



NEWS FROM THE MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Tel: 612.668.0230 | Fax: 612.668.0235
1250 W. Broadway Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55411
www.mpls.k12.mn.us

Dear MPS community,

I write to you today from a place of shared grief and pain. Pain from the tragic death of George Floyd. Pain from what has occurred in our City since.

I write to you today to acknowledge the range of emotions being experienced by our students, staff and families.

Many of us, most of us, are grieving and that grief is being manifested in myriad ways: physically, spiritually and emotionally. It is a grief compounded because it comes on the heels of living through the life-altering impacts of COVID-19 on our learning community – a reality that continues even today.

There are no easy answers to what we are experiencing as a school community; as a Twin Cities community; as a nation. What we have witnessed this week is in many ways analogous to the release valve on a pressure cooker. It is the manifestation of decades of systemic racism, oppression and disenfranchisement. Only time will tell if there will be beauty from the ashes.

But in this present moment I ask us to collectively embrace hope by turning our attention to our children. Now more than ever we must educate them about their shared history, no matter how ugly and difficult it may be, and also their shared humanity. Fully informed with this knowledge, they can help us build together a better more just and equitable society.

Collectively we need to redouble our efforts to help our students understand that each one of them is worthy and valued and important. Each one of our students has something to contribute: not in spite of their diverse lived experiences, but exactly because of their diverse lived experiences. Their voices, their perspectives, their contributions provide us with the seeds of hope we need in this hour. The same goes for the families that love and support them. The same goes for the staff members who educate and support their learning. Within each of us exists the seeds of hope for a better tomorrow if only we nurture them and commit to not allowing the weeds of anger, hurt, divisiveness, prejudice, bias or fear to choke them and stunt their growth.

I know many of you can't embrace the future or hope because you are overwhelmed by the current condition. [Here you can find supports for students, staff and families](#) to help make sense of what we are experiencing right now. I also am providing [the number of a mental health support line](#) that you should feel free to take advantage of if you need to.

Finally, I am not naïve about the role systems like MPS have historically played in the disenfranchisement of many in our community. You have my commitment that we will continue to improve our own work. We will do more to teach history that is inclusive, and nuanced, and told from

multiple perspectives. We will ensure our policies and practices don't perpetuate harm, especially to children of color and American Indian students. And we will continue our work to ensure that our staff, our curriculum, and our instruction are reflective of - and meet the needs of - all the children we serve.

No one might have predicted that this is where we would find ourselves as our school year comes to an end. But I know that as a school community we are a resilient people and we will find a way through this together for the good of our future, for the good of the children.

Wishing you peace,

Superintendent Ed Graff