

- **Holly Thompson** <holly.thompson@isd728.org>
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To: [REDACTED]@yahoo.com

Cc: schoolboardemails@isd728.org, Daniel Bittman

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Thu, May 6, 2021 at 3:05 PM

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Ms. [REDACTED]

Thank you for sending such a thoughtful email to the Board on Tuesday. All Board members have received the email and had a chance to reflect upon the feedback. We will use your feedback, as well as that from others, this summer when we meet for professional development, talk about the year, and determine ways we can modify and adjust current programs and happenings throughout the District. I, as the Board Chair, wanted to respond to your email now however, and am responding on the Board's behalf.

We appreciate you taking the time to send an email to the Board and to provide feedback. We continue to encourage, value, and appreciate parent engagement! This past year, especially during the pandemic, has created a lot of opportunities for collaboration and we continue to learn and grow from each situation. As a Board, we take full responsibility of what is happening throughout the District, and we are extremely grateful for and proud of the amazing things happening each and every day. At times, we have the opportunity to lead through challenging times and situations, and this past year has included some of those opportunities.

While there may be times when individuals share examples of materials or events that are not condoned or approved by the school district, the District does address these situations immediately and when it becomes aware. For the example you shared (i.e. **How not to be a Racist**), I followed up with administration and they indicated they were not aware of anyone within our school district that used that book. If you have specific information, please let me know immediately, and I will investigate further and make sure the situation is addressed appropriately. The District is interested in bringing people together and trying to avoid any type of political rhetoric or divisive actions. Furthermore, we work tirelessly to ensure that all perspectives are heard, and that our students have an opportunity to learn and grow together. Hearing the facts, being able to understand multiple perspectives, and having the opportunity to learn and grow from others remain priorities in ISD 728.

In terms of your comments related to Mr. Johnson. We, like you, want our students to be compassionate people and to care for others. While I am limited in what I can legally say about this or any personnel related situation, I can tell you that **the District does not condone looting or any illegal activity, and that students in that class reported that Mr. Johnson, as well as one other employee in the room, made it very clear that both were inappropriate and not condoned.** I can also assure you that the investigation has been comprehensive, and that appropriate action has been taken. The recording only showed a very small part of the discussion, which is unfortunate.

As far as intimidating text messages that may have been sent to some students outside of school and/or the class, please encourage these students to report the information. Administration has and will continue to address these types of behaviors and does not, in any circumstance, condone such behaviors. Again, we believe in providing a safe environment for ALL learners, and behaviors that you describe should not happen!

Again, thank you for reaching out and for sharing your feedback. We appreciate you taking the time and look forward to having you attend some of our meetings.

Sincerely,

Holly Thompson

ISD 728 School Board

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