



ANTIOCH SCHOOL DISTRICT 34
Inspiring personal excellence.

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Dr. Bradford Hubbard
Superintendent

August 18, 2020

Antioch CCSD 34 Students and Families,

Welcome to the 2020-21 school year! I could not be more honored, proud, humbled, or excited to be serving as your Superintendent. During my time in District 117 over the past seven years and in this District for the past four months, I have grown to love, respect, and deeply value this community. While tomorrow will not be a traditional first-day-of-school, it will be OUR first-day-of-school. We hope that it comes with all the excitement and energy that has been put into the planning for it. Our staff cannot wait to see, connect with, and begin building genuine and authentic relationships with our students and families. These connections will be the foundation for everything else we aim to collectively accomplish.

In preparing for this year's journey and addressing our staff yesterday morning, I have focused in on three words to help guide, ground, and inform our shared work. Hope. Gratitude. Grace.

Ask any successful leader and they will tell you that hope is not a strategy. True. But, hope is necessary; especially in the face of fear, adversity, unpredictability, and the unknown. More than just hoping that tomorrow goes well, that Remote Learning 2.0 stands up to expectations and needs, and that we can transition soon to in-person learning, I hope with every fiber that every single Antioch CCSD 34 student feels valued, seen, heard, and loved this year. I hope that every single family believes they are true partners in the educational process and trusts we are striving to do what is right for their most precious gifts. I hope that every single Antioch CCSD 34 staff member believes in their value and impact. I hope to be the leader you all deserve. I hope this year, given all of its nuances and challenges, is our best year yet. I hope that what we are about to do with, for, and on behalf of our students will be what is best, right, and successful. I hope you, me, we, and this year will be great.

Gratitude is a key ingredient in happiness and fulfillment. It, too, is a critical component in schools. We have much to be grateful for and given the challenges in education, especially now, it is important to recognize and celebrate that which works, helps us grow, and allows us to have a positive impact on the experiences, opportunities, and outcomes for our students. In the face of a pandemic, injustice, civil unrest, damaging storms, or a less-than-ideal remote start to the year, we must embrace, show, and thrive on the gratitude that fuels our partnership, connection, and appreciation. I am so grateful to be a small part of this incredible team. I hope you will join us in making this year about finding gratitude in the moments and memories we collectively create.

As we embark upon this new and different school year, we hope we all are able to have, show, give, and embrace grace. We are in uncharted waters, but we are in them together. Remote Learning 2.0 will be different for our families, our students, and our staff. As we launch new

platforms and tools, we will be presented with opportunities for improvement and growth. As we learn to forge meaningful relationships with and amongst our students virtually, we will learn about and adapt to what is successful. As we identify academic or social-emotional needs, we will be flexible in meeting them. As we look to transition to in-person learning, we will diligently examine metrics, logistics, guidance, and our reality. In all of this, we are looking to model and working to encourage patience, permission, and partners in navigating this together. This is grace.

Tomorrow, we kick-off a school year that has not ever been rivaled in its complexity or uncertainty. Know that as a member of our Antioch CCSD 34 community, you are loved. Together, we got this. And, so long as you are part of our family, "You'll Never Walk Alone."

We will continue the work of the Transition Task Force and we will continue collaborating with our partners in striving toward a transition to in-person learning. For tomorrow, know that we are excited to open our virtual doors and welcome this year's students into our virtual classrooms and learning spaces. It is an enormous responsibility that we have, but an amazing opportunity, as well. We do not take lightly the gravity of our role or the expectations, goals, hopes, and dreams of our students, families, and staff. These are what fuel our passion, purpose, and dedication.

As I said, I am honored, proud, humbled, and excited to be here – our staff is, too! With hope in our hearts, gratitude in our practices, and grace in our interactions, this will be a great school year. Thank you for entrusting us and thank you for your partnership.

Eagerly awaiting tomorrow morning,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Hubbard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each name being capitalized and prominent.

Dr. Bradford Hubbard
Superintendent