

William Penn School District

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, GREEN AVENUE ANNEX
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WilliamPennSD.org

April 20, 2021

Dear William Penn Community:

This past year has been challenging for us all - dealing with the changes in our lives brought forth by the COVID pandemic as well as the many injustices we watched play out in our nation time after time. The death of George Floyd and the subsequent trial of Derek Chauvin has caused much anxiety and anguish and has impacted the lives of us all. This event, and so many others like it, are reminders of policies and practices that have negatively shaped the experiences of black and brown children. It shows that we have more work to do to create and sustain a just and equitable society and school system.

Today the verdict of the Derek Chauvin trial was released. We hope the outcome of the trial will begin to bring healing to our community, move our nation forward, and address the many factors that we know adversely affect families of color.

The racial trauma and repeated exposure to stories of violence and inequalities is still an on-going concern. In the days following this guilty verdict, it is imperative that our students and staff have time to process, reflect upon, and share our thoughts and feelings surrounding the verdict. Everyone will not share the same feelings and opinions; however, we must be committed to make sure we provide safe spaces in our schools to allow for meaningful and peaceful dialogue to take place. We must provide for the respectful expression of thoughts and feelings.

We encourage our students to reach out to their teachers, coaches, counselors, and administrators to make your voices heard and share what you are feeling. We encourage our school leaders and staff to allow for safe sharing and to take the time to listen. We also encourage all parents/guardians to talk with your children about how they may be feeling about the verdict and the importance of expressing themselves appropriately. Our collective emotional well-being throughout the many events in our daily lives is important to each one of us.

Please be safe and continue to look out for each other.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Eric J. Becoats'.

Eric J. Becoats, Ed.D.
Superintendent