

August 29, 2019

Dear Parents, Guardians and Staff;

As you know, last week I sent a letter to all district staff members. In that letter, I made a serious error when I unfairly labeled media and social media coverage of the recent and historical events that have occurred in our school district. It was not my intent to discount the news or the community's reaction to what has been reported. More importantly, I did not mean for my words to be in any way dismissive or discouraging of our students and their experiences.

My letter did not convey how seriously I take these events. I am deeply sorry that I chose my words so poorly.

This week our schools have been very busy. Our staff worked extremely hard to prepare for a successful first day of school. I am very proud of all of our teachers, administrative assistants, educational assistants, custodians, transportation workers, food service staff, and all branches of our employees. Their dedication and unwavering support of each other and our students is most impressive.

This past Tuesday, our employees engaged with professional learning on reporting child abuse and neglect, sexual harassment prevention and understanding how to support the impacts of traumatic experiences on our youth. We were supported by experts in the field who led these trainings for us.

As we opened our schools on Wednesday, our employees were knowledgeable in their efforts to support our students, to hear their stories and to promote safety in our schools. From the 49 new members of our staff to those who have dedicated their careers to supporting students in our schools, we are ready for this new school year.

We have revised our policies and we continue to review and update our practices to support and enhance student safety and security. As our high school administrators so eloquently wrote in a letter to high school parents and guardians earlier this week – "the events of the past do reflect on us, but do not define us." I couldn't agree more, and I remain committed to helping our students and our community work through these challenging times together.

Sincerely,



Terri Forsten
Superintendent