

# Hastings-on-Hudson Public Schools



Office of the Superintendent  
27 Farragut Avenue, Hastings-on-Hudson, New York 10706  
tel: (914) 478-6205 fax: (914) 478-6209  
[www.hohschools.org](http://www.hohschools.org)



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**William S. McKersie, Ph.D.**  
*Superintendent of Schools*  
[mckersiew@hohschools.org](mailto:mckersiew@hohschools.org)

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Dear Hastings Families and Staff:

As we all know, the horrific treatment and murder of a fellow human being, Mr. Tyre Nichols, was made visible for the world on Friday night. For many, the brutality was familiar and one more page in a long history of Black people being brutalized. I must note that, while the video release was essential for transparency, the run-up to the release in the media, portraying it with countdowns akin to a sports event, painfully exemplified the inhumanity that pervades what Fredrick Douglass (1881) and W.E. DuBois (1903) described as “our nation’s original sin, the Color Line.”

The Hastings community is aghast and heartbroken, seeing Mr. Nichols’ murder as another example of our fundamental failings as humans. I want to make clear that the Hastings Police Department has no tolerance for the terrible actions taken by the five Memphis police officers at the center of this tragedy. Chief Dosin stressed to me this weekend that his entire department is disgusted by the actions of the now terminated Memphis police officers. The HPD will continue their efforts to set the standard for protecting the welfare of each and every resident of Hastings with dignity and respect. Chief Dosin underscored that the fast move by Memphis officials to hold these five officers accountable should be a model for police departments nationwide.

Hastings educators, in word and deed, must step up with extra effort to guide and teach dignity, compassion and justice for all students, especially our Black students, in the wake of the inhumane treatment and murder of Mr. Nichols. Early this morning, Dr. Jenice Mateo-Toledo, Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator, circulated a set of teaching resources to principals, which they are relaying to staff. I share these resources below:

- [NYSUT Response to Tyre Nichols' Death & Resources for Members](#)
- [Facing History & Ourselves Guidance for Teaching Current Events](#)
- [Anti-Defamation League Resources for Addressing News About Bias & Injustice](#)

Hastings educators are ready to support students—in developmentally appropriate ways—in what we expect to be wide-ranging emotions and perspectives. We will insist on respectful, dignified discussions, echoing what Mr. Nichols' family called for over the weekend. Principals, teachers, counselors and other staff will be extra attentive to needs and concerns. We will continue to

draw on the expertise of Dr. Mateo-Toledo, and area educational agencies, to identify additional resources for teachers, students and families.

Please be in touch with your student's teacher or school principal with specific questions.

Peace.

*Bill*

William S. McKersie, Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Schools