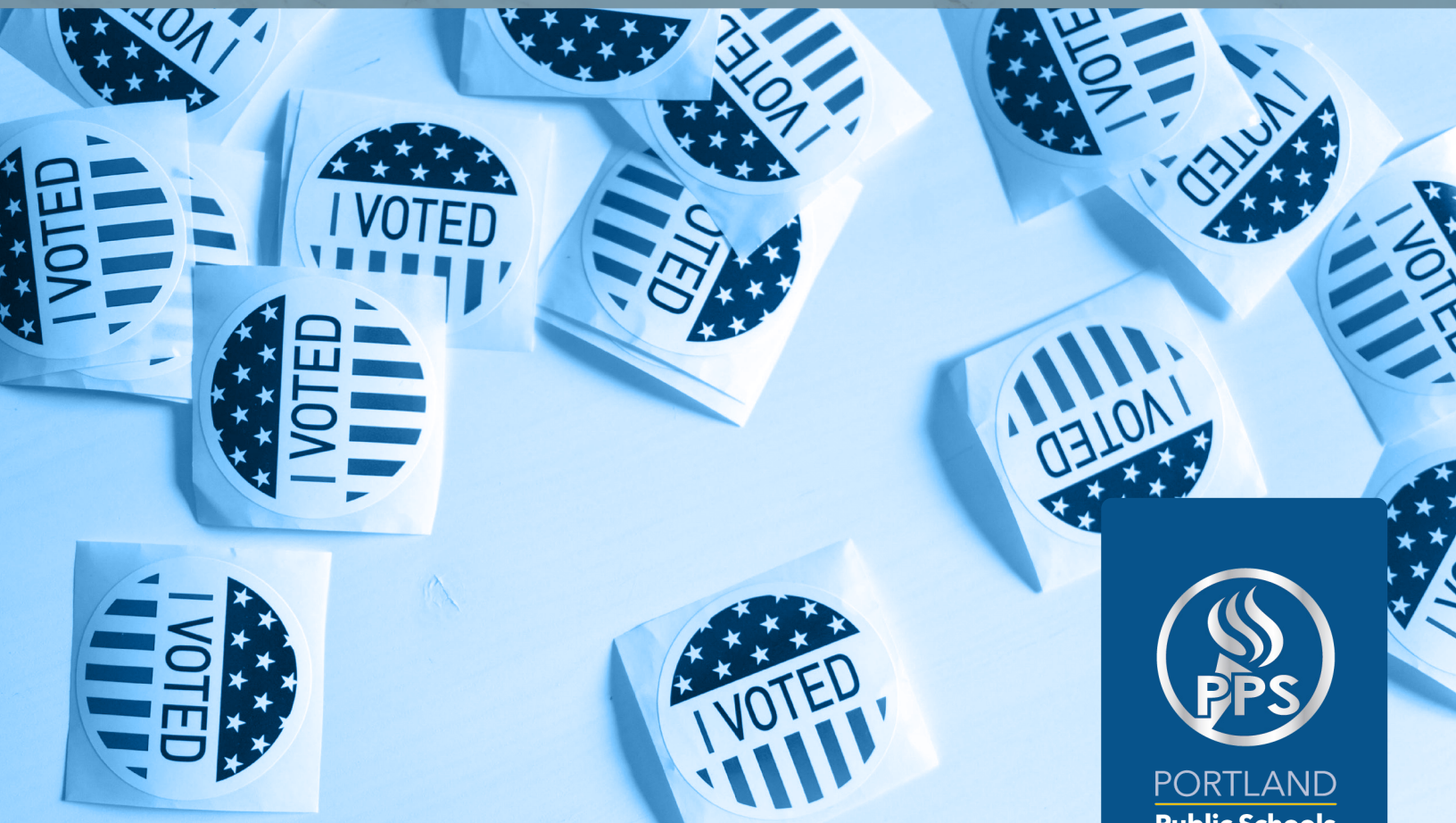


# Portland Public Schools **Election 2024** **Tool Kit** ★



PORTLAND  
Public Schools

# Table of Contents★

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Message from the Superintendent . . . . .                  | 3  |
| Guidance for District Leaders . . . . .                    | 4  |
| Additional Lesson Plans . . . . .                          | 8  |
| Professional Development . . . . .                         | 10 |
| Directory of Internal/External Supports for Students . . . | 12 |
| Guidelines for Political Speech . . . . .                  | 14 |
| PPS Hate Speech Protocols . . . . .                        | 15 |
| Support for Staff. . . . .                                 | 18 |

# Message from the Superintendent ★

Dear Portland Public Schools community:

As we approach the November 2024 election, I want to take a moment to reflect on our journey, starting with the challenges we faced during the tumultuous 2020 election and the pandemic that followed. These four years tested our resolve, and many of us experienced fear and uncertainty. Here in Portland, we saw a racial reckoning that has yielded changes across our city, including the renaming of some of our public schools, to better reflect our values. In these moments of adversity and confronting painful parts of our history, we found hope and strength in our community.

On the eve of another election, I am immensely proud of our public schools' role in nurturing informed citizens who contribute positively to our society. We take our responsibility seriously to empower our students to think critically, embrace diversity, and participate actively in our democratic processes. To that end, we are guided by our unique, comprehensive portrait of the citizens who will vote in the decades to come.

We are fortunate that here in Oregon, our predecessors created the vote-by-mail election system that brings families together at the kitchen table to discuss our shared future, and makes voting more accessible to all eligible voters. I urge each of you to engage, educate, and encourage one another to participate in this pivotal moment. This election isn't just about candidates; it's about our values and our vision for the future.

Let's come together as a community, support our democratic process, and make our voices heard. I invite you to read our Elections Toolkit and share with others. Together, we can pave the way for a brighter, more inclusive future for all of our students.

Together, we rise.



**Dr. Kimberlee Armstrong**

Superintendent, Portland Public Schools



# Guidance for District Leaders ★

As leaders and educators, we are uniquely situated and directly responsible for supporting our students' learning and contextualization of this election. We also know that the election may give rise to civil unrest and other conditions that threaten the safety of students and staff.

Delivering on these responsibilities and addressing safety require our thoughtful and adaptive *preparation*, *mutual support*, and a collective *focus* on modeling and teaching the characteristics we espouse in our Graduate Portrait.

**In the Educator Essentials attributes from the [PPS Vision](#), PPS staff are called upon to be:**

- **Adaptive & Resilient** with a commitment to “developing the skills and persistence to shift the system and structures around them when necessary and build their own resilience through self-care, and collaboration with students, educators, and others.”
- **Consistent & Reliable** with “consistently high expectations and levels of preparedness so they can best respond to the needs of the students in front of them.”
- **RESJ Centered** with a commitment to be “courageous change agents who actively promote and ensure racial equity and social justice. They understand that the perceived reality, based on the dominant culture, has often excluded the perspectives of people of color. They understand that they can replace the narrative with a more inclusive and objective multi-cultural approach that contributes to the positive identity development of adults and students of color. They ensure equitable access to learning for every student, and their diverse learning styles, through clearly defined racial equity and social justice-based practices, and culturally and linguistically responsive teaching and curricula and materials. They create safe learning communities that value diversity in their departments, schools, and classrooms.”



## What is expected of me?

We can expect further civil unrest on Election Day in particular, as well as the days leading up to the inauguration and possibly beyond. As a leader, it is your responsibility to prepare, in advance, you and your team for events that we can reasonably anticipate will have distressing repercussions for our students and staff, including the January 20 Inauguration Day. Preparations should include addressing potential impact in advance, including:

### Schedule a Staff Meeting

- Your direct reports who are team leaders should plan their team meetings and individual check-ins with their direct reports in advance of Election Day.
- Anticipate what may occur leading up to and after the election.
- Review how each person will handle those scenarios and identify any supports needed.
- While we prepare for unrest, Election Day is traditionally a time for celebration for the peaceful transition of power fundamental to American democracy.
- You may want to consider a joyful recognition of Election Day as part of your planning, demonstrating one of our Core Values, Joyful Learning and Leadership.
- Set aside times you and your team will be available for one another.
- Remind staff of the guidelines regarding political speech by public employees.
- The PPS Vision and Graduate Portrait paint a compelling vision.



## Staff Expectations

While the result of the election has consequences for our staff members on a personal level we also have an obligation as public school employees to present an objective, non-biased view of the election. To that end, we have the following expectations of staff members leading up to and following the determination of the election results:

### Do:

- Share factual information about the electoral process with students
- Acknowledge the context of what is happening in the community, state, and in this case, the U.S. Capitol. Ignoring or minimizing what may be causing significant anxiety is another form of trauma.
- Support students through culturally responsive practices and strategies. Be prepared with an activity that allows them to give voice to what they are experiencing. You know your students and classroom. This is about creating community and acknowledging that every individual has a right to feel whatever it is they are feeling. Their reality and feelings are not up for debate.
- Make space for students to share their feelings in a productive manner. Using sentence prompts such as "I feel...". Be prepared to move students to a virtual breakout room if hateful or discriminatory comments are made.
- Only share factual information with students. To answer questions, say, "That's a really good question and I don't know the answer, but we can try to find out together."
- Encourage students to find support among friends and loved ones and encourage students to seek support when they need it. Help students identify who their support network is and suggest adults such as counselors and social workers if they need it.
- Promote empathy with your students. Empathy is not only good for those around you, but it can also promote good health, lower stress, and prevent burn-out while connectign you to other people in deep and meaningful ways.
- Continue to practice routines to provide a sense of normalcy for students.
- Encourage students to practice some basic emotional and self regulating skills which may include: taking breaks when they need them, getting outside if possible, avoiding social media, eating healthy foods, getting enough sleep, and giving themselves grace and acceptance for what they feel.



## Staff Expectations, cont.

### Don't:

- Share personal feelings about the winner/loser of the election
- Make assumptions that families and students share your personal views of Vice-President Harris and Former President Trump.
- Make inflammatory comments about any of the parties, politicians, or their policies.
- Ignore discriminatory behavior or words. Address them in the moment and refer to district resources on responding to hate, bias, or discriminatory speech.
- Make inflammatory comments about either of the candidates or their policies

## Support for Students and Families

Like all of us, students and families are experiencing uncertainty, stress and anxiety related to the November election and its fallout, the pandemic and economic fallout, the racial uprising, and climate change. We know our students who are Black, Indigenous, people of color, and their families experience this trauma differently and more intensely.

As leaders, please familiarize yourself with the full range of academic and service supports available for students and families and be prepared to support staff as they refer and provide services to meet student and family needs.

## Student Attendance of Protests

Student led-walkouts/protest: if students in MS/HS grades choose to leave campus to participate in a walkout/protest, they will not be monitored by district staff once they have left PPS property. PPS staff (teachers, support staff, administrators) will remain on campus and continue to attend to students who remain in the classroom. PPS staff to the best of their ability will identify students who have left campus to engage in the walkout/protest and will attempt to notify parents/ guardians in a timely manner. PPS cannot ensure student safety once students have left a PPS campus.

## Response & Recovery-Clean Up Strategies for Building Damage

- Increase number of on-call maintenance
- Emergency contract for clean-up/repair

### How to Use the Tool Kit

We know and applaud the many educators and leaders who have already provided lesson plans and engaged students around this election. This tool kit was designed to help inform you and support you as you utilize the resources that meet your needs while also providing consistent and coherent content so that expectations and supports are clear and available to everyone.



# Additional Lesson Plans★

The Office of Teaching and Learning's Humanities Department has provided lessons plans and resources for election week that align to our vision PPS reimagined: *A graduate of Portland Public Schools will be a compassionate critical thinker, able to collaborate and solve problems, and be prepared to lead a more socially just world.* K-5 lessons are already available in the Teaching Election Guidance below.

**All classrooms have the option of engaging their students on the upcoming election, which align with our Graduate Portrait, utilizing the resources below.**

Lessons will align with the following attributes of the Graduate Portrait:

**Resilient and Adaptable Learners:** Students are prepared to navigate, adapt to and meet life's complex challenges. They can embrace discomfort and navigate persistently through failure to success by adapting themselves to the environment or changing it. They have a growth mindset, knowing that new knowledge and skills are always possible, and they see mistakes and failures as learning opportunities. As informed and resourceful self-directed lifelong learners, they advocate with pride for their rights and for themselves. They make use of community and cultural assets to develop networks of allies to help them persevere through challenges and embrace continuous learning for professional growth and personal fulfillment.

**Reflective, Empathetic, and Empowering Graduates:** Students are self-aware, reflective, and able to recognize personal bias toward people, cultures, and situations. They operate from a strengths based perspective and demonstrate empathy, curiosity, respect, and interest in other points of view. They seek to empower others and are accepting, appreciative, compassionate, and kind toward others.

**Transformative Racial Equity Leaders:** As racial equity leaders, students take part in making our society more just and equitable for people of color. They understand how our communities have been impacted by racial injustice, and they can recognize and interrupt the conditions that enable it. They develop agency and advocacy skills to challenge injustice and change oppressive systems in their communities. They understand that the dominant historical narrative can minimize the perspectives of people of color and contribute to institutional racism. They can deconstruct the dominant narrative and change it to a more balanced and inclusive one. Students respect the perspectives of all cultures. As racial equity-driven problem solvers, they engage in community conversations about social justice issues and help develop and implement solutions that respect and include the perspectives of other cultures.





## Elementary Lessons

PPS Teaching Voting & Elections Guidance

## Middle and High School Lessons

[Oregon Historical Society 9th-12th Curriculum](#): In this curriculum, students will learn about the rights and responsibilities of U.S. citizens as well as the steps they can take to actively participate in civic life. Educators can use the curriculum with or without a museum visit.

[iCivics Election 2024](#): Provides students with election-focused civics games and lesson plans that include simulations, vocabulary development, graphic organizers, and active participation opportunities.

[Digital Civics Toolkit](#): Offers a collection of resources for educators to support youth in exploring, recognizing, and taking seriously the civic potentials of digital life.

[Library of Congress](#): Teach students the Electoral College through Math and U.S. History Lenses

[The New York Times](#): Writing Prompts, Challenges, Lesson Plans and Other Resources for Teachers and Students. They also offer a [lesson of the day](#) leading up to Election Day.

[OPB-PBS: The Election Collection](#): Middle and high school educators across the U.S. are empowering students to share their take on issues that matter to them. Learn how your students can create and publish audio or video commentaries for a national audience.

[KQED's Youth Media Challenge: Let's Talk About Election 2024](#): Empower student voices beyond the classroom as they publish their own audio or video commentaries for a national audience.

Civic Engagement and Advocacy: [Teaching Tolerance Election 2024](#)

Critical Thinking - News sources: [Teaching Tolerance Digital Literacy](#)



# Professional Development

Because of the context of this election, we want to ensure that all educators are prepared to facilitate meaningful and engaging conversations with students on a range of topics associated with our current circumstances.

## **The following may help lead to constructive, thoughtful conversations:**

**Talk about issues and not personalities** – This is from the lens that many people in our community supported both candidates, and we don't want to increase the divide by focusing on the people. What are the issues that people feel are important to express? What does this say about the divide in America?

**Identify concerns** – Let people talk about what they are sitting with. What are the things we need to be aware of and talking about?

**Process emotions** – This is the most challenging part because people will be emotionally charged and we want to give people the opportunity to express their emotions.

**Process next steps** – How do we come together to combat the divisive nature of our country and communities? What do we need to do to support each other with conversations, gatherings and events designed to invite diverse groups to work together?

Let's Talk is a guide from Teaching Tolerance to help educators facilitate critical conversations with students:

[Teaching Tolerance: Lets Talk! Facilitating Critical Conversations with Students](#)

Facing History and Ourselves: Fostering Civil Discourse

[https://www.facinghistory.org/sites/default/files/publications/Fostering\\_Civil\\_Discourse.pdf](https://www.facinghistory.org/sites/default/files/publications/Fostering_Civil_Discourse.pdf)

Teaching Civics in Uncivil Times

<https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/16/09/civics-uncivil-times>

The Teaching Channel: Teaching Respectful Talk

<https://learn.teachingchannel.com/video/speaking-respectfully-nea>



## Resilience Building Approach

Students, families and staff are facing incredible stress. We know our BIPOC students and families experience this trauma differently and more intensely. And we know how important building resilience is as we talk about the election and potential consequences. Consider the following:

1. Talk with your students about how to identify and adopt self care practices.
2. Encourage students not to lean into despair. As much as possible, try to redirect to asset based and positive outlooks during discussions. Try to motivate students to reflect on opportunities for growth, learning and optimism.
3. Encourage students to stay Informed and get information from trusted news sources, but be sure to take breaks from the screen and the news.  
[Bipartisan Policy Center](#).
4. Encourage students to find support among friends and loved ones and encourage students to seek support when they need it. Help students identify who their support network is and suggest adults such as counselors and social workers if they need it
5. Promote empathy with your students. Empathy is not only good for those around you, but it can also promote good health, lower stress and prevent burn-out while connecting you to other people in deep and meaningful ways.  
[Brene Brown: The Power of Empathy](#)

## Social Emotional Learning

PPS Office of MTSS created the following presentation to help build and deepen your classroom community. Please refer to [this](#) website for resources in your classroom.

## Conversations About Race

Edutopia created this culturally responsive piece to support talking about race in the early elementary classroom: [Edutopia: How to start talking about race in the early elementary classroom](#)

Teaching Tolerance curated lessons to support learning about Race and Racism: [Teaching Tolerance: Teaching About Race, Racism and Police Violence](#)



# Directory of Internal/External Supports for Students★

PPS provides resources and support for students and families throughout the year. If the election proves stressful for students, below are several internal and external resources and services to support our students.

**Counselors** - School counselors focus on helping students address their academic, personal/social, and career development goals and needs by designing, implementing, and evaluating a comprehensive school counseling program that promotes and enhances student success . School counselors work to promote safe learning environments for all members of the school community and regularly monitor and respond to behavior issues that impact school climate, such as bullying, student interpersonal struggles, and student-teacher conflicts. Effective school counseling programs are a collaborative effort between the school counselor, teachers, families, and other educators to create an environment promoting student achievement, active engagement, equitable access to educational opportunities, and a rigorous curriculum for all students.

[Comprehensive School Counseling Program](#)

**Social Workers** - Social workers work to decrease barriers to learning created as a result of systemic racism, poverty, inadequate health care, and neighborhood violence. School social workers often focus on providing supports to historically underserved populations of students that have a high risk for truancy and dropping out of school, such as youth who are homeless or in foster care, students who identify as immigrants or refugees, students transitioning between school and treatment programs or the juvenile justice system, or students experiencing domestic violence. Social workers work closely with teachers, administrators, other educators, parents, and caregivers to provide coordinated interventions and consultation designed to keep students in school and build upon family and student strengths to access the culturally responsive supports needed to promote student success.



## **Serving Immigrant Families:**

PPS remains committed to creating safe and inclusive learning environments for all of our students regardless of race, gender, gender identity, religion, ethnicity or immigration status. The link below provides a full list of resources for immigrant families. <https://www.pps.net/domain/4352>

## **RESJ Partnerships:**

PPS continues to partner with culturally specific organizations to help serve and support our students. The link below highlights our partner organizations here to support students. <https://www.pps.net/Page/15401>



# Guidelines for Political Speech★

Our role as educators and public employees is clearly defined when it comes to political speech. Oregon law strictly limits political activities that public employees may engage in during work hours. Under Oregon’s “Solicitation of Public Employees” law, ORS 260.432, public employees may not, during work hours, promote or oppose election petitions, candidates, political committees or ballot measures.

To provide additional clarification, our PPS legal department outlined specific activities and examples applicable to this law. This guidance can be found here:

[Campaign Guidelines for Public Employees](#)

## **Additional guidance**

Please also see [PPS Administrative Directive 3.30.040-AD](#) on Art and Other Visual Representations in District Buildings.



# PPS Hate Speech Protocols★

PPS does not tolerate hate speech nor acts of discrimination. In 1997, PPS adopted the Non-Discrimination/Anti-Harassment Policy which has been amended throughout the years to respond to emerging situations. The intent of the policy is to provide a culture of safety for students, families and employees by outlining protected classes, providing mechanisms for complaints and reporting to ensure the safety and well-being of all. The district's protected classes include: age, national origin, disability, economic status, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and gender expression or identity. The policy also provides consequences for those who engage in discriminatory practices, dismissal of staff and trespass of parents and volunteers.

In response to the increasing number of hate speech incidents, a cross functional team worked to develop a consistent set of actions to respond to these incidents. These are outlined in [PPS Hate Speech Protocols](#). These protocols include guidelines for notification, reporting and communications support. If there is a hate speech incident, all staff are encouraged to access these protocols and follow them. It's also important to consistently 1) denounce the act; 2) reaffirm PPS values of racial equity and social justice; and 3) support targeted students.

In addition to following our protocols, we are also asking everyone to be vigilant about recognizing hate symbols in your virtual and physical environments that impact students. The Antidefamation League collates a [hate symbol database](#) that we asked operations staff to be aware of and to report any use of these symbols on school properties.

The State Board of Education has adopted the Every Student Belongs rule, which prohibits hate symbols, specifically three of the most recognizable symbols of hate in the U.S. – the swastika (outside of a religious context), the Confederate flag, and the noose, in any program or school-sponsored activity, except where used in teaching curricula that are aligned with the Oregon State Standards. Please see more at the [Oregon Department of Education web site](#).

Additional resources can be found at [PPS.net/ResponsetoHateSpeech](https://PPS.net/ResponsetoHateSpeech)



## Hate speech versus political speech

It is also important to distinguish between hate speech and political speech. Hate speech is not protected by “free speech” and both PPS and state policies prohibit the use of hate speech. Below are five common defenses of hate speech and practical suggestions to redirect adapted from Western State Center’s *Confronting White Nationalism in Schools Tool Kit*:

### Common Defense of Hate Speech

### Practical Suggestions to Redirect

### PPS Vision - Graduate Portrait

“It’s about pride, not prejudice”

Racial groups or historically marginalized groups gather and assert pride as a way to protest historic and current discrimination and cultural racism.

White pride cannot be equated with Pride month in support of LGBTQ communities, Native Pride, Latinx pride or Black Excellence.

*Positive, Confident, Connected Sense of Self:* Students have positive feelings about their personal and cultural identities and a healthy sense of confidence and self-worth. They are connected to networks of allies who serve as role models and advocates, strengthening their self esteem by nurturing their personal and cultural assets and strengths.

Pride and confidence in one’s culture does not involve speech that denigrates or promotes violence towards others.

“This is a free speech issue”

policies support the rights of schools to prohibit hate speech. We are responsible for cultivating a culture of safety for every student. Speech that threatens the safety of any students, particularly those who belong in protected classes is not tolerated at PPS. The State Board of Education also prohibits hate symbols, specifically three of the most recognizable symbols of hate in the U.S.–the swastika (outside of a religious context), the Confederate flag, and the noose.

Hate speech is not protected speech.

A range of legally upheld

*Powerful and Effective Communicators:* Students communicate effectively by organizing, writing, speaking, and presenting clear, logical, persuasive, compelling content. They understand the importance of culture, time, place, and context in developing appropriate methods of communication and can adapt the ways they communicate to various situations.

Effective communication has the power to unite us across differences.

“This is all just political correctness by social justice warriors”

Working to cultivate safe and positive school climates is in alignment with our values and vision. Here are two terms that have been co-opted and redirected in their intentions. Challenge those who mock them in defense of bigotry to replace the first with “basic respect for others” and the second with “people who are against racism.”

Prohibitions of hate speech are not efforts to be politically correct nor an attempt to limit discourse and debate.

*Transformative Racial Equity Leaders:* As racial equity leaders, students take part in making our society more just and equitable for people of color. They understand how our communities have been impacted by racial injustice, and they can recognize and interrupt the conditions that enable it. They develop agency and advocacy skills to challenge injustice and change oppressive systems in their communities.

We believe in the fundamental right to human dignity and that generating an equitable world requires an educational system that intentionally disrupts—and builds leaders to disrupt—systems of oppression.





# Hate speech versus political speech continued

## Common Defense of Hate Speech

## Practical Suggestions to Redirect

## PPS Vision - Graduate Portrait

“What about reverse racism?”

Data demonstrates systemic advantages for white people in all facets of life in the US. While members of any group may commit acts of bias against any other, these acts do not add up to the institutional and cultural racism that disproportionately produces negative outcomes for people of color.

*Reflective, Empathetic, and Empowering Graduates:* Students are self-aware, reflective, and able to recognize personal bias toward people, cultures, and situations. They operate from a strengths based perspective and demonstrate empathy, curiosity, respect, and interest in other points of view. They seek to empower others and are accepting, appreciative, compassionate, and kind toward others.

We believe in the fundamental right to human dignity and that generating an equitable world requires an educational system that intentionally disrupts—and builds leaders to disrupt—systems of oppression.

“We are post-racial, racism is over”

Our community and country recognize the pernicious history of institutional and cultural racism present in our systems. We know that racially motivated hate speech incidents have increased over the past several years. We have work to do together, and we need to listen to understand and believe one another's experiences.

*Inquisitive Critical Thinkers with Deep Core Knowledge:* Students can read and analyze information, ask relevant questions, and develop compelling arguments based on facts and evidence. They can investigate history from multiple perspectives and understand how, traditionally, historical stories have been shaped by dominant cultures, and how these narratives have shaped current events

We know that to undo centuries of injustice and to rebuild a more racially just and equitable district, we must continue to remain steadfast in our commitment to racial equity and social justice.



# Support for Staff

## **Employee Assistance Program**

The [Employee Assistance Program](#) offers 24 hour crisis support, confidential counseling to any member of your household, legal services, and wellness programs.

Additional information is available by calling Canopy at 800-433-2320 or email [info@canopywell.com](mailto:info@canopywell.com).

