

The NPCSD Board of Education and Interim Superintendent of Schools Bernard Josefsberg condemn the recent murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis. We wish to acknowledge that many of our students, families and staff are struggling with feelings of pain and injustice in response to the continuing dehumanization of Black lives — George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Christian Cooper, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, most recently among them.

We also recognize the specific trauma that these acts of racist violence and their viral images inflict on our students, families, and staff of color, compounding the shared stress related to the disruptions of COVID-19 — a health and economic crisis that disproportionately hurts communities of color.

This systemic brutality against Black lives reminds us how much more work we must do to create truly inclusive environments for our students as they become citizens of the world. NPCSD has taken on Racial Equity and NYSED's Continuum of Well-Being as district initiatives; racial injustice violates both these crucial commitments, jeopardizing the mental and emotional health, sense of self-worth, and dignity of every member of our learning community.

Wherever we are in our learning and discomfort around racism, we cannot afford to remain silent. We must continue explicit conversations about race that lead to action, including the examination of district practices and the removal of obstacles that contribute to systemic inequities. As a district, we have a responsibility to foster empathy, justice, safety and belonging. Our district continues to refine and strive for policies and practices that ensure everyone has the opportunity to learn and work in an environment where they are treated with dignity and respect, free from bullying or harassment. This vital work has no end and requires continual vigilance.

Even though we are not physically together, we wish to offer some support. Please see the resources linked below to learn more about how we can help our students, even our youngest learners, as we all grapple with processing this recent rash of racialized violence and the unrest we are all witnessing:

- [Teaching About Race, Racism and Police Violence](#)
- [Beyond the Golden Rule: A Parent's Guide to Preventing and Responding to Prejudice](#)
- [Racism and Using Your Power as a Parent to Support Children Aged 2 to 5](#)
- [Parent Resources: Uplifting Youth Through Healthy Communication About Race](#)
- [Supporting Kids of Color in the Wake of Racialized Violence](#)

Thank you for your partnership in engaging your children in these difficult but crucial talks about racism. Our families of color must have these conversations on a regular basis, perhaps even daily. All of our youth are trying to make sense of the world around them and they crave our collective support, guidance and courage.

#### **New Paltz Central School District Board of Education**

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Bernard Josefsberg