



Educational Services Building

25345 Taft Road, Novi, Michigan 48374
(248) 449-1204 • Fax (248) 449-1219

To Novi Community School District Parents and Community Members:

As a parent, you have had to deal with a lot this year. The pandemic. The arguments between people over wearing masks. Now, the death of a black man. Protests and then conflict throughout the country.

In the movie *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Atticus Finch tells his son Jem, “Lot of ugly things in this world. Wish I could keep them all away from you, but I can’t.”

In 2020, there have been a lot of ugly things.

The most recent example happened in Minneapolis with the killing of George Floyd.

As a parent, it’s hard to know how to talk with your children.

As parents, we want to protect our children. Keep the ugly things away.

I would encourage you to help your children and your students understand the hard, ugly things that we see in this world. Look for clues from your children. Listen. Be honest. Help them understand and process the ugly things.

In Novi, we pride ourselves on accepting people, celebrating our diversity, but the truth is there is ugly in the world. Not everyone celebrates differences. Not everyone believes that someone who is different is equal or worthy or important.

As a parent, as a teacher, as someone who believes that there are things worth fighting for, it is up to us to help our children, our students, learn about the ugly in the world and find ways to make it better. It is our responsibility.

It will be difficult. We’ll make mistakes.

But to hide the ugly is worse.

Students who are passionate, empowered, and prepared for their world and their future.

Dr. Steve M. Matthews, Superintendent of Schools • steven.matthews@novik12.org
<https://www.novi.k12.mi.us/>



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While we can't be together because of the pandemic, we can support one another through phone calls and emails and text messages.

So let's trust each other. We can help our children. We can help each other.

Gratefully and Appreciatively,
Steve M. Matthews, Ed.D.
Superintendent

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