Re: Recent events involving sexual allegations by our students

The uncompromised safety of our students is always our first priority. The Buffalo Public Schools is dedicated to ensuring the safety of our students and their families throughout their educational careers.

As you may know, on June 17, 2019, a student at City Honors School reported to an administrator that a teacher was secretly and inappropriately photographing students in class. We commend the student for having the courage and initiative to bring this abhorrent behavior forward. The teacher was removed, law enforcement authorities were contacted, and federal investigators were able to conclusively determine the total scope of this teacher’s appalling criminal misconduct.

The New York State Child Victims Act mirrors our profound commitment to justice for all children who have been victimized by a trusted adult in the past or in the present. While this legislation is an important measure toward protecting our students, we know that we all need to do more. We must be engaged in continuous conversation with our students, parents, staff, and law enforcement officials to ensure the prevention of any harm to our children. We must examine policies and procedures so that a coordinated, preemptive, and supportive framework of protection is improved, wherever possible, across all of our schools and in each of our classrooms. And, we must ensure that all adults inside our schools are fully reminded of their professional training and responsibilities under child abuse laws and District policies.

As stated at the September 18th, 2019 Board of Education meeting, the Board and District are fully involved in this work, however, we cannot do it alone. Over the course of this year, we will be working with the Board, Parent Congress, and community stakeholders, as well as announcing health and other curriculum initiatives that foster a safe learning environment for all.

We need all stakeholders, including our parents and caregivers, to join us in reinforcing with children and adolescents—“if you see something, sense something, say something.” It will continue to take all of us—as it did at City Honors School—to achieve the uncompromised safety of our students in every school, every classroom, every day.

Dr. Kriner Cash
Superintendent of Schools

Sharon Belton-Cottman
Board of Education President

“Putting Children & Families First to Ensure High Academic Achievement for All”