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Dear BWRSD Community,

The recent murders of two unarmed Black men and a Black woman; George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor, in Minnesota, Georgia, and Kentucky remind us of the systemic racism that still exists in our country. Their senseless deaths have galvanized many in our country to reflect on ways they can advocate for equal justice for all. We have been encouraged by the diverse peaceful protests across America and the world. As a school district, we must use these current events as teachable moments for our students, while also reaffirming our commitment to creating educational environments that allow all students to learn, grow, and thrive without discrimination and harassment, and adjusting our curriculum to support the effective development of students.

Current events can and should be used as learning opportunities for students at the secondary level, to discuss and engage in conversations about the Constitution, citizen rights, and how citizens should redress grievances. Some of our teachers, at KMS and MHHS, already are having discussions with students to provide them the opportunity to discuss their understanding of these current events and how these events impact the students' rights. This is something that our schools have done consistently, and it should continue, despite the challenge of the topic.

The Bristol Warren Regional School District deeply values each of our students and families and is committed to maintaining and fostering an educational environment that is free from discrimination and harassment as defined in policy AC: Anti-Discrimination/Anti-Harassment adopted February 25, 2019. The policy can be found at:

<https://www.bwrsd.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=4451&dataid=9230&FileName=Copy%20of%20BWRSD%20Anti%20Discrimination%20policy%20FINAL%20Approved%20190325.pdf>

BWRSD will highlight state civics standards that develop students' understanding of the rights and responsibilities we have, as citizens living in a democratic society. Our schools will continue to develop social emotional learning curricula; such as character education and how to recognize one's own emotions, thoughts and values, and how they influence behavior. We will also focus on how we listen to each other and meet people with empathy. This includes reflecting upon our own prejudices and biases. Teaching social awareness and acceptance is equally important, because our students will learn, grow, and work in a diverse world where they will have to work with colleagues who are from different cultures and lead different lives. BWRSD students and staff will be invited to participate in statewide conversations about how to foster change and action in school communities.

Recent current events can serve as an opportunity to open dialogue, both at school and at home, about the importance of everyone's rights being protected. BWRSD is a strong school district, filled with engaged students, caring and committed parents, outstanding teachers and staff, and a community that supports our collective work.

In partnership,

School Committee Members  
Bristol Warren Regional School District

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