



# PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

prepared & empowered

January 7, 2021

Dear Portland Public Schools Students and Families,

As leaders of the Portland Public Schools, we are outraged and heartbroken over what took place yesterday at the U.S. Capitol. We are writing to let you know that our schools are already at work to support our students as they process these events and to provide resources for students and families to help them do that.

Yesterday's failed insurrection leaves many of us feeling unsafe, and uncertain of what is to come. We saw racist images such as the confederate flag being flown inside the building that is the seat of our nation's government, an affront to our country's values and ideals. These events may be especially painful for the families in our community who have had these kinds of experiences in other countries, and who came to the United States of America for the safe harbor of its democracy.

We denounce the violent actions of the mob that assaulted the Capitol and tried to deny the American people their right to choose their leaders and have a peaceful transition of power. These events are a reminder of the work we must keep on doing as a school system. We will continue championing racial equity, decolonizing our curriculum and addressing systemic inequities within the Portland Public Schools, while fostering dialogue and discourse.

We are grateful that our institutions held last night, but we should not take that for granted. Everyone in the Portland Public Schools will continue to do their best today and every day to teach our students about the ideals that are the foundation of our democracy and to ensure that we as a school system live up to them. We are committed to continue to work to guide our students to be truth-seers, truth-tellers and change agents.

Here are some resources that students and families may find helpful:

Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Parents and Teachers (National Association of School Psychologists)

[English](#), [Arabic](#), [French](#), [Portuguese](#), [Somali](#), [Spanish](#), [Vietnamese](#)

[Talking to Kids About the Attack on the Capitol](#) - (National Education Association)

Also, we encourage students to reach out to a trusted adult at school with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Xavier Botana, Superintendent