



WEST WINDSOR-PLAINSBORO REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Superintendent of Schools

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“Systemic injustice requires systemic solutions.”

U.S. Representative Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts

Dear West Windsor – Plainsboro Regional School District Community,

Like many, this weekend was spent horrified by the murder of Mr. George Floyd of Minneapolis. The collective reaction to the events in Minneapolis has blanketed our nation. Further, our headlines have been consumed by the murders of Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery. These tragedies are coupled with the disproportionate way in which COVID-19 has impacted communities of color. Peaceful protests have demanded action for such racial injustices. Action is demanded. Justice is demanded. Not action and justice as nouns, but action and justice as verbs.

In a Los Angeles Times, Op Ed, Presidential Medal of Freedom award winner Kareem Abdul-Jabbar stated:

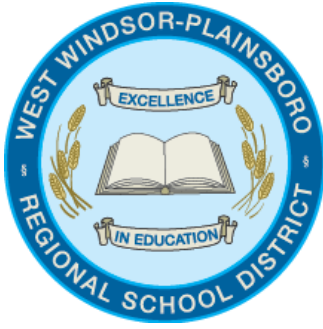
Racism in America is like dust in the air. It seems invisible – even if you’re choking on it – until you let the sun in. Then you see it’s everywhere. As long as we keep shining that light, we have a chance of cleaning it wherever it lands. But we have to stay vigilant, because it’s always still in the air.

In light of the recent social media incidents in our WW-P community, Mr. Earle, Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Services and Planning, and I have held 15 feedback sessions with members of the African American and Black community. We have been privileged to hear directly from students, alumni, parents, educators, and community members. In these discussions and dialogue, it is evident that African American and Black students are hurting. It is also evident that there are great opportunities for our school community to enact meaningful change.

Themes that emerged from our discussions include, but are not limited to:

- Diversity
- Advocacy and Representation
- Macroaggressions

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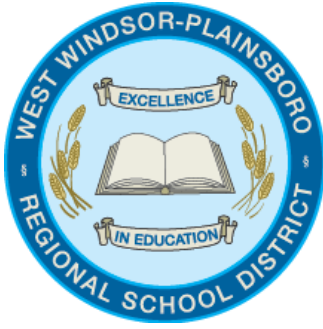
- Systemic Inequalities
- Stereotypes
- Bias
- Racism
- Diversity
- Prejudice
- Equity
- Unconscious Bias
- Privilege
- Institutional Racism
- Belonging
- Inclusivity
- Social Justice
- Curriculum
- Racial Awareness
- Creating Safe Spaces
- Mindsets/Beliefs
- Culturally Relevant Pedagogy
- Accountability
- Community – The complexities are bigger than WW-P

As a school system, we are committed to dismantling structures of systemic racism. We are committed to educating our students' hearts and minds. Confronting racism is not a political issue. Confronting racism is a moral and ethical obligation.

In the days ahead, we will provide students a safe virtual space for students to speak with each other in the presence of district staff. High school and middle school students wishing to engage in discussions to process these events and discuss opportunities for change can register by clicking [HERE](#).

The school district will continue to partner with the African American Parent Support Group (AAPSG), student and alumni from the WW-P POC, students, counselors, staff, teachers, administrators, and the WW-P Board of Education. We will continue to collaborate with community groups, members of the religious community,

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PTA/PTSA members, and with local law enforcement. Conversations about racism demand community conversations and action.

Our African American and Black students and families need partners, allies, and advocates. West Windsor and Plainsboro residents I urge you to hear this call. The responsibility to confront and obliterate racism is everyone's responsibility. Conversations about racism must become engrained within every home, business, community organization, and school system. Be the change. Have the conversation.

Additional support resources, including how to help children cope with traumatic events, are listed on our [District Website](#). Our school counselors, student assistance counselors, University of Behavior Health Care counselors, and administrators are available to support students and families.

Our school district will continue to strive to become a better version of itself. Please continue to hold one another in your hearts and minds. Compassion, advocacy, and accountability must carry us forward.

Please stay safe and be well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Aderhold".

Dr. David Aderhold
Superintendent of Schools
West Windsor – Plainsboro Regional School District

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