



BUNKER HILL MIDDLE SCHOOL

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"Bulldog...It's more than our mascot; it's our character"

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Dear Bunker Hill Families and Students:

I was pleased to see Mr. Bollendorf put out a unifying message because not only would it dictate how I responded as well for my Bulldog families, but the reality is that social aspect of school becomes a microcosm of what really happens in adult society. I am also pleased with the hope that with the district's assertion for the Black Community that *TWP Sees You - TWP Hears You - TWP Stands With You - TWP Supports Our Black Students, Staff & Community*, the words become actions in a real positive direction.

I think change cannot happen unless two things occur. First, we have to take these words and get really uncomfortable dissecting the meaning of the above statement. It is only through willingness to engage in uncomfortable conversations, that we allow ourselves to truly see the other point of view and obtain lasting change. However, history tells us that words can be just words on a page and words take a very long time to become action. It's been almost 232 years to the day that we ratified our desire to become "a more perfect Union," "establish Justice and insure domestic Tranquility", and "promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty." 232 years later, we are still working on it and it would seem we have longer to go than we thought. The second is that we need to put our words into actions and get down to the business of doing the hard work for the children in our care. We must not continue the generational pain and divide. We need to understand that the real work is sitting down across a table strategizing how to bring change and engaging in productive debate as to what is needed so as to reach a compromise.

Dr. Muscelli and I talk many times about this and genuinely try help students with this understanding and utilize teachable moments like this each day. Our next step and what we really need to do is help eradicate biased thoughts and harmful words from the minds of students so those words of hate and ignorance cease to be part of their vernacular. If we were in school, we would be having assemblies and talking about this and what is the response of a Bulldog in these times. Unfortunately, we do not have the captive audience as we social distance. We believe that if Bunker Hill is truly to be a designated "No Place for Hate" school that has to be paramount in what we say and what we do. My hope is that when we get back into the building, we can define even more what it means that a Bulldog isn't just our mascot, but our character and define and expect that decorum and belief in and outside of Bunker Hill. It is going to take a collective group of educators and parents to do that – to have real conversations and actions to bring our words to positive action. Thank you for hearing my thoughts.

Very Truly Yours,



Mike D'Ostilio