

May 28, 2021

Dear WCUUSD Board Members, Leadership Team, Superintendent,

We, the undersigned and first cohort of the Racial Equity, Intersectional Justice, and Confronting Bias at School course for educators, offer the community our statement below regarding on-going education for equity and inclusion across the district. We have written this statement knowing the work for justice for all is life-long and requires all our persistent actions. We have also selected our words intentionally and carefully. We want consistent attention to teaching our students to thrive in the future we are now creating.

We have also applied for and received an Equitable Education Systems grant from the Vermont Agency of Education. This grant provides the foundational work to establish what we would like to call: *The Humanity & Justice Coalition*. This group, made up of community stakeholders, is tasked with enabling the statement to become three dimensional and real.

This work occurred within the context of a course for WCUUSD educators who brought their creativity, commitment, and collaboration to class each week. They all brought a desire to learn and take action to enhance their understanding of the challenges our students face each day and to make change happen. We are elementary, middle, and high school teachers, librarians, an elementary principal, high school counselor, director of special services, the director of curriculum, instruction and assessment, and the equity scholar in residence. We consider this a working document.

Here is Our Commitment to Humanity & Justice:

The Washington Central Unified Union School District is dedicated to taking concrete actions that provide a safer and more supportive learning environment that is free of barriers; one that affirms the identity of each of us and acknowledges and celebrates differences to create a sense of belonging for each person connected to our schools. The school district is committed to creating inclusive educational opportunities that are relevant both historically and culturally, addressing the impacts of bias, prejudice, and discrimination while building more opportunity for us to thrive rather than merely survive. This statement represents a commitment within our school district to acknowledge and end oppression and oppressive systems, to center our full humanity of all in our community, and to keep broadening our perspectives. These identities — including and not limited to race, color, religion, creed, national origin, ethnicity, marital status, family composition, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, varying physical and mental abilities, and socioeconomic status — carry socially constructed meaning and value. Our commitment is to the development of cultural humility and personal growth that is best supported in a climate that respects differences and provides a sense of belonging and inclusion.

We are looking forward to your support and adoption of this statement as a commitment for our district and your encouragement for making this work a reality in all we do.

In all efforts for access and justice—

Meg Allison
Mary Bove
Kelly Bushey

Alison Byrnes
Ellen Cooke
Krista Dy
Cat Fair
Jenn Ingersoll
Amy Koenigbauer
Karen Liebermann
Alyson Mahony
Jennifer Miller-Arsenault
Shelley Vermilya