

TULLY CENTRAL SCHOOLS
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January 10, 2022

To The Tully School Community,

The purpose of this letter is to let the Tully School Community know that tonight the Tully Board of Education will be holding an emergency meeting to discuss steps the District can take to address the concerns brought up by a specific student in recent social media posts. My hope is that after this Emergency BOE meeting we will be able to move forward more quickly and effectively with our ongoing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiative, which includes creating a climate and culture across our District that is supportive of LGBTQIA+ students. Given that the topic of this meeting relates to a specific student, the Board will start the meeting and then immediately adjourn into Executive Session to protect this student's privacy under Open Meetings Law. For your convenience here is a link to the letter I sent out yesterday which summarizes this situation: [Knight Insight Senior Spotlight Letter](#)

Please note a few important points regarding this matter:

- Ultimately the decisions regarding what gets published in *The Knight Insight* are mine. In this situation, Mr. O'Brien was simply doing what I asked him to do.
- My original decision regarding this student's Senior Spotlight was not the right decision, and I regret making this decision. Since then, I have apologized to the Tully community and reversed that decision, and we will be running the student's original Senior Spotlight feature story in the next issue of the *Knight Insight*.
- In the near future I would like to meet with this student and his parents to discuss this situation, and I would like to have the opportunity to apologize to this student in-person.

Regarding the district's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Initiative, here are some specific steps we have taken this year:

- During the January 24th BOE meeting, the Board will vote on establishing a paid advisory position for our Genders and Sexualities Alliance (GSA) club. The GSA club has been club at our JSHS for several years now, with a volunteer advisor. One of the main purposes of this club is to support our LGBTQIA+ students. A paid advisory position will ensure that this club remains an ongoing source of support for our LGBTQIA+ students.
- During the January 24th BOE meeting, I the Board will vote on establishing a paid advisory position for our Community Wide Dialogue (CWD) Club. The Community Wide Dialogue is an exchange program that allows our students to engage in dialogue with students from a school in the City of Syracuse. The purpose of this dialogue is to raise awareness of structural racism in our society today, and to empower our students in an effort to end structural racism. For several years we have participated in this exchange, and we are now interested in starting a club to extend this experience. A paid advisory

position would ensure that this club remains an ongoing opportunity for our students.

- Beginning on Thursday, January 13th, Board members and I will begin a five week book study, sponsored by the Central New York School Boards Association. This book study is centered on the book entitled *Five Practices for Equity Focused Leadership*. The purpose of this book study is to help board members and superintendents develop a better understanding of DEI so that we can work together more effectively to improve opportunities for all of students.

Clearly as a school district we have to do a better job of supporting our LGBTQIA+ students. I have room to grow in this area as well. I am committed to growing in this area and taking the necessary steps to forge substantial, enduring changes. I am looking forward to having the District's and the community's support in accomplishing this goal.

Sincerely,

Robert J. Hughes

Robert J. Hughes

Superintendent of Schools