



**WILLIAM J. GRETZULA, Ed.D.**  
*Superintendent*

## **PENNSBURY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

134 Yardley Avenue • Post Office Box 338

Fallsington, Pennsylvania 19058-0338

Telephone: (215) 428-4111

Fax: (215) 428-4270

[www.pennsburysd.org](http://www.pennsburysd.org)

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Dear Pennsbury School District Community,

On a daily basis, our school community must uphold its core values and beliefs. Our new Equity Vision Statement espouses, “The Pennsbury School District is committed to fostering an inclusive educational environment that understands, respects, and embraces individual differences as assets that serve to enhance our school community.”

In a time when our country and local community are already navigating a pandemic, racial unrest, and economic uncertainty, we witnessed an insurrection on our nation’s Capitol and an attack on the principles of democracy. The events at the Capitol tie into the broader conversation that we have been having in our educational community about equity, justice, and fairness for every learner in our system. The assault on the Capitol illustrated that there is much work to be done in the way of ensuring our democratic principles of justice and equality are upheld. Also highlighted by the attack was the systemic racism that exists in the distribution of our democratic freedoms.

As a parent, I wrestle with how to explain to my own children where we are as a country with any hope or optimism that this path we are on has a simple course correction; however, we recognize that public education in the United States of America was founded on the principles of developing an informed citizenry. As an educational community, we have the responsibility to understand how the Capitol insurgency impacts the students we serve and the educational equity work to which we are committed. In the coming weeks, Pennsbury students, staff and community stakeholders will be able to take positive steps forward using education as a lever for change.

### Upcoming Events

#### *For Students:*

In October, we shared guidelines with our staff regarding upcoming events connected to the Presidential Election, as we believe our mission includes promoting critical-thinking and age-appropriate dialogue regarding real-world events. The guidelines state, “Faculty and staff may use professional discretion in discussing such topics. All discussions or activities should be relevant to curriculum content and/or enhance learning opportunities in the classroom in a developmentally-appropriate manner (i.e.: student social-emotional learning sessions).”

Additionally, we recommended that viewing events, such as the Inauguration, should have a direct connection to one’s curriculum, as recordings of such events make it less critical to watch live. We recognize the historic importance of such events, but we also believe that allowing children to view these events with their parents/guardians enhances the reinforcement of familial values.

### **MISSION**

*Recognizing our proud traditions and diverse community, the Pennsbury School District prepares all students to become creative, ethical, and critical thinkers for lifelong success in a global society.*

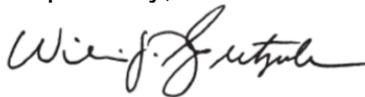
*For Staff:*

To further our annual equity goal of building cultural competence, administration has long been planning to provide professional development for faculty and staff in February that focuses on historical and contemporary issues related to race, racism and systemic inequities, and how educators need to present a counter-narrative to the aforementioned within their professional practice. This learning opportunity is scheduled for a half-day workshop previously planned for Friday, February 12th.

*For Students, Staff and Community Members:*

We have also begun planning for a K-12 conversation through a moderated webinar/forum with Pennsbury students, educators, and leaders to examine the interrelated themes of democracy, our District's annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service, and the Capitol attack. Our goal is to process the events in a manner that underscores our District values and serves as a teachable moment for our school community. Detailed information regarding the webinar will be forthcoming. As a united team, we look forward to emulating and fostering the beliefs that make the Pennsbury School District a great community in which to live and learn.

Respectfully,



William J. Gretzula  
District Superintendent  
Pennsbury School District