



Howell Township Public Schools

Joseph Isola
Superintendent of Schools

Mark Bonjavanni
Board President

January 7, 2021

Dear Howell Township Public School Community:

These are extremely challenging times for us as a country and as a community. In recent months, we have witnessed escalating displays of violence, crime, marginalization, censorship, and intolerance. We, as a public school district, have a responsibility to lead the teaching and learning that will yield positive change. This is our commitment to 'relentless learning for a better tomorrow.' We would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm the core values upon which we frame all learning environments and experiences of this great district. The Howell Township School District is committed to creating a thriving and inclusive learning environment such that all members of the Howell Township School Community can bring their whole selves to our schools. We owe it to our community to ensure equal and bias-free access to all school facilities, courses, programs, activities, and services, regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, disability, or any other protected characteristic. It is with this commitment and intention for action that we advance our district-wide work.

Recently, our district formed the Committee for Equity and Culturally Proficient Practices. This committee will build awareness and capacity to actively remove any systemic bias, racism, and marginalization from our learning environments so all who work, play, and learn here can do so as their wholly present selves. In the past several months, the committee has begun examining district data in order to identify any and all disproportionalities for marginalized groups. Committee members have participated in workshops through the Central Jersey Consortium for Excellence and Equity as well as the Monmouth County Schools Partnership for Wellness Academy, collaborating with colleagues from across the state regarding culturally proficient and equitable practices. Our committee engaged in a book study in order to develop a common language and shared understanding of equity and access in schools.

Additionally, a productive collaboration has formed between our committee and members of a local community organization with a similar mission. We have grown tremendously during this time, particularly in our realization that we have more work to do in owning our equity truth. We have developed a focused plan detailing the ways in which Howell Township Public Schools intends to better understand and take action regarding those truths.

Through an anti-racism, anti-hate and anti-bigotry lens, the Howell Township Public Schools will maintain an unwavering commitment to improving environments for all members of our community. We recognize that this is a complex journey which will require stamina as we grapple with the challenging work ahead. Our journey has begun to move our attention from awareness to action. All of our students and staff deserve an environment that makes them feel comfortable, safe, and valued.

Respectfully,



Mark Bonjavanni
Board President



Joseph Isola
Superintendent of Schools