



NEWS

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For Immediate Release

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PPS Calls on School Community to Promote Peaceful Teaching and Learning Environments as Part of American Education Week

PITTSBURGH PA November 15, 2021 –Following Saturday's World Kindness Day, today, Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) launched a social media campaign to encourage peaceful teaching and learning environments and discourage physical violence districtwide. During American Education Week, November 15 – 19, 2021, the District will call on families, students, and the community to honor staff who work to ensure that every PPS student receives a quality education through the promotion of five pillars- **Kindness, Compassion, Dignity, Respect, and Unity**. As part of the week, the District calls on families to stay alert with their children's social media activities and the greater community to monitor its role in perpetuating the false narrative that schools are dangerous places.

"With TikTok challenges encouraging students to participate in negative behaviors and an uptick in media reporting indicating that violence may be rising in K-12 schools here in Pittsburgh – and across our region and country, there is a need to build responsibility within our community for the safety of all of our students and staff," said Dr. Wayne Walters, Interim Superintendent. "For close to 20 months, in-person interactions were limited," continued Dr. Walters. "As students transition back to school, it will be important that adults foster supportive environments that provide space for students to re-engage with their school community and each other. Families, community and media play a vital role with recovery in collaboration with the District, and we are promoting the discontinuation of sharing, posting and viewing of violent videos of students as it has the potential to traumatize vulnerable students and perpetuate the false narrative that schools are dangerous places."

Each day this week, posts supporting the five pillars will be shared on the Pittsburgh Public Schools' social media pages. Schools will also share messages with students as part of the morning announcements. On Thursday, November 18, the District [Parents Empowering Parents](#) will feature guest speaker University of Pittsburgh Associate Professor of Practice Dr. Anna Arlotta-Guerrero for Engaging with Your Growing and Developing Child. Dr. Arlotta-Guerrero's area of focus is social justice and equity in the preparation of teachers, teaching English Learners, and developmental practices in early childhood. The virtual meeting will take place from 7:00 -7:45 PM. Families can RSVP at www.pghschools.org/PEPSQUADRSVP.

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