June 3, 2020

Dear Hastings Community,

We are writing to all of you, as a collective voice, hoping to reach each of you in this difficult moment. The police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis on May 25th, as well as the killings of Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade, Andrew Kearse, David McAtee, and others have prompted protests and riots worldwide, and we are standing together to say that racism has no place in Hastings-on-Hudson.

Our community’s strength comes from our diversity, our inclusion, and from the kindness we show our neighbors, our coworkers, and our classmates. Today and every day, we stand together with our Black community members, and those around Westchester, New York state, our country, and the globe to actively speak out against racism, against hate, and against violent actions motivated by racism and hate.

We stand with the statement made by Hastings-on-Hudson Police Chief David Dosin, extending the department’s sympathies to the family of Mr. George Floyd and their denouncement of the actions of Minneapolis police officers.

In our school district, our school leaders and teachers have been collaborating with our director of diversity to share resources, coach difficult conversations, help educate the adults in the community and most significantly, educate and be present for our children. We know that racism has detrimental impacts on child development and academic achievement, and while our educational efforts against racism have been ongoing, we have been collaborating more extensively in recent days.

We stand together, deeply feeling the words of Dr. Cornel West, who said, “You can’t lead the people if you don’t love the people.” And we are so fond of all the people in our Village and schools, and those who work and visit here. That affection motivates us to listen, and if you need to speak with us about racism, about resources for our community, about how to foster more solidarity with our Black community members, we are here. Dr. West also said, “Justice is what love looks like in public.” We seek justice together with our Black community members, and with all of you, and stand unified against racism and hate.

Sincerely,

Members of Hastings-on-Hudson Board of Education
Superintendent Dr. Valerie Henning-Piedmonte

Link to June 1, 2020 letter to the faculty and staff of the Hastings-on-Hudson UFSD by Ms. Jenice Mateo-Toledo, Director of Diversity