



RESOLUTION RELATING TO REAFFIRMATION OF CENTRAL PRINCIPLES

November 10, 2016

RESOLVED BY THE BURLINGTON BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS AS FOLLOWS:

WHEREAS, this School Board believes that the success of the Burlington School District at all levels from Pre-Kindergarten to Adult Learning is dependent upon promoting and modeling excellence, inclusion, and equal opportunity in all respects; and

WHEREAS, the recent Facebook posting/reposting of racially/gender/and ethnically offensive materials by a member of this Board is at fundamental variance with the standards of conduct and example desired by the Board for its members; and

WHEREAS, while the report prepared for this Board by its counsel notes that the offensive nature of the postings has not been manifested in the official interactions by the Board member with the Administration and other Board members, the adverse impact of the bad example set by the postings/repostings across the entirety of the District cannot and should not be underestimated or condoned; and

WHEREAS, as an educational institution, the opportunity for and necessity of lifelong learning, and for self-improvement through evaluation, acknowledgement of error and corrective action are essential and highly valued; and

WHEREAS, the opportunity for self-improvement following legitimate criticism are also consistent with this Board's adherence to restorative practice concepts;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS, AS FOLLOWS:

The posting/reposting of offensive and repugnant material that castigates on the basis of constitutionally protected characteristics is contrary to the fundamental philosophy and goals of this School Board, and is hence denounced without reservation.

The Board affirms that commissioners should aspire to engage in public actions that are consistent with our goals to value diversity and inclusion of marginalized and disenfranchised groups.

The Board should take affirmative steps to ensure that this type of repugnant situation does not reoccur in this District. This will be achieved by reviewing the Board's Ethics Policies and other relevant policies to support the goal that commissioners' public actions are consistent with our goals to value diversity and inclusion of marginalized and disenfranchised groups.

(cont.)

The Board, in adopting a restorative approach to this event, acknowledges Commissioner Kirk's apology for the posts and steps to make amends, including participation in Board diversity and equity trainings and social media training.

This Board affirms that all of its Commissioners will avail themselves of the District's programs on diversity training, inclusion, affirmative recruitment, and equal opportunity.

In the wake of these posts, the Board wants to communicate to the District's students that we value diversity, caring, and compassion, and we are committed to a school environment in which everyone—each and every student and staff member—is respected and thrives.