

September 30, 2020

Dear Burlington Families and High School Students,

Earlier this morning, graffiti was discovered at the construction site of the new Karcher Middle School. The “N” word was spray painted on the concrete floor inside the new building. This hateful language is harmful to our students, staff and community as a whole and especially to our families of color. It’s the second time in two weeks that the “N” word has defaced one of our school building properties, as it was etched into wood chips outside of Cooper Elementary just over a week ago.

The district is saddened by these hateful acts of bigotry and empathizes with our students and families of color who may be traumatized by these incidents. These defacings deepen the hurt, outrage, and frustration felt by our community and adversely affect our efforts to build a greater sense of community. The use of the “N” word is abhorrent and has no place in our schools or community.

Since this happened at a building that is currently unoccupied, no students or staff actually saw the graffiti. We are working with the police to investigate this act of hatred against our community. If you would like to offer your support to our students, staff and greater community, please feel free to offer your messages of love and belonging to Black students and all students. You can email your positive message to SHARE (Students Helping Advance Racial Equity) club advisors Carolyn Simpson at BHS csimpson@basd.k12.wi.us and / or Kurt Rummier at KMS krummler@basd.k12.wi.us.

Meanwhile, let us again be clear that the Burlington Area School District opposes any use of the “N” word and all hate speech because there is real harm and trauma that hate brings forth. We remain committed to serving as a learning community that is both anti-racist and healing-centered and reject all forms of racism on and off school grounds.

In partnership for equity.

Stephen Plank, Superintendent