



Mr. Carl L. Albano, Superintendent
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March 19, 2021

Dear Garrison School Community,

I hope this message finds you and your family well. As we begin the spring season and approach the end of our academic third quarter, I would like to provide you with the following updates on some of the exciting initiatives our school district has been working on.

Anti-Racism & Equity Task Force:

I am pleased to announce that on March 17th our Board of Education unanimously approved the Anti-Racism & Equity Task Force's recommended strategic plan. The official plan is posted on our new website at <https://www.gufs.org/> under *District Initiatives*. I sincerely thank our entire Task Force for volunteering their time, expertise and passion for this important initiative. I look forward to providing regular progress updates to our community as we work towards our goals and objectives.

New GUFS Website:

This past Wednesday, we launched a completely redesigned school district website. Our goal was to create a website that provides informative content and simple navigation for students, parents, staff and community. We also wanted to make our website aesthetically pleasing with visuals capturing the quality teaching and engaging learning happening at GUFS. District-wide information can be found on the *District Home* page, and school specific information on the *Our School* page. We encourage you to visit our new mobile friendly website at <https://www.gufs.org/>. Recommendations can be made by clicking on the *Website Feedback Form*.

SEL (Social Emotional Learning):

Mrs. Emig and our SEL leadership team is close to completing their training to begin implementing the evidenced-based RULER (Recognizing, Understanding, Labeling, Expressing, Regulating) program in our school. The next step will be to introduce the skills and tools they have acquired to all stakeholders in our community. The RULER program is based on the research of Marc Brackett, Ph.D, the founding director of the [Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence](#). His research focuses on the role of emotional

intelligence in learning, decision making, creativity, relationships, health, and performance. Mrs. Emig, Mrs. DiDiego and Mrs. VanDekker will present on the RULER program initiative as well as other school and community based mental health resources at our April 7th Board of Education Meeting. Please do not hesitate to contact our mental health professionals or principal at any time if you have questions or believe your child needs support.

Strategic Coherence Plan:

Our coherence planning team consisting of teachers, administrators, parents and Board of Education members has been working over the last few months to draft a Garrison Vision of the Graduate (see attachment). Once completed, the Vision will provide the focus for a district strategic planning effort to follow.

We are interested in your opinion on the work that has been completed thus far. If you haven't done so already, please take a moment to share your feedback by clicking on the following link <https://my.thoughtexchange.com/525210595>. The planning team will consider this feedback before finalizing the Vision of the Graduate and launching the Strategic Coherence Planning process. Our strategic planning consultant, Jonathan Costa, will make a formal presentation on the Vision of the Graduate at the April 20th Board of Education meeting.

The progress made towards these initiatives represents the collaborative efforts of many dedicated individuals, who despite the challenges of the pandemic, remain steadfast in the pursuit of the continued improvement of our school. My most sincere thanks to all of you for your ongoing support of our district.

Sincerely,

Carl L. Albano

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Superintendent of Schools