

THE TINTON FALLS SCHOOL DISTRICT



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
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Lisa Goldey
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June 2020

Dear Parents and Community Members:

The month of June traditionally is filled with a mix of celebration and somber reflection for our students and our families. We celebrate the joy of our children's graduations, while also reflecting upon the new stages that our children are entering and the challenges that they may face.

June also has been a time of celebration and somber reflection for our Country. For example, in June, we celebrate Juneteenth, the day in 1865 on which those African Americans who were held in bondage in the most remote parts of the Confederacy learned for the first time that President Lincoln had issued the Emancipation Proclamation, ending slavery laws in states that had seceded from the Union. Celebrating that joyful moment is tempered, though, by our knowledge that President Lincoln's proclamation did not end slavery in the United States. Slavery instead remained legal in those states that had remained loyal to the Union until the passage of the 13th Amendment.

We also celebrate National *Loving* Day on June 12th, the day in 1967 on which the United States Supreme Court struck down all anti-miscegenation laws remaining in the United States that prevented Americans of different races from marrying each other. As with Juneteenth, National *Loving* Day represents a victory for equality in our country. But also as with Juneteenth, our celebration is tempered by our knowledge that the *Loving* decision did not end systemic racism in the United States. Discrimination against African-Americans continued in housing and employment throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Indeed, one of our Board Members recalls a time in the 1990s when the Klan marched on her best friend's store in an effort to dictate that people of color had no place in the town.

The recent killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery are only the most recent part of our Nation's history of violence against people of color. As we remotely celebrate graduations this month and prepare to come together to celebrate in person next month, please know that the Tinton Falls School Board also is reflecting upon the deep pain that many of our students, staff, teachers, administrators, Board Members, and other community members are experiencing right now as a result of the ongoing violence and systemic racism in our country that still exists against people of color. At a time of increased dialogue and action, the Board formally re-affirms our continued commitment to fight racism, white supremacy, and injustice. We will continue to implement best practices to support our staff, families, students, and community.

As you may know, our District has had a longstanding practice of reviewing policies, modifying best practices, and providing professional development to teachers and staff

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regarding, among other things, equity and social-emotional needs. The District also has a proven history of adopting best practices around curricular support, programs, and opportunities that promote diversity, inclusion, and equity. We will continue to work directly with the community and with experts to shape this discussion, take action against any inequities, and continue to support our students, teachers, staff, administrators, and Board Members.

We continue to welcome you to our meetings and to share your ideas. We must ensure equitable treatment and opportunities for all students in an inclusive environment. We look forward to continuing this work together. Our reflection and action will make our community and schools stronger.

Sincerely,

Tinton Falls School District

Tinton Falls Board of Education