

Dear E.O. Smith and middle school parents/guardians,

I am writing to invite you to a public deliberation forum at E.O. Smith High School on June 5th from 6:00-7:30 p.m. This forum is the result of a partnership between E.O. Smith's Democratic Dialogue Project and the Thomas J. Dodd Center at the University of Connecticut. The primary purpose for this initiative is to bring all E.O. Smith stakeholders together with multiple points of view to listen, discuss and make decisions to take action toward addressing issues or problems facing our school-community. In this process, we aim to expand the knowledge of the public on issues and improve democratic attitudes and skills.

Over the past several months, E.O. Smith student facilitators have participated in training exercises with the Dodd Research Center to prepare them to be moderators of public forums. These students will serve as moderators for the discussions on June 5th. We are inviting community leaders, parents, and students to join us as participants to a discussion on mental health and wellness, which was selected by the student body from a list of over a dozen possible topics. This public discussion project is supported by the Region #19 Board of Education and the E.O. Smith Foundation, and a grant from the University of Connecticut's Humanities Institute.

The format for the forum will include a student moderator responsible for facilitating a group discuss of participants that will include community leaders and E.O. Smith parents and staff. The moderators chief functions are to remain impartial about the subject of discussion, promote the involvement of each participant, help participants find common ground and encourage deeper reflection. As a participant, your tasks will be work with your group to try to identify ways the E.O. Smith Community can work toward the promotion of mental wellness in our community. You will also contribute to the development of our student moderators.

If you are interested in participating in this initiative, please RSVP to ldeloreto@eosmith.org. Please include your first and last name in your response as well as the first and last names of anyone who will be joining you. You will receive a confirmation email with information on the room number and location.

Thank you in advance for your assistance with the E.O. Smith Democratic Dialogue Project.

Sincerely,

Lou DeLoreto, Principal
E.O. Smith High School