

WESTSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS RESOLUTION
ON THE FURTHERANCE OF EQUITY, JUSTICE, DIGNITY AND RESPECT
JUNE 15, 2020

***WHEREAS**, the last few weeks have once again shown the anguish caused by needless brutality, racial injustice and unimaginable prejudice and, as educational leaders, at this moment we grieve, particularly for our black students, staff and families, and we want to do everything we can to love them and support them; and*

***WHEREAS**, we worry for our entire community. We are hurting, and the sense of loss and hopelessness is exacerbated by the feeling that we have already struggled for equal rights for all. We have already toiled for justice for all. And we wonder how we once again find ourselves here, where our society is inflicting pain on our own people, because some of them happen to have darker skin than others; and*

***WHEREAS**, societal success has always been an arc of intermittent progress and regression. At this moment, when it comes to racial equity, it is clear that we still have a long way to go. And within that, we acknowledge that it is not just extremism that got us here. We believe there have been racist actors, yes, but we also believe that our structures of law, society and plain old inertia have played roles in inequality. Institutional racism is real, and we must do all we can to eradicate it; and*

***WHEREAS**, historically, inherently racial policies, such as redlining, restrictive racial and religious housing covenants and other conscious policies and practices put people of color at a disadvantage. Like all school districts in our city, our Westside community is a product of these past decisions and events. We accept this history, in its totality; and*

***WHEREAS**, we are proud to be a diverse district where we all meld into one middle school and one high school. Our racial and socio-economic demographics are strikingly similar to the City of Omaha. Right at 69% of our students are white, while 11% are black. We have a Hispanic population of 10%, a 5% Asian population, and 5% identifying as mixed/multi-race. In addition, approximately 35% of our students qualify for free/reduced school meals. Therefore, we feel we are uniquely equipped to mold a better, more understanding and more just future, together. We believe it can be done and we want to help lead the way; and*

WHEREAS, we believe in the awesome power of education, and we see no better way forward than better focused and intentional educational efforts. We promise that in the coming days, weeks and months you will see significant developments in the areas of staff education, student education, community listening and goal-setting while we also continue to recruit, retain and develop a more diverse workforce. We are open to, and want to hear, your ideas.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Westside Community Schools and the Westside Board of Education is committed to:

- *Renewing some Community Advisory Groups, while also adding building-level and district-level goals, to increase our efforts so that Westside can become more of a leader in equity, dignity, appreciation and excellence for ALL.*
- *Pressing harder to decrease bias, better appreciate our similarities and differences and redoubling our efforts to ensure that everybody feels welcome at Westside.*
- *Being attentive and mindful listeners and becoming better “doers”; identifying the problems are not enough, and we will seek remedies through thoughtful action and system-wide accountability.*
- *Continuing our pursuit of excellence for all through increased partnerships with other individuals and organizations that seek to make a positive difference in how all students and citizens are treated and thought of throughout our great city and state.*

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Westside Board of Education asks that you please support and join us on this journey. It is too important to ignore, and you have our pledge that the District will do our best to lead the way.

Adopted this 15th Day of June, 2020.

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