June 2, 2020

I, much like many others have expressed, continue to be saddened and dismayed by the brutal acts of racism in our nation. Of all the organizations with the mission of serving people, it is the school system that bears the greatest and most compelling purpose and opportunity to root it out. I accept that responsibility and condemn those who commit them.

In embracing this imperative, I keep questioning what we are doing. How are we teaching our white students and staff members to go deep inside of our personal biases, unpack our feelings about race and culture, and embrace our fear of discovering how we perceive others’ identities? How are we examining and changing the constructs, protocols, and policies that continue to promote institutional racism? How are we building trust in pure social justice with our black and brown communities? I worry that we are not quick enough despite our current efforts. But we won’t stop.

I am pleased with the progress and leadership of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee at Main Street School and Lincoln Street School. I am energized by the work of the Racial Unity Team and our collaboration with them to fulfill the mission of developing understanding and acceptance of all human differences in the community. School and district leaders continue to learn together about unpacking equity and cultural proficiency in schools. And, our SAU Anti-Discrimination Task Force is emerging from its organizational phase to operational when it will begin to review current policies through an institutional racism lens. I understand that our process is slow moving, but I commit to keep it moving.

As a school community, I believe we can effect a positive change in the dialogue on race if we can all embrace the belief that we need to change it. As your school superintendent it has been clear from my first day that I intended on bringing that change to this community. I am now asking for your help to do so.

Respectfully,

David Ryan, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

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