

To: WSESU Parents and Staff
Copy: WSESU Leadership Team *RS*
From: Ron Stahley, WSESU Superintendent of Schools
Subject: Our Mission to Support All Students
Date: February 6, 2017

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As a result of the current immigration proposals coming out of Washington, I want to reaffirm our mission in the Windham Southeast Supervisory Union. The WSESU District Mission is: ***To provide a safe, inclusive and supportive environment where all students grow academically, socially, and emotionally, and are challenged to reach their potential as local and global community members.***

Recently school districts throughout Vermont have received messages of support for all of our students and families from Rebecca Holcombe the Secretary of Education and Governor Scott.

To quote Secretary Holcombe: *Vermont strongly stands against the prejudice and intolerance that characterize the current immigration proposals coming out of Washington, as well as casual talk about federal National Guard and law enforcement intervention in communities whose real challenges stem from the ravages of poverty or racism. We are all Vermonters, and we know the safety and wellbeing of each of us is essential to preserving a strong and vital Vermont.*

As Governor Scott stated last week: *"I can't imagine what Vermont, or our country, would look like today, had we refused to allow immigrants from all reaches of the world to experience this wonderful country the way most of us have, simply because they were not born here or didn't share our exact religious view. As I have said, I'm going to do everything I can to protect the rights of all Vermonters and the human rights of all people – that includes standing up to executive orders from Washington that cross legal, ethical and moral lines that have distinguished America from the rest of the world for generations."*

We fully support the principles of decency and democracy to stand and refuse to be separated from vulnerable members of our community. We need to be firm that our communities and our schools are safe and welcoming places that embrace and support all our children and families. Our children – no matter their race, religion, national origin, poverty status or disability status – have a right to learn and be supported as they grow into the strong Vermonters we value and desperately need to build a strong future for our district and our state.

We in the WSESU District proudly celebrate the diversity of our students who collectively speak over thirty different languages. Our Diversity / Equity Team has been supporting diversity and cultural competencies for over thirty years. Our Diversity & Equity Coordinator, Mikaela Simms is an important resource for our students, families and staff members.

I continue to be most heartened by the countless ways in which our staff is committed to providing all students a comprehensive educational experience. We have high expectations for all our students to reach their fullest potential with an emphasis on academic studies, while also supporting social competency and social skill development to become competent and caring citizens. We want to assure that all students will have access to equal educational opportunities in safe, healthy, and respectful environments.

Finally, I am exceedingly grateful to all who give so much to make this such an outstanding school district. It is the combined efforts of each of our constituencies – the faculty who teach here, the administrators and staff who serve our students, the students themselves, and our parents, school board members and community members who lend their interest and support – which enables this district to promote **"An Education of Excellence"**. To all of you, my sincere appreciation.

"An Education of Excellence"
Representing

Brattleboro, Dummerston, Guilford, Putney, Vernon, Brattleboro Union High School,
Brattleboro Area Middle School, and the Windham Regional Career Center

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