

HENRY M. JACKSON HIGH SCHOOL

1508 136th Street SE
Mill Creek, WA 98012
Phone (425) 385-7000 ▪ Fax (425) 385-7002

DAVE PETERS
Principal

SECHIN TOWER
Asst. Principal, 12th

SHAUN MONAGHAN
Asst. Principal, 11th

MICHELLE RENEE
Asst. Principal, 10th

BLYTHE YOUNG
Asst. Principal, 9th

Dear Jackson Students and Families,

June 3, 2020

It is with sadness - but with a desire to serve as advocates - that we address the recent events of racism, violence, and destruction in our country and communities. As many of us watched the footage of the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, we were sickened and exasperated. We understand that the deep anger around how he died is also symbolic of the inexcusable historic injustices and oppression that black people in America have experienced for hundreds of years.

Our country's history includes a backdrop of white privilege and denying the full humanity and rights of People of color. I am a white man with white privilege and acknowledge that I am complicit in the systems that sustain racism. I am also a white man who commits to addressing the systems that sustain racism including those in Jackson High School. I come to you not just as your Principal but also as a human being who is angry and frustrated at the killings of and injustices toward black people. I stand as an ally and seek answers to make needed changes in our school.

I want our students and our community to know we walk together. The protests that are happening worldwide now remind us of the growth we have yet to make towards equity. It is essential to acknowledge the voices of outrage, but also important to use them peacefully, and not use the constitutional rights to protest as a decoy for ulterior motives. We support those who have and continue to protest peacefully.

At Jackson High School, we value and celebrate the diversity of our student body and community. We acknowledge the pain and frustration that comes from events like this. But we have to do more than simply acknowledge. We need to lean on our commitment to equity, and we need to develop a call to action. Together we can make a lasting and positive difference in our Jackson community and in our own lives. We also cannot be silent when we see racism, and we will increase the training of our students and staff to have the insights and strength to speak up when they see injustice. We will stand up against racism as we make JHS a school that is inclusive, safe, and welcoming for all students. We also strive to make JHS a place where we intentionally learn about our students' cultures and experiences, and we will use our understanding of our students to help them succeed in school and flourish in their futures.

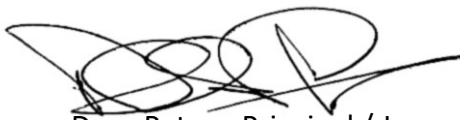
We are fortunate in Everett Public Schools to have access to data that can identify our areas of needed growth and can influence our decisions. Our data shows us that we have been narrowing some important gaps. That said, it also tells us that we still have systems in place that discipline at disproportionate rates, set up barriers to challenging options, and under-serve many of our students of color. Our ASB will continue its efforts to be diverse in its leadership, to

Our mission is to provide a rigorous curriculum that sets high standards and prepares all students for the future.

be inclusive in school activities, and to provide a variety of opportunities for student voices to be heard. Next year, our ASB will also revise behavior expectations for students to earn and maintain leadership positions. We aren't perfect – and we have made mistakes – but we are committed to closing the gaps and eliminating the barriers that are part of our current systems.

It is important that we talk about race and equity in our school, with our families, and with our peers, colleagues and friends. As has been said, “When you have courageous conversations then you have progress.” At Jackson, we are going to emphasize this with an even stronger sense of urgency. The stage is set for us to live out our newly developed PAK behaviors to Be Proud, to Be Aware, and to Be Kind. We will not tolerate racism at Jackson. We will not be silent or turn away when we see acts of injustice. We will work together to form lasting relationships, to equip all students to be advocates for others, and to fill the school experience of each student with positive and grateful lifetime memories.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dave Peters', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Dave Peters, Principal / Jason Gadek, ASB Advisor / The JHS Equity Leadership Team