



# ARLINGTON CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

**Brendan Lyons, Ed. D., Superintendent of Schools**

144 Todd Hill Road • LaGrangeville, NY 12540

Phone 845-486-4460 • Fax 845-350-4087 • Email [blyons@acsdny.org](mailto:blyons@acsdny.org)

November 22, 2019

Dear Arlington School Community,

The Arlington Central School District mission is to empower all students to be self-directed, lifelong learners, who willingly contribute to their community, and lead passionate, purposeful lives. In order for us to achieve our mission, we must first provide a safe and inclusive environment that honors the diversity of our school community.

Last spring, I wrote to you about multiple bias incidents across our elementary, middle and high schools. Unfortunately, this fall there have again been several acts of hate and bias directed at students, including swastikas drawn in a high school bathroom. As I stated in June, this behavior is in direct contradiction to our core values and has no place in our schools. Parents, community members, faculty and staff, and students need to work together to ensure that our children understand that the use of racist, derogatory, and/or discriminatory words or actions are never acceptable.

As a district, we are committed to supporting the victims of intolerance and hatred. Students who commit racist, derogatory, or discriminatory acts or who use hateful words will face consequences. While it is important to respond to bias incidents, it is equally important to work to prevent them and to encourage dialogue and understanding. We teach the importance of respect, kindness, equity, and inclusion in our classrooms. Arlington has formed district, school, and middle and high school student equity teams, which work to create a safe and welcoming environment for all students.

## **Partner with us.**

1. Talk to your children about bias and about the way they talk to and treat others. Here are three resources that can help you to have age-appropriate conversations with your children:
  - [Partners Against Hate](#)
  - [Beyond the Golden Rule guide for teaching tolerance](#)
  - [Talking with Children About Racism and Bias](#)
2. Join your school's equity team. This year we expanded our school equity teams to include parents and community members. Our goal is to have all voices represented in our quest to ensure that all students experience the joy in learning every day in a safe, welcoming space. If you are interested in joining or want more information, please contact your school's principal.
3. If you feel your child has been the target of bias, there are legal protections for them. [Please review this link about New York State's Dignity for All Students Act.](#)

Together we can effectively promote an equitable and inclusive environment that all of our students need to excel.

Sincerely,

Brendan Lyons  
Superintendent

***Our mission is to empower all students to be self-directed, lifelong learners, who willingly contribute to their community and lead passionate, purposeful lives.***