

**THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

440 NORTH BROAD STREET
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19130-4015

WILLIAM R. HITE, JR., Ed.D.
SUPERINTENDENT

December 16, 2016

Dear Parents / Guardians:

The School District of Philadelphia takes pride in being a diverse and multicultural community. A place where ALL students, regardless of race, religion, gender, immigration status, language, sexual orientation, political view, or social economic standing have a right to access a free and public education that develops his/her fullest potential. Our commitment has been and will continue to be to maintain a safe, respectful and rigorous learning environment for every student, every day.

Your child's physical and emotional wellbeing is our priority, and making sure that every student and family feels safe and welcomed in our schools and offices, is our commitment to you. There is absolutely no place in our schools for bullying, harassment, racism or bigotry in any form, toward any student. We will continue to take advantage of the systems our district has in place to prevent bullying and support positive student behavior. As a school district we believe in No Place for Hate and will discipline those who seek to intimidate, harass or create a school environment that causes any student or group to feel intimidated or ill-treated.

We work every day to educate our children to not only tolerate but rather to accept, understand, and develop a cultural appreciation for all people. This value system will continue. I encourage you to talk to your child about respecting others and also about being resilient when faced with bigotry or other forms of ignorance, and reminding them that he/she has the right to be safe, respected, and protected in our schools. Please discuss with children things we all share: our humanity, the desire to live in peace, and the need we humans have of feeling loved and safe.

If your child feels overwhelmed or afraid by recent events, please encourage them to talk with a trusted adult at school or at home. In the event that you or your child were to witness, become aware of, or be the target of harassment, intimidation, violence, and/or discrimination, we ask that you act immediately.

The following list includes some of the steps you can take:

- Call 911 if you are the victim of a crime (including hate speech and hate crimes) on your way to or from school.
- Inform your school principal if the event takes place at school.
- Contact the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations (PCHR):
<http://www.phila.gov/humanrelations>
 - To report hate crimes and bias incidents (non-emergency) during work hours call: 215-686-4670. For calls after hours, or to report anonymously, call: 215-686-2856.
- If you see or are a victim of an immigration raid in Philadelphia, call the emergency hotline: 267-333-9530. This line is available 24/7.

We value all our students and families and are here to help if you need us.

Sincerely,



William R. Hite Jr., Ed.D.