

Dear Churchville-Chili families:

I would like to take this opportunity to request your support and collaboration to address the recent death of George Floyd as well as the series of deaths and other acts of racism over the past several weeks and years. This is a very emotional time for each of us, especially our children. We need to join together to end racism.

As adults, it is very emotional watching the reckless actions of one person taking the life of another played out on news channel outlets. I recognize how unsettling and traumatic it is for our youth, especially those who are marginalized, to watch this unfold. Numerous students are using social media to post their thoughts and feelings about this incident related to racism and white privilege, which mirrors the larger national social media environment. I believe that as adults and role models for our students and our own children, we must make time to hear what our students have to say, have an honest dialogue about racism, and provide them with support and assurance that we will treat each other with mutual dignity and respect.

As a district, we are focused on cultural responsiveness in an effort to become a more inclusive learning environment and improve opportunities for students to have greater access and equity in our school community. This includes our Dignity for All committee which has had student representation for the last five years. They have provided leadership in cultural awareness, implicit bias, relationship circles, and conversations about racism. On behalf of our student group, their request is that, "we stand together, those who have privilege and those who do not, to remove barriers, take action to become anti-racist, and work together to fix these problems."

We need to continue our work and do more. I hope you will join me in listening and learning from those who have experienced bias and acts of institutional racism. This is our opportunity to have a candid conversation with our children about racism, how it exists now and has throughout history. It is our call to action to determine ways to move forward together to respect our differences, eliminate oppression, learn from one another, create equity, and combat unnecessary acts of violence.

We have provided resources on our district website to assist with this challenging conversation about racism: <https://www.cccsd.org/raceandequity.aspx>. If there are other resources you would recommend, please let us know.

Our counselors are available to support you and your children. Their contact information has been posted on Google classroom pages for easy access. In addition, you can contact us for additional support at 293-1800 x2131.

Let's move forward and stand together to unite our children and community,

Lori Orologio

*"Justice will not be served until those who are unaffected are as outraged as those who are."* - Benjamin Franklin