



School Administrative Unit 21

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Serving the communities of:

Hampton Falls

North Hampton

Seabrook

South Hampton

Winnacunnet High School

Dear Members of the SAU 21 Community:

We have been tardy in writing to you about events in our country over the past weeks and their impact on our schools in Hampton Falls, North Hampton, Seabrook, South Hampton and at Winnacunnet. While we are all aware of the debilitating impact of racism on our institutions and relationships, the recent death of George Floyd and many others before him, as well as the events that have unfolded since, serves as a painful reminder of the reality that black and brown citizens face in their lives each and every day.

Over the past few weeks we have each thought a great deal about conversations that one of our 2019 graduates had with our Principals and SAU administrators in March of last year. As part of an Extended Learning Opportunity (ELO) Project, this student detailed what it was like to be black at our high school, referencing how students feel being the only student of color in advanced classes there, identifying the types of things that are said in the hallways, discussing the perspective of never having had a teacher who looks like you, and pinpointing other forms of microaggression that students interviewed for this project experience in our schools and communities regularly. SAU and School Leaders commented that it was one of the most powerful presentations that they had ever been part of and, unfortunately, that nearly all of these things could be said about any of our SAU 21 schools.

While we used that moment as an opportunity to begin a conversation and to bring in some resources, our SAU and districts clearly have not done enough. Personally, none of us believe we have done enough. Moving forward, we pledge to enhance the work that had been started prior to the school closures to better educate our leaders and staff to tackle systemic bias, inequities and privilege in our districts.

We cannot ignore the racism that we witness and instead need to stand with our fellow citizens to demand better. While next year will undoubtedly be challenging and difficult, all of our SAU 21 schools will commit to provide professional learning experiences in diversity for all employees, to provide equitable access to academically rigorous experiences, and to integrate anti-racist curricula across our academic programs.

We will also be posting a list of resources that may be helpful to you in navigating conversations with family and friends about race and privilege. You can find the list on our SAU 21 website at www.sau21.org.

We hope that you will join us in this important work.

Sincerely,



Bill Lupini
Superintendent of Schools



David Hobbs
Assistant Superintendent



Caroline Arakelian
Executive Director of Student Services



Matthew Ferreira
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William McGowan
Principal – Winnacunnet High School



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