



Wednesday, November 11, 2020

To the Students, Staff, Families and Community of the Ann Arbor Public Schools (“AAPS”):

The University of Michigan Civil Rights Litigation Initiative’s August 24, 2020, letter alleges racism at Pioneer High School. The allegations in the letter are alarming, and the AAPS Board takes them very seriously. The Board is committed to a full and thorough investigation of the allegations and the issues they raise.

The Ann Arbor Public Schools Board of Education (AAPS Board) is firmly and unequivocally against any and all acts of discrimination, prejudice, microaggression and inequity, both institutional and individual. We believe as the AAPS Equity Plan states, that it is *“the moral responsibility of each member of our learning community to take the intentional actions necessary to create a learning community free of barriers, biases, and disproportionality for each and every person regardless of personal characteristics and social circumstances.”*

We are committed to addressing all situations of racism that may arise, without fear, so that our black and brown children, and all students, are fully supported. We want to ensure that all children are educated in inclusive and supportive environments where they have every benefit to learn and thrive.

AAPS has engaged the service of independent consultants from Dykema Gossett to conduct a thorough and independent investigation of the matters outlined in the August 24, 2020, letter. To date, no findings or conclusions have been reached, as it is very early in the investigation. For that reason, no investigative report has been issued, and no public statements have been made.

We encourage every member of our student body, staff, families, alumni and community who are aware of the matters or issues raised in the August 24, 2020, letter to reach out to the AAPS Helpline at 734-545-2321. We recognize that reporting sensitive information requires courage. Dr. Denise Eaddy-Richardson, a respected counselor and advocate in the Ann Arbor community, will be operating this line to ensure that everyone in our community has access to a professional who will listen in confidence and who will help communicate concerns.

The AAPS Board commits that we will share a summary of the investigative report once it is complete. We also commit to identifying and taking any actions we feel may be warranted to support our students and help our AAPS learning environment continue to be inclusive. Each student is important to us. We humbly ask for the community’s patience as we await the results of the investigation.

Sincerely,

Bryan Johnson
President
AAPS Board of Education



Jeanice Kerr Swift

Superintendent Statement

Ann Arbor Public Schools

Friday, October 23, 2020

In the Ann Arbor Public Schools (AAPS), we stand firm against any and all acts of bias, bigotry and racism.

The AAPS has received the August 24, 2020, letter from the University of Michigan Civil Rights Litigation Initiative alleging racism at Pioneer High School. In the AAPS, we take this situation and the matters outlined in that letter very seriously. All of us are deeply disturbed by the content of the allegations. We are committed to a full and thorough investigation of those matters as we understand the important value each child brings and are deeply committed to equity and opportunity for each and every student we serve.

In response, AAPS has engaged the service of independent consultants from Dykema Gossett, to conduct a full and independent investigation of the matters set forth in the letter. To date, no findings or conclusions have been reached, as it is very early in the investigation.

In addition, we take very seriously any and all concerns shared regarding racist attitudes and practices that exist anywhere in our AAPS organization, and we will ensure consistent and thorough processes for hearing and addressing concerns. We recognize that reporting sensitive information requires courage and that it is critically important that students, staff and community members have a safe place to openly share their concerns and experiences.

We encourage any member of our student body, staff, families and community who is aware of any concerns to reach out to our **AAPS Helpline at 734-545-2321**, hosted by Dr. Denise Eaddy-Richardson, a competent, caring and respected counselor and advocate in the Ann Arbor community. In this way, we will be sure that all in our community have access to a professional who will listen in confidence and support with communicating concerns. This Helpline is a safe place where individuals can reach for support beyond the classroom and school.



A prior Superintendent statement from August 26th regarding the commitment of the AAPS to anti-racism and equity-centered practices is [here](#); a Superintendent statement from June 3rd is [here](#).

We are committed to address all situations of racism that may arise, without fear, so that our Black and brown children, and all students, are fully supported. We want all students to have every benefit to learn and thrive in our schools and so that all children are educated in inclusive and supportive classroom and school environments. The work to eliminate racist attitudes and practices in the AAPS is both a moral obligation required of each of us individually, as well as a collective imperative in our organization and across our community. In the AAPS, we are committed to carrying this work forward for every child and in every classroom across our system.