



Poland McKinley Elementary School

Dear Parents/Caretakers,

September 16-20 students will be taking part in *Start With Hello* Week. *Start with Hello* teaches students the skills they need to reach out to classmates and build socially inclusive learning environments for all students. Inclusion, acceptance, empathy, and connectedness are the cornerstones of the *Start With Hello* program. Students learn to take small but powerful actions to promote inclusion and to support students who are showing signs of loneliness or social isolation. Loneliness is the overwhelming feeling of being left out and social isolation is not having frequent interactions with friends. Young people who feel this way may struggle with learning and social development or pull away from society. *Start With Hello* is an important social and emotional learning program to introduce students to the power of connecting and helping one another. Each day we will have a different theme and random act of kindness for the students to try and to help build inclusiveness, connectedness, and support.

Start With Hello Week:

★ **Monday: Meet -N-Greet Monday**

- Meet someone new and use your own personalized “Hello Style.”
- Engage in peer lunch talk using the conversation cards at each table to encourage connections.

★ **Tuesday: Upstander Tuesday**

- Students will watch the NED video about how to prevent bullying and become an upstander

★ **Wednesday: Wear Green to support Start With Hello week**

- Students are encouraged to wear green as a symbol of unity, inclusivity, and solidarity with Sandy Hook Promise.
- Students will participate in a mindful moment during the morning announcements and give a compliment/kindness note to someone during the day.. Remember to be genuine with your compliments.

★ **Thursday: Trusted Adult Thursday**

- Give gratitude and thank a trusted adult in the school community.
- Go on a *Start With Hello* Treasure Hunt with your homeroom to name the trusted adults and resources in our school.

★ **Friday: Wear Poland Pride to encourage connectedness in our community**

- Celebrate the *Start With Hello* Movement by coming together as a community of connection and inclusion and participate in a *Start With Hello* Photo Booth during lunch time.
- Sign the *Start With Hello* Pledge in your homeroom.

For more information on *Start With Hello* and to sign up to receive the Parent Guide, please visit:

<http://www.sandyhookpromise.org/bringstartwithhello>.

Thank you for your continued support!

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