Principal's Letter to Families

Date _____

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your child will soon participate in the *Stacked Deck* program for the prevention of problem gambling. This program was developed by Dr. Robert Williams and Dr. Robert Wood, professors and researchers at the University of Lethbridge in Alberta, Canada. Dr. Williams is a coordinator for the Alberta Gaming Research Institute and a co-editor of the journal *International Gambling Studies.* He is internationally recognized as an expert in gambling studies and a leading authority in many areas, including Internet gambling, the prevention of problem gambling, and the socioeconomic effects of gambling. Dr. Wood specializes in issues related to youth, crime, and deviance, and is known for his studies on Internet gambling, the link between government gambling revenue and social inequality, and problem gambling prevention with North American teens.

Though many parents may be unaware of problem gambling issues, prevention efforts in this area are very important with teens and young adults. National studies in the United States, Canada, Australia, and Sweden have found problem gambling to peak in the 18-to-24-year-old age group. Problem gambling occurs when a person has difficulty limiting the amount of money and/or time he or she spends gambling, and when this difficulty leads to serious negative consequences.

Effective school-based programs are an essential part of overall prevention in the community. While a handful of other school-based programs demonstrate an ability to change gambling attitudes and knowledge, *Stacked Deck* is the only program that is proven to actually change gambling *behavior* and to decrease both gambling and problem gambling. The program is uniquely effective in achieving this level of success.

Thank you very much for supporting your child's participation in *Stacked Deck*, and for all you do to support your child's education and development.

Sincerely,

School Principal

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