

WEST DEPTFORD TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS

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Dear West Deptford School Community,

In the midst of these difficult times, I would like to take the time to acknowledge the grief and pain of our community members. Our country has simultaneously experienced a multitude of difficult situations. Our schools, businesses, medical facilities, places of worship, entertainment, etc. have been shut down, disrupting every part of our lives. We are planning for an uncertain future and struggle to picture what that looks like.

While still working through how we are going to recover from the pandemic, we are now called upon to address a very serious reality. The recent deaths, specifically that of George Floyd, are difficult reminders that there is still much work to be done. The video of Mr. Floyd was deeply troubling and many throughout our country are calling for change. Some are struggling to find a way to express their anger and frustration - this is where we can offer support, understanding, and begin the healing process.

It is imperative and urgent that educators take an active role in the process of listening to our students and community members, providing opportunities for open dialogue and the sharing of ideas to create actionable steps toward a more equitable tomorrow. These tragic events present our community with an opportunity to examine and learn, reflect upon our values, investigate our implicit biases, and demand equity and justice for our children and future generations.

As a leader in the school community, I will continue to work with all stakeholders in order to chart a new path to successfully implement an inclusive and supportive educational experience for all students. This includes our District staff, the Board of Education, members of our community, and our local Police Department. Together, our goal is to understand the trauma our community has suffered and to work toward healing. More than ever, we are determined to improve equity in our schools, and we welcome feedback, input, and ideas from our community members. We are hopeful that these conversations will begin at home.

Please know that our staff is available to assist you and your family. If you or one of your children want to talk to someone or need support in any capacity, school support personnel are able to assist you. Together, we can provide opportunities for our community to be advocates and effect change. We must continue to foster an environment where all community members feel welcomed, valued, and accepted, and provide an education in which all students have equal opportunity.

I would like to sincerely thank this community for the support of our students, schools, and one another.

Sincerely,

Gregory J. Cappello, Esq.
Superintendent

Pride, Passion, and a Commitment to Excellence