



# BUFFALO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Office of the Superintendent

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### **Dr. Tonja M. Williams** **Interim Superintendent of Schools**

Dear Buffalo Public School District Community,

The Buffalo Public School District (BPSD) is committed to the safety and education of all of our students. Essential to this commitment is open communication and transparency with our families and stakeholders regarding issues when they arise. For this reason, I would like to make you aware of limited but concerning issues surrounding our district in the last few weeks.

Our school district has witnessed cases involving bullying, fighting, and other disturbing behavior. What is unfortunate is that violence has been a concern not only in our district, but also across our nation. Many experts have attributed this erratic and troubling behavior to the arrested social emotional development of our students resulting from the pandemic. The physical disconnection that our students experienced has manifested into behaviors signaling an outcry for help.

This is deeply concerning. I believe there is something very special about the Buffalo Public School District. We have excellent and committed staff members, and wonderful students and families; however there is a small number of youth whose behavioral actions are so disruptive to learning, that it interrupts our vision for Safety and Educational Excellence for all.

Please know that ALL threats and actions involving student altercations, fights, and violent acts are taken very seriously and are thoroughly investigated. To ensure student equity, excellence, and empowerment in this district, we continue to provide wraparound support and programs to address fighting such as restorative justice, conflict resolution measures, parent meetings, social and emotional support, parent engagement and public safety resources.

We will continue to explore additional trainings, partnerships, and awareness for teachers and staff, as well as educational opportunities for students, and open dialogue to ensure that our district is on the right track. This is a top priority for our district. Parents and caregivers I am asking you to:

- Allow your child to talk about his or her feelings.
- Monitor his or her social media accounts.
- Watch for signs of trouble. This includes aggression, withdrawal, etc.
- Work with school staff to encourage positive resolutions.

We will continue to work diligently to ensure that all of our schools and buses are safe, orderly, and conducive to learning. Please discuss with your child the importance of appropriate behavior at school. All student behaviors are governed by the Buffalo Public School District's Code of Conduct, which has levels of consequences. Our goal is to always empower our student, allowing them to realize their brilliance and their ability for success.

Thank you parents, community partners, and stakeholders for being a part of our village and your commitment to our Buffalo Public School District scholars!!

*Dr. Tonja M. Williams, Interim Superintendent*

*"Putting Children and Families First to Ensure High Academic Achievement for All"*