

STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO ANTI-ASIAN AMERICAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER (AAPI) VIOLENCE AND ACTS OF HATE

Just as the ASD was celebrating bringing all students back to in-person learning last month, our students and families watched in horror as we witnessed more acts of violence in Atlanta and Colorado. Once again, unjust acts of violence have shaken us to our core as we mourn the senseless deaths of innocent Americans.

As educators, we must foster learning environments and opportunities that respect and value the contributions of others no matter their ethnic or cultural origin. We must also provide safe and inclusive environments where our students can thrive.

As a District where 17% of students and 10% of staff identify as Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI), we must speak up and assure our Asian and Pacific Islander families that we are here for them. As our work in the areas of equity, diversity, and inclusion continues, we strongly condemn anti-Asian violence and the trauma that it has caused our students and families.

Our District's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion must be shared with all in our community. We must hold ourselves accountable and ask ourselves hard questions around creating more just and safe learning environments for all.

The rising incidence of anti-Asian hate crimes across the country is unacceptable and must end. While we may be thousands of miles from Georgia and Colorado, we are connected in our humanity and our care for each other.

We must continue working to end racism and hate within our schools and community, including acts of violence, racial slurs, silencing, and exclusion. We must ensure our students feel loved, cared for, and respected. We must also ensure that our staff, families, and community know how to communicate their concerns and take action.

Anchorage is a place where all people should feel welcome, safe, and included. There is no place for hate and racism. Collectively, we must condemn all acts of hate and violence. So, what can we do? As a District and learning community, we can raise awareness about systemic inequalities and their impact on our students and families. We can celebrate each other and our differences. When we witness instances of mistreatment, harassment, or discrimination, we can report it. And, we can advocate for all students and the rich diversity and culture they bring to our schools and our community. The Anchorage School Board is dedicated to this work.