

June 5, 2020

Dear Banks School District Families and Staff,

We are deeply troubled by the recent events surrounding the death of George Floyd and others. We in the Banks School District hurt for those who are affected by these tragic and senseless acts. Feelings of pain, fear, anger and more are boiling in our nation and in our community. We desire for our students and staff, especially those of color, to feel welcome while in our schools and in our community. We desire our students to receive the quality education they deserve in an environment of acceptance and safety, where diversity is celebrated and not derided. Our schools and community must be a safe place for students to learn and grow, and we need to make this a reality. We recognize that we still have work to do in order to make our schools feel safe for all of our students.

Over the last year, the district put together a Student Success Plan that is focused on equaling the playing field for every student. It invests in our students' social and emotional health and provides more resources to our most vulnerable and underserved students. The events of this past week are a reminder that rooting out institutional racism in our school system has to be a top priority for us. As we begin to open up our schools in the fall we have an opportunity to change and improve the outcomes and experiences for historically marginalized students.

We will be working with our staff to ensure the learning and application of culturally responsive and sustaining strategies are continually explored and used in our district. We are committed to take actions that will improve the experiences of our students.

While we say goodbye to our seniors and begin preparations to welcome new students next fall, we must continue to strive for a better future. A future in which we dedicate ourselves to uniting against violence, the oppression of others, and that all voices are elevated and valued.

Respectfully,

Jeff Leo, Superintendent

Norie Dimeo-Ediger, Board Chair