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SUBJECT: Message re Middle East Conflict
FROM: [REDACTED]
TO: Staff - All District Employees <staff-alldistrictemployees@dearbornschools.org>
DATE: 18/10/2023 17:01

Good afternoon,

I hope you are well.

If you have not done so already, please read the message below from Dr. Maleyko regarding the Middle East conflict.

In our official capacity we must exercise sound judgement when engaging students. As we have done in the past, discussions on this highly emotional and complex topic should be age appropriate and pertain directly to classroom assignments. Student opinion and perspectives need to be respected and our own personal opinions and conjecture should be shared outside the workplace.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1YdE9NhrI4aau0jhQSVaFAIGupr0LHGSYe26-J_B12f4/edit

Office of the Superintendent

October 12, 2023

Greetings Staff,

For those of you who have been around the district for as long as I have, you will recall that when there is turmoil or crisis in the Middle East, Dearborn unfortunately takes center stage. It happened in the early 90's during the Gulf War, again on September 11th, and then shortly after during the Iraq War. However, this most recent conflict has brought more attention and a different level of emotion to our community.

As we sit here worrying about the physical well being of family and friends, it takes a toll on our own emotional well being. Adding to the stress is our own feelings about what is taking place in an area of the world that is as familiar to many as a walk down Warren, Scheafer or Michigan Avenue. It is next to impossible to avoid any discussion about this conflict while at work, however the depth and complexity can make even the simplest of conversations a tipping point for a heated exchange. As adults we are struggling with our own thoughts and emotions to manage the intricacy of this issue and at the same time we are being asked to provide the calm that is needed for children in our schools. I commend all of our staff members, especially those who are directly working in the classroom, for your commitment to providing our children with a safe space that remains focused on teaching and learning. Avoiding conversations with students is difficult, especially when they may not have the maturity to exercise discretion in their dialogue. Thank you for being the role model they need right now.

We do not live in a vacuum and everyday interactions reflect who we are as a person. We can not hide that nor should we pretend to be something we are not. Being honest with those who we interact with is how we build relationships and trust. As adults working in an environment surrounded by children, some too immature to understand the impact of their words and actions, we must continually strive to model the behaviors we need them to exhibit but more importantly the behaviors they need to learn.

It's also important to know that you are not alone. Your colleagues are working through the same emotions and feelings. The District has many resources available and I want to encourage all of our staff to take advantage of these support mechanisms. Our own [Employee Assistance Program](#) offers discrete and confidential support for staff and most recently we have just partnered with [Care Solace](#). They too have tools, support, and resources to support staff members outside the work environment. We can not abandon our beliefs and our feelings, they are at the core of who we are as a person. Taking advantage of the resources available to you can provide a structure to help manage and cope with a variety of situations.

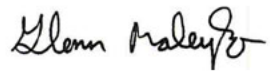
I have heard reports of students asking teachers "what side are they on?" I'm sorry that you were asked that question. I'm sorry that you were put into that situation. Outside the workplace the answer to that question is based on your own personal experiences and we are so fortunate to live in a country that allows us to freely express our thoughts and opinions. Within the workplace, when talking with students, I hope you would say you are on the side of peace, the side that looks for an end to aggression and violence. I encourage you to tell students not to pick sides but to pick

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solutions that will end decades of mistrust, lies, and human suffering. I would tell every student to be on the side that respects human life and civil resolutions to problems.

Take care of yourselves and your families as we all look for better days ahead.

With my most warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Glenn Maleyko". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'G'.

Glenn Maleyko, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

GM/jh