



Oct. 20, 2015

Dear Northfield High School families,

Thank you for your support and patience as we have conducted a thorough review of concerns raised by some families that inappropriate force was used in the context of discipline procedures at the school. In the course of this work, we were contacted by staff, parents and community members who expressed concerns about how other student behavior and discipline matters have been handled at the school.

At the conclusion of this review, Principal Avi Tropper has stepped down from his position at the school. We know this will be an emotional decision for some, and it is important for the community to be clear on how we plan to move forward.

We deeply support the vision of Northfield High School as an inclusive, diverse school that will provide an excellent education for all students. And, we appreciate the efforts of the extraordinary educators at Northfield and how many wonderful things are happening at the school every day.

At the same time, this change is necessary for Northfield to achieve the vision that we and the community share for the school. The safety and well-being of our students must be our No. 1 priority.

Our principals must enforce clear, consistent and fair procedures around student behavior and student discipline so that all kids are safe, all classrooms have effective learning environments and all kids are treated fairly and with respect. In cases where students do not act in accord with school policy, these cases must be dealt with promptly and fairly, in accordance with districtwide discipline expectations and in such a way that de-escalates conflict as effectively as possible.

Our review detailed multiple instances where this was not the case over the last two months at Northfield, including inappropriate use of force, inappropriate escalation of relatively minor incidents, inappropriate supervision of security personnel, stated intentions to use suspension as a tool to force at least one student out of the school and inappropriate behavior towards parents raising concerns.

We stress that we remain entirely committed to supporting the vision and future of Northfield High School. Ed Salem will continue as acting principal and we expect to name a new interim principal shortly for the remainder of the 15-16 school year. We look forward to your participation in the hiring process for a new permanent principal at Northfield and will share details with you on a timeline for that proposed process in the coming weeks.

Tomorrow, we will have staff on hand to assist Northfield teachers as they discuss this transition with your students during the advisory period. We also encourage you to reach out if you have additional questions or concerns. We will be hosting office hours at the school if you would like to stop by – these will be held from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. tomorrow/Wednesday and from 8:30 a.m. – noon Thursday. You also may call the Family and Community Engagement helpline at 720-423-3054.

During this time, the faculty at Northfield is building a strong foundation and an inclusive culture at Northfield. Your belief in the school and your support during this transition is critical as we move forward.

Tom Boasberg, Superintendent

Susana Cordova, Chief Schools Officer