17, 2023. Please do the same for students taking Health during the second semester by February 1, 2023.** Students who are exempt will research health professions in the Media Center.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Jennifer C. Desmarais'.

Jennifer Desmarais  
Principal

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Judith Collentine'.

Judith Collentine  
Health Education Teacher