



Hillsborough City School District Statement Denouncing Racism and Reaffirming Equity
September 2020

“Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world.”

-Nelson Mandela

Current events have reaffirmed the vitality and importance of these words. As a school district, we are guided by our [Essential Outcomes](#) to teach our students to be people of good character who are fair, ethical, responsible, empathetic, and caring. We strive through the work we do to make a difference in their young lives that will improve our community and their future homes.

As a nation, we find ourselves confronting recurring tragedies involving black Americans. We are deeply saddened and outraged by the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery and most recently, the shooting of Jacob Blake. The national – even international - response to these tragedies has shaken our nation to the core, increasing the already present air of uncertainty due to the continuing pandemic.

As a school district, we can and will continue to take actions that are within our expertise and professional obligations to children. We will always teach our children that racism and injustice are unacceptable. We will always support the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion. We will work proactively with staff to provide professional learning surrounding these topics.

Collectively, we can have a powerful impact and make a meaningful difference in the lives of children by helping to deploy Mandela’s weapon against the forces of senselessness.

Superintendent Carlomagno, Educational Services Director Lindner, as well as parents and teachers have been working to determine how we can best support our educators, students, and families on topics including racial injustice, inclusion, and equity. At times the task seems insurmountable but we can and must do this even during the challenges we are facing in navigating this pandemic. We are making progress but will need to move more quickly.

As members of the HCSD community, we all need to be strong advocates for racial justice and for the safety of all families in our care. Our Essential Outcomes and values of equity, fairness, and respect will continue to guide us in our work moving forward. Do not lose hope, because our children - our educated, well-taught, and well-informed children - are our greatest assets for ensuring a future where all races and identities are included, valued, and respected.