



Buckley Country Day School

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Dear Parents,

I am well aware that in my position I must often refrain from taking a public political stance, and so I do.

This message to you, therefore, is not a political one. A belief in the dignity and worth of ALL human beings crosses political lines. Instead, it is a message that comes from a deep and steadfast belief in the values that are at the very core of what our community must stand for.

This morning, I feel compelled to reaffirm what I wish I would not have to: *Buckley is and will always be a school welcoming children and families of all backgrounds. All children, wherever their families are from, are worthy of our love and respect.*

The values that we celebrated this morning at our Martin Luther King Jr. assembly are values that we will continue to uphold and strive to live up to in our community.

Dr. Juhel

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Dear Parents,

This is a tough world that our children have to comprehend and navigate. On a day like today, I wonder what they make of the acts of hatred and senseless violence that too often they have to witness. I hope that they are not becoming immune to hearing or reading about them. I hope they do not lose faith in their ability to bring about change and become leaders of conscience and action in a world that on too many days seems to have lost its moral compass.

As an educator, it is daunting to think about the responsibility that we have to teach beyond the skills that will likely reward our children with professional success. Thankfully, I find myself in a school community that understands the need to provide its students with the kind of intentional environment that fosters respect and empathy; an environment that views its diversity as an invaluable asset, not a statistical data point; an environment that truly seeks to open the eyes and awaken the mind.

As an educator, too, I realize that I can do as Voltaire urges and tend my own garden. On most Fridays, our community gathers to hear speeches written and delivered by our senior class. They are the perfect antidote to the realization of the fragility of certain of our values and to mounting pessimism about the future. Last Friday, we heard Skylar tell us that we have to embrace each other with all of our flaws and imperfections; Ally shared how a meeting with a Holocaust survivor strengthened her sense of identity and helped her see with clarity the role she can play in making sure history is not forgotten and doesn't repeat itself; finally, Maya shared her grandparents' stories, the stories of immigrants who have helped her understand the hardship they faced, the privileges she enjoys, and the empathy that needs to be at the core of all human interactions.

Buckley's faculty and staff understand that our purpose extends beyond graduating smart, educated, and successful students. Equally important is our purpose to graduate courageous, engaged, and empathetic citizens and leaders.

Buckley stands against violence and hatred. Our hearts go out to all the victims of bigotry, racism, anti-Semitism, and all other forms of hatred.

I look forward to continuing on this important journey with your children.

Dr. Juhel

Dear Parents,

As I am sure you are aware, a National School Walkout is being organized for students, teachers, and school administrators to take part in for 17 minutes, at 10am, across every time zone, on March 14, 2018, to remember the victims of the Parkland school shooting and call for legislative action to keep schools safe.

On Friday, I met with a group of upper school students who expressed an interest in discussing how our school would take part in this movement.

At the end of Friday's assembly, I spoke with the upper school students about how they can choose to participate in the walkout if they so wish on March 14.

The walkout will take place in the Powers Family Courtyard. Upper school students who wish to participate will gather there at 10:00 am. We will plant 17 flowers with white ribbons around them. Student will be allowed to bring posters they will have made and will be aloud to say

something, read something, or sing a song. Lower school students will not participate in the walkout, and their teachers will be ready to answer any questions they may have about it. Only upper school students who wish to do so will participate.

Although prompted by a terrible tragedy, I was proud to experience how our students are learning about advocacy and making their voices heard.

Please discuss your child's choices with him or her before March 14 and let me know if you have any questions.

Warmly,

Dr. Juhel