June 2, 2020

Dear Willingboro Public Schools Community,

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied to a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”

I am writing to you with a heavy heart over the death of George Floyd. Mr. Floyd’s death on May 25, 2020, led many individuals from around the world to feel a sense of sadness, anger, uncertainty, and hopelessness. We mourn with the family of George Floyd, and we grieve for the tragic loss of his life.

During this time of unrest in our country, the words of Dr. King, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere” is a call for communities to stand in solidarity for equal opportunity for all individuals. We stand with those who peacefully march for change. We stand with those who fight every day in the courtroom and in the political arena to establish laws that will promote equity for every human being regardless of race, religion, gender, or economic status. We stand with those law enforcement officers who work tirelessly to protect our community and ensure that laws are applied fairly to all citizens. We stand with the Floyd family and with all other families who have tragically lost love ones.

As we stand strong, there will be times when we will get tired and weary. It is during these times that we will be lifted by the memory of George Floyd and so many others. As we stand, we will lean on our education and our right to vote, which are both catalysts for change. We must never forget that our collective voices are powerful beyond measure.

It is challenging to connect and provide emotional support during this time of distance learning; however, our counselors are available to provide support to our students. Parents are encouraged to contact the building principal if their children are in need of support. I have
included a resource below from the New Jersey Department of Human Services to assist our students, families, and staff who require support.

A virtual program is being planned for Willingboro high school students to discuss the history of non-violent protests and race relations in America.

At this difficult time, I find encouragement in knowing that the future leaders and change agents are current students of the Willingboro Public Schools. They are our hope for a better tomorrow. Our village will continue to uplift, encourage, and support the students of Willingboro.

Sincerely,

Dr. Neely Hackett
Dr. Neely Hackett

Resources from the website of the New Jersey Department of Human Services

The Mental Health Association in New Jersey operates the New Jersey MentalHealthCares Helpline. Callers to the Helpline may receive supportive counseling, crisis assessment and intervention, and when needed a connection to appropriate resources and services. Stress can surface in many forms and often appears weeks or months after a traumatic event. It may include anger, fatigue, loss of appetite, sleeplessness, nightmares, depression, inability to concentrate, and/or hyperactivity. If you or someone you know is experiencing distress or feeling overwhelmed by painful emotions, call the New Jersey MentalHealthCares' Disaster Helpline: 866.202.4357 (HELP). A TTY line is available at 877.294.4356. Translation services are available as well.