

December 13, 2016

Dear Beaverton School District families,

I want to take a moment to acknowledge some of the anxiety we are hearing from some of our students and families. We are living in a time of increased tension as people grapple with changes taking place on the national stage and at times that fear, anxiety and even hate can manifest itself here in Beaverton. I want to make it clear that **WE** in Beaverton are here to support, welcome and embrace each and every student that walks through the doors of our schools. I know our teachers and staff come to work each day with the best interest of all kids at heart.

I also recognize that at times rhetoric is not good enough. And when rhetoric fails to support we look to formal structures. I want to highlight a few things that are already in place in Beaverton. We have two significant board policies that govern the way we operate. The first is our non-discrimination policy.

Policy AC states:

The District prohibits discrimination and harassment based on any basis protected by law, including but not limited to, an individual's actual or perceived race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national or ethnic origin, marital status, age, mental or physical disability or perceived disability, pregnancy, familial status, economic status, veterans' status, or because of an association with any other persons within these protected classes.

The second is the District's anti-bullying policy and complaint procedure. Our policy makes it very clear we will not tolerate bullying of ANY kind against ANY student.

Policy JFCF makes clear that:

The School Board is committed to providing a safe, positive and productive learning environment. Hazing, harassment, intimidation, menacing, bullying, and cyberbullying by students is strictly prohibited and shall not be tolerated in the District.

The policy further clarifies bullying:

Harassment, intimidation or bullying means any act that substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities or performance that MAY be based on, but not limited to, the protected class status of a person.

Both our non-discrimination and anti-bullying policies specifically call out 'national origin' as a protected class. We would prohibit discrimination and bullying of any kind against students because they are from a particular country or other part of the world or even if they are perceived to be from another country or other part of the world.

I would ask that anyone that is the subject of bullying, harassment, or discrimination or is a witness to bullying, harassment, or discrimination to speak up immediately. Our teachers, principals and all other staff stand ready to support our students, and will take action.

I also want to point out something very specific related to immigration enforcement. In Beaverton, we welcome and educate every child that comes to our schools regardless of the circumstances that brought them here. We do **NOT** ask a student to report their immigration status, we do **NOT** ask a family to provide their immigration status. We do **NOT** collect from students any social security

numbers or green card information or any other identification that would provide us a family's immigration status. We do not have access to any such information to provide to immigration officials if asked. To us, a student that is undocumented is no different than one that is documented or a citizen. We do not want to, nor do we have any way of, differentiating between students in this manner.

While I am hopeful that statements of this kind and the policies that we have in place will assure all our families that Beaverton is a welcome and open place for each and every student, I understand that anxiety will persist. So, I call on each and every person in the Beaverton community including and especially those who are employed by the Beaverton School District to reinforce this message with our kids and our families.

Thank you!

Don Grotting
Superintendent