Dear Royal Oak Schools Community,

The last several months, as we have battled an international health crisis, we have learned about our strength and resilience as a community. We have had many groups come together quickly to support one another and help friends in need. We have asked much of our students and families as they turned living rooms into classrooms, and have struggled with health concerns and economic instability. We will never know all of the stories that have played out in individual households but without hesitation, our supportive community has rallied to be strong for each other. The events surrounding the tragic and wrongful death of George Floyd have challenged us again, as a community and a nation.

His murder ignites strong feelings and emotions, especially for our African-American students and families. While we are all experiencing the aftermath of this hateful act differently, it is incumbent on us to be allies in confronting racism, until we realize true equal rights for all. We will succeed in that by working together, and by promoting understanding, compassion, and lifelong learning.

I am proud of Royal Oak Schools and our commitment to social justice and to our prioritization of student safety, emotionally and physically. These challenging times demand that we continue that work, that we stay focused on strong goals for ensuring equity, inclusion, and the celebration of diversity. We need to support individuals as they learn about the destructive impact of their biased words and actions. Racism has no place in our schools, our community, or our world. We must stand together for the rights of all.

Talking with your children about racism can be difficult. I am providing a few resources here, and our school and district equity teams will work to share more resources with you in the coming days.

CNN: How to talk to your children about protests and racism

New York Times: Books for children on racism

Today: How to talk to kids about racism, protests and injustice

Mary Beth Fitzpatrick
Superintendent
Royal Oak Schools
800 DeVillen Ave.
Royal Oak, MI 48073
(248) 435-8400 Ext. 1228