

For Immediate Release
June 5, 2020

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KISA Equity Statement

It was with shock and sadness that we witnessed the reporting on the tragic killing of Mr. George Floyd. It was yet another reminder that systemic racism has drastic consequences on persons of color — in particular, African Americans. Our country cannot withstand another life lost due to conditions that are within our control. The need for change does not rest on the marginalized, but rather it is the responsibility of those with privilege and power to create conditions where all can thrive. It begins with those in leadership recognizing their role in dismantling systems of oppression.

As leaders, we accept our individual and collective roles in creating change. We commit to using our positions — including the authority, access, and privilege that come with them — to demonstrate an unwavering commitment to the values of diversity, equity, belonging, and inclusion.

We condemn racism and discrimination in any form. We will tirelessly work to interrupt and end harmful or inequitable practices and policies, eliminate implicit and explicit biases, and create truly inclusive, culturally responsive, antiracist school environments for adults and children. We refuse to stand by and watch.

Students, families, and staff are wrestling with how to begin the healing process. Topics related to race, protest, civil unrest, and inclusion are often uncomfortable. Despite the discomfort, all of us must be willing to engage in honest dialogue regarding the inequities that persist in our society. Only then will we reverse the historic systems of injustice that have plagued this nation for far too long.

The following resources will serve parents and educators as we support children in our community:

Parent resources

- [Talking to Children after Racial Incidents](#) - the Penn GSE Newsroom
- [Tips for Parents on Media Coverage](#) - the National Child Traumatic Stress Network
- [Helping Children Cope: Talking Tips for Talking About Tragedy](#) - Mayo Clinic
- [Talking to Children about Tragedies and Other News Events](#) - American Academy of Pediatrics

General Resources

- [Supporting Kids Of Color In Wake Of Racialized Violence](#) - EmbraceRace
- [Talking to kids about discrimination](#) - American Psychological Association
- [What White Children Need to Know About Race](#) - National Association of Independent Schools
- [NPR What to Say to Kids When the News is Scary](#) - National Public Radio
- [Something Happened in Our Town](#) - Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Heritage Center
Animated Story
- [Helping Youth After Community Trauma](#) - National Child Traumatic Stress Network
- [Teaching About Race, Racism, and Police Violence](#) - Teaching Tolerance
- [Understanding Race and Privilege](#) - National Association of School Psychologists

Sincerely,

The Kent Intermediate Superintendents' Association

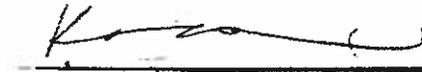
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About Kent Intermediate Superintendents' Association:

The Kent Intermediate Superintendents' Association (KISA) is a committee of superintendents from Kent Intermediate School District's (Kent ISD) 20 constituent public school districts, as well as the superintendents from the Grand Rapids Christian and Catholic School systems. All together, the group represents over 100,000 students and collaborates on common topics to achieve the following vision: Working together to increase student achievement for each child in Kent ISD.

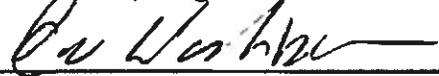
Local School District Signatures


Ronald E. Caniff
Kent Intermediate School District


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Caledonia Community Schools


Scott Smith
Cedar Springs Public Schools


Dave Washburn
Comstock Park Public Schools

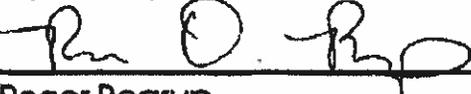

Heidi Kattula, Ed.D.
East Grand Rapids Public Schools


Daniel Behm
Forest Hills Public Schools

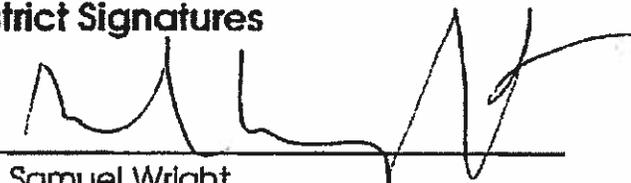

Kevin Polston
Godfrey Lee Public Schools


William Ferrerhoff
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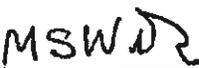

Ron Gorman, Ph.D.
Grand Rapids Public Schools


Roger Bearup
Grandville Public Schools

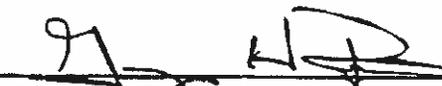

David Faber, Superintendent
Catholic Diocese of Grand Rapids


Samuel Wright
Kelloggsville Public Schools

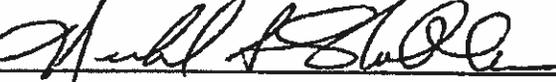

Gerald Hopkins
Kenowa Hills Public Schools


Michael Weller
Kent City Community Schools


Michael Zoerhoff
Kentwood Public Schools


Gregory H. Pratt
Lowell Area Schools

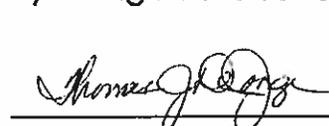

Scott Korpak, Ed.D.
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Michael S. Shible, Ph.D.
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Pete Bush
Sparta Area Schools


Rob Blitchok
Thornapple Kellogg Schools


Craig Hoekstra
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Tom DeJonge, Superintendent
Grand Rapids Christian Schools