

ACTION ITEM

REVISED 6/17/19

Date: June 17, 2019

From: District 39 Board of Education

Subject: Approve the District 39 Board of Education Resolution Condemning Hate and Deepening the District's Commitment to a Positive School Environment

PROPOSED ACTION BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Motion to approve the District 39 Board of Education Resolution Condemning Hate and Deepening the District's Commitment to a Positive School Environment

BACKGROUND

The events that transpired at WJHS on June 5, 2019, were disturbing to us all. While the Jewish community was singled out, the words and symbols were not about hate against just one group, but an attack on our entire community. For the District 39 Board of Education this is a call to action: We have more work to do.

This is not to diminish, in any way, the well-founded emotions reverberating through our Jewish community. There has been a rise in both local and global anti-Semitic incidents, which adds justifiable cause for concern.

Creating a positive school climate is a longstanding priority in District 39, and was established as a strategic goal in 2016. A Statement of Inclusion was adopted in 2017, representing a set of ideals that we continue to stand behind:

"District 39 believes inclusion plays a vital role in student growth. We are committed to providing a safe and equitable learning environment that fosters a mindset of empathy, respect, and belonging for all District 39 students and staff.

By respecting each person's unique identity, perspective, and learning style, we create a stronger community. We honor differences including races and cultures, genders and sexual orientations, abilities and aspirations, identities and affiliations, socioeconomics and worldviews. Embracing diversity prepares our students to thrive in an increasingly complex global community."

Much effective work has been done to establish a culture of empathy. However, there is room for improvement, and the District is committed to further challenge hate within the school community.

We hear stories of bullying, harassment, and intolerance within our community; some are reflections on historical events, but many are more recent. Most concerning is a perception that nothing will be done to make it better. We must increase the level of understanding across our schools and community about the threats posed by hate and intolerance. The District is committed to working with outside experts to further challenge hate and improve the climate within our school community.

Change can only occur when all members of the school community are engaged. We must all be equipped with the skills to challenge hate in all its forms. The desire for change is essential, but desire isn't enough.

For all of these reasons, we resolve to stand, as a Board, against all forms of hate. Let our District set an example for others. The District 39 Board of Education will not tolerate any form of hate or discrimination. Let this resolution be the impetus for positive change and inspire all of us to take the steps needed to eliminate hate within our District 39 community.

Attachment

Resolution Condemning Hate and Deepening the District's Commitment to a Positive School Environment:

Whereas Wilmette School District Number 39 remains committed to providing a safe and equitable learning environment that fosters a mindset of empathy, respect, and belonging for all District students, staff and community members.

And whereas Wilmette School District Number 39 policy 7:20 prohibits any conduct that harasses, intimidates, or bullies a student on the basis of actual or perceived classifications including race, color, nationality, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or religion.

And whereas Wilmette School District Number 39 policy 7:18 states that the District will not tolerate aggressive student behavior, including bullying or harassment of any kind.

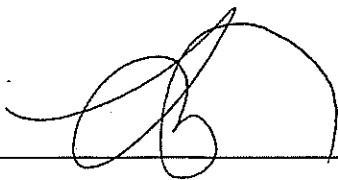
And whereas the District 39 Board of Education adopted a *Statement of Inclusion* in 2017 which embraces the ideals of respect, diversity and belonging for the entire Wilmette Public Schools Community.

And whereas the Wilmette School District Number 39 Administration has implemented numerous programs, curricula, and protocols designed to promote inclusion and discourage bullying and harassment within Wilmette Public Schools.

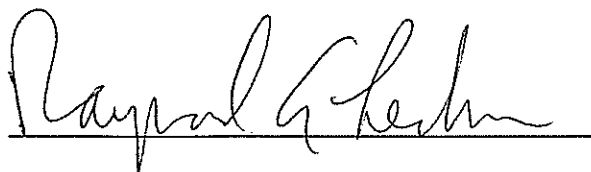
Now, therefore, Be It and It Is Hereby Resolved by the Board of Education of School District Number 39, Cook County, Illinois, as follows:

- The Board of Education condemns any and all forms of hate or discrimination.
- The Board of Education will work toward ensuring a school environment free of hate.
- The Board of Education empowers the District Administration to promote inclusion and discourage bullying and discrimination within Wilmette Public Schools.
- The Board of Education directs the District Administration to commit to and present a clear, actionable, timely, and sustainable plan to reduce instances of harassment and intolerance throughout Wilmette Public Schools.
- The Board of Education supports all Wilmette School District staff, students, and families in working together toward eliminating all instances of prejudice, hate, and discrimination from within the Wilmette community

Dated this 17th day of June, 2019.



President, Board of Education



Secretary, Board of Education