



Middletown Public Schools

Michael T. Conner, Ed.D. Superintendent of Schools

January 12, 2018

Dear Middletown High School Community,

This morning a disturbing social media post was shared throughout the Middletown High School community and reported to school administration. The content of the social media post was inflammatory to the core values of students and staff of this wonderful community. Individuals from senior management were deployed to Middletown High School as a support outlet for all students and staff. The Middletown Police are investigating and the school has taken appropriate steps to ensure student safety, but because of student privacy laws, I cannot comment further on the specific incident.

On Tuesday, January 16, 2018, I will be meeting with student leaders and staff members of MHS to start the necessary healing process as well as deepening our equity ideas to curtail racism, bigotry, and hate. Ms. Weiner is currently working with her guidance department to ensure all students can discuss this matter with a trusted adult at MHS.

As we prepare to celebrate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., I want to commend and recognize our community on the work we have accomplished with equity. During my short tenure with the Middletown Public Schools, I have heard staff and students engage in discussion platforms that focused on race, implicit bias, and culturally relevant practices. Addressing these topics are complex, albeit necessary to craft our collective work on the core values of Middletown—equity.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. stated, "The time is always right to do what is right." Our time is now where Middletown's voice about equity will strengthen and community actions will promote an environment that is welcoming to all. Dr. King also stated in a famous speech, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'" In reflection, I heard executive officers from the Minority Student Union denounce hate as a collective entity this afternoon, student-ambassadors meeting with school administrators to create discussion networks so our coalition work eradicates racism in society, and our high school staff being proactive to support all individuals within the confines of the community. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. asked his audience, "What are we doing for others?" I see all individuals from Middletown High School, in totality, joining as a core to address the simplistic undertones that still exist domestically. Despite the anger and pain that many are feeling today, our work together will move our community and continue the great legacy work that Dr. King articulated during the Civil Rights era. I am proud of our students, administration, and staff of Middletown High School. They are true examples of Dr. King's dream—being the voice against racism and hate.

I want to reassure you that all students and staff will be safe as a community moving forward. Additional security measures will be in place at Middletown High School starting Tuesday, January 16, 2018. More importantly, our students and staff will have support outlets throughout the week for anyone that may need assistance during this difficult time. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. Thank you for your continued support and I look forward to seeing you in the near future.

Happy Martin Luther King Jr. Weekend.

Regards,

Michael T. Conner

Michael T. Conner, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools