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Dear Long Beach Middle School Parents

I am writing to you today in regards to a recently released Netflix series, *13 Reasons Why*, which has become a concern for us at LBMS. This show relates to the very sensitive topics of teen suicide and depression. The series is based on the best-selling book by Jay Asher, and follows teenager Clay Jensen as he returns home to find a box with his name on it lying on his porch. Inside he discovers a group of cassette tapes recorded by Hannah Baker, his classmate, who tragically committed suicide two weeks earlier. The recordings detail the thirteen reasons why Hannah committed suicide. The series has been rated TV-MA for mature audiences, however, many middle school aged children have been viewing the series.

While we should by no means avoid the discussion of mental health issues, our concerns stem from the idea that this series may glamorize teen suicide for some of our children. The series presents the aftermath of the suicide in a captivating and dramatic fashion not in a realistic manner. Critics have expressed concerns that the series doesn't treat the very real problem of teen suicide seriously or realistically, and, have expressed concern that the series in fact romanticizes teen suicide.

If your child has already viewed the series, we would encourage that you consider beginning a discussion about the series with your child. SAVE (The Suicide Awareness of Voices in Education) has put out an article entitled Talking Points for New Netflix Series - 13 Reasons Why. This piece, <http://files.constantcontact.com/0c8ba0ff101/b759ea8b-3f2e-436b-af72-acbd5f8ce8fc.pdf>, can assist you in starting such a conversation with your child if you are looking for guidance.

If your child has not yet watched 13 Reasons Why, there are several professional mental health organizations who have taken the opinion that they **not** be encouraged to watch the series.

If you have concerns about your child viewing this or other TV-MA shows on Netflix, and are looking for information regarding their Parental Controls, please click the following link for help with making the desired adjustments: <https://help.netflix.com/en/node/60850>

If you ever feel like your child needs support, or someone to talk to, please reach out to us immediately. Please contact your child's guidance counselor, our school social worker, school psychologists or a school administrator, and one of us will make sure we get your child the help and support they need.

Additionally, Long Island Crisis Center provides services 24-hours a day, 7 days a week by trained mental health professionals and can be reached online at <http://longislandcrisiscenter.org/> or by phone at (516) 679-1111.

Attached is a letter from the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) regarding the series. It provides guidance for educators and families and may also be found here: <https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/school-safety-and-crisis/preventing-youth-suicide/13-reasons-why-netflix-series-considerations-for-educators>

Thank you, as always, for your continued partnership, and, for taking the time to read this email. We care deeply about every child at our school and welcome the opportunity to work with you each day to ensure the success of every child at Long Beach Middle School.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any additional questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

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