



Columbia PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Dr. Brian Yearwood
Superintendent of Schools

Columbia Public Schools

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Dear CPS Families,

Over the last week, there has been much discussed regarding the City of Columbia's diversity celebration. I recognize there continues to be strong feelings related to the performance at the breakfast and the communication related to the performance. I also recognize those feelings extend beyond just our schools and our community.

Since my arrival in Columbia, I have been amazed by the investment its citizens have made in making the City of Columbia and Columbia Public Schools the very best - it's what makes this community great. I have no doubt everyone wants the very best for our children.

For some, the city's event demonstrated the importance of inclusion. For others, expectations were not met, specifically regarding the level of communication provided to parents. Either way, it has created frustration for many. I want to apologize to parents and our community for that frustration. As a district, we continually strive to meet the expectations of our parents and community. When we do not meet those expectations, I apologize.

While there may be further disagreement, dialogue, and discourse about how best to move forward, I want to encourage a return to civil and respectful conversation and further express my support of every scholar in our school district.

It is important for our scholars that we always look for ways we can continue to learn, grow, and improve. I shared previously that we are continuing to review our internal process and look for ways to share information effectively, clearly, and fully with our students and families. This will include a review of our permission slip process that incorporates feedback from parents.

I also want to reiterate that Columbia Public Schools values the role the public plays in our decision-making process. We believe that we benefit as a school community when our stakeholders are active participants. We continue to invite and encourage our students, staff, parents, and patrons to offer input about our activities to help improve our operations and our schools.

My continued hope is that our students can learn from how we as adults model productive and civil engagement within a community so we can maintain focus on putting our scholars first.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brian Yearwood
Superintendent
Columbia Public Schools