



Turlock Unified School District

Superintendent's Update

June 4, 2020

Dear TUSD Community,

Over the past several months, our District and County have come together in unprecedented ways to focus on the health and safety issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the troubling events of recent days also demand our immediate attention and thoughtful, compassionate response as a community. The very public death of George Floyd is the most recent in a long history of racialized violence in this country. This tragic incident has galvanized people across the United States, and around the world, to take to the streets in peaceful protests and call attention to the injustices Black Americans face every day. Many in our TUSD community have respectfully participated, sharing their voice and support to bring about real change.

As a District, we uphold the responsibility to not only prepare students academically, but also teach them to appreciate diversity, develop empathy, and respect every human being regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, or social class. As educators we are uniquely positioned to influence students to become the change they want to see in the world. Our recognition of this charge, and desire to affect systemic change, was the impetus behind organizing TUSD's Equity Task Force—a diverse group of school and district colleagues who are “committed to equitable practices and experiences for all students and staff to mitigate social inequalities and embrace human diversity.” The events that are unfolding in our Nation make clear that our work in this area has just begun; it will take all of us working together to build a more just world for future generations. More focused conversations and actions surrounding race and biases are necessary if we are to ensure TUSD provides a culture where every one of our 14,000+ students and 1,500 staff feels they belong and matter.

As Superintendent of Turlock Unified School District, and a mother of three, I take seriously my responsibility to create safe, equitable places for families to send their children to learn and thrive. I maintain the same efforts for my colleagues' work environments. With school out and a long summer ahead, I encourage our TUSD families and my colleagues to have conversations about this difficult time in our Nation's history. The questions are hard; the answers are harder, but the reflections will strengthen our awareness and response. I encourage everyone to develop and practice compassion and respect for every human being regardless of difference. Our actions define our character; our kindness and understanding can begin to help many heal as we collectively look to a more fair and peaceful world, including within our Turlock community. TUSD looks forward to the return of school on August 12 as we have much work to do on many levels. Please be safe and well.

Respectfully,

Dana Salles Trevethan
Superintendent
Turlock Unified School District