

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Friday, October 13, 2023 8:48 AM EDT

To: Victoria Greer <vgreer@cpsd.us>; Manuel J Fernandez <mfernandez@cpsd.us>; Sam Musher <smusher@cpsd.us>

Subject: Response to Thu message

Dear Dr. Greer, Manuel, Sam, and who else it may concern at OEIB,

My name is [REDACTED], and I teach 6th grade science at VLUS. I am writing to you as a white Jewish educator who is very angry and disappointed at the message that was sent out about "the war" in Palestine and Israel on Thursday, October 12th.

Your job as school and district leadership is to communicate to families, educators, students, and community members what the values of the Cambridge Public Schools are. In your message yesterday, you communicated that CPS places more value on white lives than brown Muslim lives. This is shocking to me, since it goes against everything that OEIB and Dr. Greer's administration publicizes.

I have been on the Jewish ERG email list, and therefore privy to the messages other educators and parents have sent to your office. In your email yesterday, you used precisely the language demanded by people there. I hope that just as you listened to them, you similarly listen to me. A few thoughts on word choice: The word terrorist brings deeply racialized connotations. You conspicuously did not mention Palestine or Gaza, therefore not including any of our community with connections to those places and people in your extension of care. Israelis are "innocent civilians" but Palestinians simply do not exist.

As you sent your email, Palestinian children were dying. An entire people are incarcerated, undergoing genocide at the hands of white colonists. Food, electricity, and drinking water have been cut off to Gaza, hospitals are beyond over capacity, and white phosphorus bombs are being dropped in residential areas. These are human rights violations.

Your email ignored this entire picture of life for brown, Muslim Palestinians, and in doing so, told your employees, students, and the people of Cambridge that when a group of highly educated, white parents tells you to abandon your values of racial justice and human dignity for all, you will do so. You have told us that white lives matter and all lives matter, rather than naming the brown lives that matter. There are acts of violence being committed against Israelis that are also deeply upsetting, but there is a 75 year history of violence towards Palestinians that is ignored by the west and is being perpetuated here. As one of my students asked "Why are we not talking about Niger and France? Why are we only upset when white people are hurt?"

I agree with you that there are "mixed feelings, thoughts, ideas, and ideologies that impact us all", and in this moment, you chose white supremacy over human rights. Yes, there are also 75 years of Israeli history that one could debate, but the current crisis is clearly a humanitarian one caused by white nationalist rhetoric.

If you really care about your values of racial justice and religious freedom, you need to correct the message that was disseminated. I grieve for all who have lost their lives in this racist occupation- Jews, Muslims, brown, white - may their memories be a blessing.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]