



MT. PLEASANT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

720 North Kinney Avenue
Mt. Pleasant, Michigan 48858
(989) 775-2300 Fax: (989) 775-2309
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Superintendent
Jennifer Verleger
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Assistant Superintendent
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Chief Financial Officer
Ginger Faber
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April 20, 2021

Dear Mount Pleasant Public Schools families,

At Mount Pleasant Public Schools, we strive to ensure all our students can learn and achieve in an inclusive, safe environment free from harassment, discrimination, bigotry or intolerance.

We work hard each day to foster a culture of respect, compassion and kindness so all our students, families, staff and visitors feel welcome and supported.

You may be aware of recent media reports and social media posts regarding an incident involving a Ganiard Elementary student. Our district is conducting a full review of this matter including conducting interviews and reviewing videotaped evidence.

In the spirit of transparency, I wanted to provide you an update so you can have an accurate and more complete picture of events as we now know them from our ongoing internal review.

On Tuesday, March 23, a Ganiard Elementary student asked her friend who is also an elementary student to cut her hair at school. The friend removed scissors from a classroom without permission and cut a portion of the student's hair while riding home on a public transportation bus. The next school day, the principal met with both students to discuss the incident.

The student grew unhappy and dissatisfied with the way her hair looked after the other student cut it and asked a school library employee to help fix her hair during a classroom visit to the library.

Rather than declining this request or consulting with the student's parents or school administrators, the library employee – who is also a cosmetologist – agreed to even out the student's hair to make her feel better. She brought in professional shears and special barrettes. Our preliminary review shows the student's teacher was also aware the library employee was planning to cut the student's hair.

On Friday, March 26, the library employee cut the student's hair at the student's request and without obtaining permission from the student's parents or consulting with school administrators. Regardless of their good intentions, these actions are unacceptable and show a lack of judgement on the part of our two employees. Both employees have admitted their actions and apologized. Both are being reviewed for further disciplinary actions in accordance with our school policies and procedures. I have personally apologized to the family on behalf of the school district.



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Our review is ongoing and we will provide updates as we gather more information. As always, please do not hesitate to contact me at (989) 775-2301 or jverleger@mp.edzone.net.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Verleger, Superintendent
Mount Pleasant Public Schools