

Dr. Scarsella  
Report to the Board of Education  
October 17, 2023

I want to end my report this evening by reassuring all our Palos 118 families that our schools remain safe, orderly, and caring learning environments for all students. It is our mission to provide all students with schools that foster a sense of belonging and where all children feel safe and supported.

Please be assured that since the very start of the crisis in the Middle East, Palos 118 has taken proactive steps to support our students. Last week, all staff received guidance and resources. Social workers stand ready to assist students struggling and in need of additional support. Staff know racist and/or hateful language has no place in our schools, will not be tolerated, and must be reported to administration immediately.

The administration has been and will continue to monitor schools closely for any signs of inappropriate behavior. I ask that parents please notify a school administrator immediately if their child is the target of bullying, racism, or any other discriminatory acts. Every report is taken seriously, investigated thoroughly and students will receive consequences accordingly.

Not only has our school district been focused on the social well-being of our students but also their physical safety. Palos 118 works closely with local police departments to share information and keep students and staff safe from outside threats. To date, no external threats have been reported and I am grateful for our partnership with local law enforcement.

When there is conflict or crisis in our communities, our state, nation, or the world, I like to visit our playgrounds filled with children from diverse backgrounds playing and laughing together. Helping each other up and down slides, sitting together on buddy benches, smiling, and joyful.

Seeing this, it gives me hope for the future, and it underscores our responsibility as teachers, administrators, and parents that we must continue to reinforce the importance of kindness, acceptance, and cooperation that comes so naturally to our children when they meet on the playground.

I ask our entire school community to partner with us to ensure our Palos 118 schools remain special, safe places for all our students to learn and grow.