November 1, 2014

Dear Parents and Guardians:

The first academic quarter ends on November 7th. The students and staff are working hard to create and maintain a healthy learning environment for all students. This student body is such a conscientious and respectful group. Please take a look at all items contained in the letter as I hope that they are informative and helpful to all.

**Parent Workshops:** We held our first of two parent workshops on October 21st. The topic was Common Core Learning Standards. Parents had the opportunity to hear from English teachers, Mr. McGowan and Mrs. Biscardi and Math and Science Director, Mr. Blaine Weissman speak about the standards and what students will need to do and know this year to meet those standards. We will have a second workshop dedicated to Social Studies and Science after the holidays. Parents will be notified by mass phone call.

**Parent Portal:** Huntington, like many districts across the country, is providing parents with the capability to access student information from any internet-ready device. Go to the district website, click on the drop-down menu and select “parent portal.” You must establish an account by providing all accurate information required. You may access attendance, scheduling, assessment and class grade reports. If you need assistance, please call the main office.

**Health Fair:** On November 25th we are having a health and wellness fair during student lunch periods. Our partners at SUNY Farmingdale College of Nursing will provide relevant and important information to students via discussion, video presentation and handouts. They will spend time discussing harassment and bullying and they will ask all students to be “upstanders” if they see an incident which could be considered bullying by alerting an adult to intervene. They will sign a banner which we will hang in the cafeteria to reinforce this topic.

**Finley PTA Facebook Page:** Stay on top of events and news by visiting the Finley PTA Facebook page. Go to Facebook and search: jtfinleymiddleschoolpta. The PTA is having its annual pie and bread sale. The order form is contained herein. Also enclosed is an order form for Finley Spirit Wear. Please support our PTA!

**Student Fundraiser:** We have kicked off our annual student fundraiser. Funds raised by students go directly to the student council and can only be used for student events and activities
for example, field trips, dances, guest speakers, etc. Our partner, Great American Fundraising has opened and online store on which parents can shop and have items delivered right to their homes. The online store can be found at www.gaschoolstore.com. Our school ID# is 1069053. You can skip the question which asks to register your child. We will also send home a packet for parents and family to look at over the Thanksgiving break. Remember, Finley receives the proceeds from the sale.

**Ice Bucket Challenge for ALS:** Recently, Woodhull challenged Finley to douse a staff member or members with ice water. The student council decided to have students and staff vote on which teachers should get the ice. Over the course of a week the votes and donations came in. The building collected over $1,000.00 for ALS research. Those who got the ice- Ms. DiMattei, Mr. Perlongo, Mrs. Biscardi, Mr. Ferreira, Ms. Whitfield and Mr. Parham. Take that Woodhull.

**National Junior Honor Society:** All 7th grade students are eligible for induction into the NJHS, which is a stepping stone to the NHS in high school. The academic requirements are as follows: Students must earn an overall grade point average of 95 or higher for the first three quarters of 7th grade. They must not have any grade lower than 80 in any class and be of high moral character. Parents and students will be notified by letter after the third quarter grades are complete.

**Honor Roll and High Honor Roll:** Students will be recognized each quarter for their excellent academic work. High Honor Roll students will earn a grade point average of 95 or higher. Honor Roll students will earn a grade point average of 85 to 94. Good Luck!

**President’s Award for Academic Excellence:** This is a national program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, which recognizes students for their hard work and academic achievement. This program is for 8th graders only upon moving up to the high school in June. Students who have maintained a grade point average of 90 or higher in both grades 7 and 8 will earn the President’s Award for Academic Excellence. Good Luck!

**Stop and Shop A+ Plus for Schools Program:** I have registered Finley in the A+ program which means that parents can earn financial support for their school. The PTA has posted directions on how to register as a parent. Thanks for your support.

Thank you for your support at home. Have a Happy Thanksgiving.

Mr. Amato