

Good Evening Rock Hill Leaders,

This evening I am writing to share what I trust will be received as words of encouragement. This school year has certainly provided us with numerous challenges. Your level of commitment, passion, leadership and professionalism as educators has remained steadfast. You continue to serve and guide those you lead in an admirable way. We look forward to 2021 and embrace the additional opportunities that will come our way as servant leaders.

As we prepare for tomorrow and another day of teaching and learning, please be mindful of today's events. We started the day with the historic election of the Rev. Warnock winning his senate seat as the first African American to do so in Georgia. Later in the day our nation witnessed events on our nation's capital surrounding the election certification process. While both of these are historic in their own right, they will be viewed differently. Our job as educators is to make sure we are prepared to assist our students and colleagues in processing these events and providing the necessary support to do so. As educators, we have the responsibility and opportunity to continue to help our students and staff to navigate their range of reactions and emotions, and to make meaning of what they are seeing, hearing, reading, and feeling. In the coming days and weeks, your students and colleagues may have questions or need support as they process the events happening throughout the United States this week and those to come.

In general, children and youth have little control over their own lives and make few decisions regarding how their days are spent. This leads them to think quite a lot about what is fair and what is unfair, and many draw conclusions from what they observe in adults. We believe it is important that our students know that we see, hear, respect and love them and that we are committed to their well-being and success.

Some reminders to share with your staff as we support and influence our students:

- Be mindful of social media use and your role as mentor, a fellow team member, and leader in our schools and local community. Be kind and respectful. Employees' use of electronic communication with a parent or student is an extension of the employee's workplace responsibilities--even if that communication is on the employee's personal device, platform or time. Professionalism, students' best interests, and maintaining the best learning and working environment possible should be at the forefront of our minds. The district expects all employees to remember their ethical obligations, the district's code of conduct, and that their words/posts can have unintended ramifications on both the learning and work environment in the school. Bullying, intimidation, and discrimination will not be tolerated and will be addressed in accordance with district policy.
- It is important that we do not impose our political views on our team members or our students.
- If you need personal time to be your best, take it.
- Be patient and understanding and seek to understand first.

It is critical that we, as leaders and as a school district, continue to expect and support a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion and respect for every student, family, and staff member. Please let me know if you have questions or need any support. Have a good evening.