

From: Josiah Holland <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 6/2/2020 8:30:12 PM
To: Jason Golden <[REDACTED]>
Subject: RE: Our community

Attachments: [Science Of Human Dignity.pdf](#)

Good evening Jason,

I'm so thrilled that you would take the time and effort to send this email to WCS administrators. I'm honored to work with you and in this school district.

As you probably know, restorative justice practices are of the utmost importance to me. When I interviewed for my current job, I said over and over that the greatest thing we can do for at-risk/troubled teenagers is to provide a liminal space of restoration for them. As I've studied restorative practices extensively over the past few years and implemented circles, conferences, and mediation at the ALC, I see that the work reaches far beyond what we do in our small corner of the county.

There are several ways to strengthen community on a large scale that involves restorative work. I attend the IIRP world conference back in Oct 2019 in Bethlehem, PA and one of my favorite sessions was about "listening circles". When the Boston community went through all they did with the sexual abuse crisis in the Catholic Church, restorative practitioners held "listening circles" to give victimized people a voice to be heard. This could be one method we use, as appropriate, when we identify students/faculty/etc who have a need to air frustrations and hurt: a "listening circle" for those most affected by the violence, protests, etc. Just an idea. I'd love to help facilitate.

Finally, I'm glad you chose the language of dignity in your email. Zannie Martin, Drason Beasley (our JDC supervisor), and I have normed our language to use this word when training our staffs on how to treat our students and families. Our goal is to give each young person the dignity they are born with. There's a great article that I'll attach here that I've used in our trainings over the years called "The Science of Human Dignity". It comes from the president of the IIRP and highlights that all people have the same 3 basic needs: the need to belong, the need to have voice, and the need to exercise agency. It's a great read, and I urge you to spend some time with it.

Thanks for your time,
Josiah

-----Original Message-----

From: Jason Golden
Sent: Tuesday, June 2, 2020 5:41 PM
To: Principal Group ; Assistant Principal Group
Cc: Senior Staff
Subject: Our community

Administrators,

A number of community events have been scheduled in Williamson County today and tonight to discuss the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, hold prayer vigils, and speak about our community's needs.

Many of the deep questions that may be discussed have been on the consciousness of so many of us the past year as we concentrated on having empathy for our students. As you know, we have not been perfect in this work, but I know that our faculty and staff are striving to grow in serving our diverse student body. Yesterday, our leadership group discussed recent events and brainstormed over the most appropriate way to respond.

I have spoken to a couple of you about this, but I'm emailing you as leaders to solicit your thoughts on how we do our part to promote human dignity in our work, both among our staff and students. Each of you have different life experiences, and your communities are different in many ways. However, many of the issues discussed over the past couple of days are universal.

If you have thoughts on what supports your school community might need during this time or on how we can improve our school environment, please share them with me.

Jason Golden
Superintendent
Williamson County Schools
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