

# We have work to do...

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Dear Staff and Families,

It is with sadness and a heavy heart that I am reaching out to staff and families about the tragic death of George Floyd. This incident is sure to elicit many varied emotions from all of us. Tragedies of this nature reach far beyond the specific locality of their occurrence and deeply affect all of us as individuals and across the larger community in countless ways. In addition, sadly, they serve as stark reminders that we still have much work to do to address systemic racism, inequities and disparities that exist in our country. I appreciate the partnership we have with our families and communities-at-large; and that we can count on working together through the challenges that are before us.

Any act of racism is deeply disturbing and is against all that we stand for in our school district and larger community. Incidents of racism affect our entire community whether they occur locally, within Southern Worcester County, or more broadly as a Commonwealth, nationally or globally. We deeply value our wonderfully diverse community where students and families of many ethnicities and faiths come together as one. We all grow together and help each other to be our best through learning from everyone's valuable life experiences and cultural traditions.

To be clear, words and/or actions that constitute racism or discrimination are devastating in any form and will not be tolerated. ***Such acts are deplorable, tarnish the beauty of our collective humanity, and diminish our ability to help bring out the best in each other.***

Although the end of our school year is coming quickly, I want to assure you that there will be staff who are available beyond the final day of school if your child is in need of any type of support or assistance, whether related to the heart-breaking events of this week or any other needs they may have. One of our strategic objectives is to ensure that ALL students feel a sense of belonging and connection to their school where social-emotional, physical and mental health is nurtured and valued. Please know that you can reach out anytime, we are always here for you.

Additionally, in keeping with our commitment to "***Teaching & Learning with Purpose***," listed below are multiple resources that our school counselors have identified for your review and potential use with your child as you see fit. Many students have questions about the protests happening across the country: What precipitated them? Why are they happening and what can we do? Other students may have questions about race and equality. We are hopeful that you find the below resources helpful.

- [Embrace Race](#)
- [Education with an Apron](#)
- "[Something happened in our town](#)" is also a great read aloud.
- [Supporting Vulnerable Students in Stressful Times: Tips for Parents](#)
- [Understanding Race and Privilege.](#)

- [Tips for talking to kids about racism](#)
- [10 Tips for Teaching and Talking to Kids about Race](#)
- [Talking to Kids about Racial Bias](#)

Thank you for your partnership and support of the Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District. It is deeply appreciated.

Sincerely,

***Paul S. Haughey, Ed.D.***

Superintendent of Schools