



# NEWS

OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

341 S. Bellefield Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213

**For Immediate Release**

Contact: Ebony R. Pugh (412) 529-3616

## **Statement from Superintendent, Dr. Anthony Hamlet, May 31, 2020** ***PPS Cares Parade Scheduled for Tomorrow Postponed***

PITTSBURGH May 31, 2020 – As protesters across the nation, and here in Pittsburgh, act in response to the tragic murder of George Floyd, my thoughts and concerns remain with the students, families, and staff of the Pittsburgh Public Schools. I realize this crisis is heavy on the hearts and minds of everyone throughout our school community. From grieving, to speaking out against injustice, to listening and learning about others’ pain, to taking social action through outreach or protest, Pittsburgh is trying to make sense of the hurt and our responsibilities as good stewards of our fellow citizens and next generation of leaders.

I too experience heartache. It hurt me each time George Floyd could be heard saying, "I can't breathe," as a Minneapolis police officer pinned him to the ground with his knee. This sorrow grew with each of the eight passing minutes as I thought about Eric Garner, Philando Castile, Tamir Rice, Breonna Taylor, and Antwon Rose - all African Americans inexplicably dead at the hands of those charged to serve and protect us all.

It also pained me to see a peaceful protest turned violent by outsiders as a transplant to this beautiful city. Downtown, Pittsburgh is my home. It was my home when students filled the streets to peacefully protest the killing and subsequent verdict related to the death of Antwon Rose. In both instances, I was certain students were acting on the side of racial justice, but I am constantly concerned for their safety, which cannot always be ensured when tensions run high.

Anger is a legitimate emotional response to these tragic events. The impact of racism and brutality cannot be ignored, for each time a police officer unjustly murders an African American without consequence, trauma is inflicted on the African American community. As the trauma of racist and unjust acts continue, it carries down to new generations, creating a traumatized people. We must not let the impact of anger and trauma turn into a rage – uncontrollable anger – that deters from the change we seek and deserve.

**-more-**



# NEWS

OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

341 S. Bellefield Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213

## Page 2 - Statement from Superintendent Anthony Hamlet May 31, 2020

Although I was deeply saddened to see the damage caused by outsiders, and more so, the disruption of a peaceful demonstration yesterday, the image that stays with me is young and old, white and black coming together in love and solidarity to condemn the murder of George Floyd. As I watched yesterday's peaceful protest, I could see that in Pittsburgh, we have what it takes to get the change we seek.

Despite the disruption, I am confident our students have what it takes to persevere and end this social trauma. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, they have proven themselves resilient, resourceful, and empathetic. As we prepare to graduate the class of 2020, I know they will lead us against divisions caused by racism and bigotry and create a more just world for all.

To ensure the safety of all students, families and staff and give Pittsburgh a moment to breathe and heal, we will postpone the PPS Cares Parade scheduled for tomorrow to a future date. PPS still cares, and we do this by prioritizing the safety and wellness of our families.

###