Dear Maple Run Community,

For nearly two weeks now, our country has erupted in protest following the tragic death of George Floyd and the many others before him. There is so much pain being expressed by many communities across America, including our own. Emotions are raw as we respond to yet another unjust death of a Black person. This pain is compounded by the disproportionate impact that the Covid-19 pandemic has had on Black communities. Maple Run Unified School District is committed to anti-bias and anti-racism in our schools and communities, so we offer this statement of solidarity in keeping with our core values.

Our mission and core values are:

The Maple Run Unified School District is where inquiring minds, compassionate hearts, creative expression, healthy lives and service to the community develop so all can learn, achieve and succeed.

In partnership with our families and community we value:

- Children, first and foremost;
- Safety and security;
- Collaboration and relationships;
- Joy and curiosity;
- Relevance and rigor;
- Independence and perseverance;
- Flexibility and adaptability;
- Respect and diversity;
- Accountability and integrity;
- And commit to provide equity in access to a quality education.

When faced with tragedy like this, and the resulting outcry, it serves as a stark reminder that we still have much work to do. On behalf of the MRUSD Equity Committee and our district leaders we have prepared the following statement condemning acts of racism and standing in solidarity with communities of color during this time of unrest.

We stand with:

- Our students and families who are People of Color - we hear you and we see you.
- The protestors around the country who are crying out for real action to end systemic racism and who are demanding justice for George Floyd and countless others.
- Our students who want to take action and are seeking support to do so safely and effectively.
- Continued efforts to challenge inequity through anti-bias education in our district.
- Governor Phil Scott who is responding by forming a racial equity task force in Vermont and says, "for those who see the national protests and feel disdain instead of sympathy, just know the reactions we're seeing in cities around the country are the results of decades — actually centuries — of calls for help that went unheard."

We also understand that trauma takes many forms and we want to take this opportunity to remind our community that our staff is here for you. We encourage you to reach out if you need support and encourage use of the Crisis Text Line which provides free, 24/7 support via text message. Text HOME to 741741. Together, we can provide opportunities for our children to be advocates and affect change.

If you would like to get involved through the MRUSD Equity Committee please email Jamilah Vogel - jvogel@maplerun.org.

Resources:

- Beyond the Golden Rule: A Parent’s Guide to Preventing and Responding to Prejudice (Teaching Tolerance)
- How to Talk to Kids about Race and Racism (NBC News Learn)
- Resources for Talking about Race, Racism and Racialized Violence with Kids (Center for Racial Justice Education)
- Social Justice (National Association of School Psychologists)
- Talking Race with Young Children (National Public Radio)
- Talking to Kids About Discrimination (American Psychological Association)

Signed in Solidarity,

Dr. Kevin Dirth, Superintendent for the Maple Run Unified School District

The MRUSD Equity Committee and District Leadership Team with representatives from SACS, SATEC, BFA, FCS, & NWTC