



A Message from the Superintendent

Dear Colleagues,

Next Tuesday, November 3, is Election Day. There will be no school for students and our nation will engage in the democratic process of selecting its future leaders. This election season has been deeply divisive, adding to the anxieties and stresses we've all been dealing with due to COVID-19 and other traumas. As a School District, it's important that we help heal these divisions by supporting a culture of equity, inclusion and respect for every student, family and staff member.

Our School District represents the diversity that is America -- diversity of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic status, ability, sexual orientation and more. Each of us will react to the election differently, based on our identities and values. But no matter the election outcome, our schools and offices must be safe havens -- free from hate, intimidation, bullying and fear.

We all have a responsibility to help each other feel safe, secure and valued. It's important that our educators create safe spaces that safeguard the well-being of students who may feel at risk, and lead age-appropriate and unbiased classroom discussions that allow students to express themselves in healthy ways. And it's critically important that we all model how to engage with people of differing viewpoints in a peaceful and tolerant manner. Here are some helpful resources we can all use:

- [How to Talk with Children & Teens about the Election](#)
- [5 Easy Ways To Talk To Kids About Voting](#)
- [Using The Election As A Teaching Tool](#)

Hate-based speech, harassment and discriminatory behaviors that devalue others are unacceptable by students and staff anywhere in our District. If you witness, become aware of or are the target of any of these behaviors, you can report it by calling the Bullying Hotline at 1-215-400-SAFE or by submitting a complaint using the form found [here](#).

As a reminder, on Election Day, all school buildings (except those serving as voting sites) and all Chromebook Tech Support Centers will be closed. Our administrative offices will remain open.

Thank you for doing your part to support welcoming and inclusive environments for everyone. Please take care, be safe and remember to VOTE! Your voice matters.

Sincerely,



William R. Hite Jr., Ed.D.
Superintendent
The School District of Philadelphia