June 23, 2020

Dear Members of the Sachem Community,

The COVID-19 pandemic has created an incredibly challenging environment for our Sachem learning community, for our students, parents, teachers, administrators and the community at large. We thank everyone in the District for continuing to strive to provide our children with the most positive learning experience that we can under extraordinarily difficult circumstances. We all hope that in the near future, we will be able to resume in-person instruction and all of the other school activities that are so essential to the educational, social and emotional well-being of our student population.

The tragic circumstances surrounding the recent deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and other people of color in our country have shocked the nation and deeply affected all of us. These events have sparked nationwide protests and conversations about race, equality and discrimination, and serve to further underscore the importance of providing our students with the ability to be present with our educators, their peers and the entire school community. Under normal circumstances our schools would have provided the student body with an opportunity to examine, reflect upon and discuss these events directly with their peers and teachers in a familiar and safe environment, as we have in many previous times of crisis or tragedy. We would be in a position to provide more personal, direct and immediate support to children at school in the event that they needed it. Nonetheless, we are constantly amazed by the kindness, empathy, and resilience of our student body, and we remain committed to always striving to support them to the best of our ability.

The Sachem Central School District Board of Education denounces all forms of racism, racial violence and brutality. By its policies, the Board of Education affirms its commitment to non-discrimination and recognizes its responsibility to provide an environment that is free of discrimination, including harassment and intimidation. The Board prohibits and condemns all forms of discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, gender, weight, creed, religion, national origin, political affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, military status, veteran status, or disability by employees, school volunteers, students, and non-employees such as contractors and vendors as well as any third parties who are participating in, observing, or otherwise engaging in activities subject to the supervision and control of the District. Our Board polices are available for review online and set forth these tenets in more specific detail.
We remain steadfast in our commitment to maintain a community of learners where racism and the inequitable treatment of people based upon the color of their skin has no place. We are committed to listening to those who seek to be heard, and to ensuring that all our young people know that they are valued and can feel safe in our schools. In these difficult times, we will continue as a District to support activities and provide resources essential to the critical educational mission of this District in an environment where unlawful discrimination has no place. We encourage any student or parent who identifies a student in our district who is in need of assistance to contact the District so that we may deploy available resources to assist that child in his or her time of need. Please do not hesitate to contact our administration to assist you to make use of our school resources in support of the social and emotional well-being of our students.

Sincerely,

Laura Slattery
Board President
On behalf of the entire Sachem Board of Education