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For Immediate Release

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Jason Rivers Named Director of Narrative Transformation, Conflict Resolution & Violence Prevention

Superintendent Wayne N. Walters Creates New Position Designed to Build Staff and Student Capacity to Mitigate Acts of Violence and Create Positive Counter Narratives

PITTSBURGH, May 5, 2023 –Today Pittsburgh Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Wayne N. Walters announced the appointment of Jason Rivers as Director of Narrative Transformation, Conflict Resolution & Violence Prevention. No stranger to Pittsburgh Public Schools, Mr. Rivers will leverage his more than 20 years of experience for the position responsible for overseeing, developing, implementing, and evaluating violence prevention and intervention programming and training across the District.



“I established this unprecedented role because it is time that we take action to empower our students and staff with the tools they need to mediate conflicts and change the narrative to curtail future violence in our schools,” said Superintendent Wayne N. Walters, EdD. “As a skilled facilitator with expertise in culturally responsive practices, mediation, conflict resolution, trauma-informed response, and transformative justice, Jason Rivers rose to the top as uniquely qualified for this responsive and innovative position.”

As a member of the Office of Professional Learning and Special Programming, Mr. Rivers will collaborate with schools and central office departments to build capacity for the District to mitigate acts of violence. He will provide district-wide coaching and training for school personnel and students on narrative transformation, peer mediation, conflict resolution, and violence prevention. A crucial aspect of his work will be supporting students in defining themselves to create counter-narratives highlighting the positive stories of students, schools, and District.

“Pittsburgh Public Schools has raised me, from my K-12 experiences as a student to 20+ years of service as an employee,” said Jason Rivers, Director of Narrative Transformation, Conflict Resolution & Violence Prevention. “In service of those I love most— our city, our District, our people, and, most importantly, our students, we have future stories to craft together. These stories are anchored in healing, genius, innovation, courage, aspiration, redemption, critical thinking, resilience, safety, and care. I cannot wait for us to support shaping the stories of our students and share them in their regal brilliance.”

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Mr. Rivers began working with Pittsburgh Public Schools students in 1996 through an outside agency and officially joined the District as a Student Services Liaison in March 1998. He later joined the Office of Equity as a Project Manager of the We Promise Program and served as a Racial Equity Lead Affiliate from 2013- 2018. From July 2014 – March 2020, Mr. Rivers served as a Victim Outreach Specialist with Defense-Initiated Victim Outreach, where he worked to create an open line of communication between surviving families and legal defense teams, facilitating restorative circles, victim-offender dialogues and transformative justice sessions for survivors and offenders. Since 2019, Mr. Rivers has worked to mobilize community-narrative and education campaigns with TANDEMED in five urban markets.

Mr. Rivers co-founded **AR3**, where he pioneered a transformative framework for healing and accountability by creating victim-offender dialogue, convened multi-racial community members, families, and organizations for in-depth unity discussions, and assembled an annual basketball league impacting over 5,000 community members across Pittsburgh. He has been recognized locally and nationally, receiving the Family Engagement and Community Empowerment for Racial Equity Award from Pacific Educational Group, the Jeron X Grayson Community MVP Award from 1Nation, the Lesgold Award for Excellence from the University of Pittsburgh Center for Urban Education, Outstanding Education Award from Iota Phi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity and is a BMe Community Awardee.

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