



## EAST RUTHERFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### Office of the Superintendent of Schools

100 Uhland Street

East Rutherford, NJ 07073

Phone: (201) 804-3100 □ Fax: (201) 933-1845

[www.erboe.net](http://www.erboe.net)

June 4, 2020

Dear East Rutherford School Community,

In approximately 3 months, the world as we know it has changed drastically. We have experienced a pandemic which significantly altered our lives, leaving us with so many unanswered questions and fears. Now our country is in disarray due to the tragic event in which a life was lost. Our students are watching and listening, trying to decipher and understand all that they see and hear happening around them.

As educators, our responsibility is to develop within our students, critical thinking skills to prepare them to tackle complex situations that life throws their way. When students leave 8<sup>th</sup> Grade, we want them to be able to apply the knowledge they've gained as "Wildcats", apply it to obtain their goals, aspirations and passions, stand strong in the face of adversity, and make a positive impact on their community and the world of tomorrow.

The East Rutherford School District is committed in fostering a learning environment that is free from violence, inequity and social injustice. As such, we will continue to teach our students about the issues and events related to civil rights, genocide and the Holocaust.

As educational partners, we encourage parents to use current events as teachable moments for their children on issues such as race relations, anti-violence and social injustice. Please utilize resources provided on our website as conversation starters to assist you in broaching these difficult conversations with your children. Our School Psychologists, Social Worker and School Counselors are available to offer support and assistance to any student who needs a safe space to voice their thoughts and feelings regarding the current happenings.

Both School Counselors have created a virtual platform to facilitate open group counseling sessions. These sessions will provide students a platform to engage in difficult discourse, while also focusing on Social Emotional Learning by providing them with tools to manage their emotions that may be heightened due to the excessive news coverage on television and on social media.

The East Rutherford School District is proud to be inclusive, where all people and points of view are respected. Our administration, faculty and staff will continue to strive for an inclusive and tolerant school community. We appreciate and embrace the diversity of our student body and believe we are stronger because of that diversity. Together, let us continue to foster an environment where all of our students feel welcomed, valued and accepted.

Be well,

*Giovanni A. Giancaspro*

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Superintendent of Schools