



BLUFFTON-HARRISON METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

*"A LEARNING COMMUNITY WHERE A QUALITY EDUCATION EMPOWERS
ALL STUDENTS TO LEARN AND ACHIEVE TO THEIR FULL POTENTIAL."*

805 EAST HARRISON STREET
BLUFFTON, IN 46714

PHONE 260.824.2620
FAX 260.824.6011
WWW.BHMSD.ORG

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Following public commentary, as well as multiple written communications, our district has identified an opportunity within our community to build greater awareness and acceptance of all students. District leadership, members of the Board of School Trustees, and the Bluffton-Harrison Metropolitan School District faculty have engaged in positive discussions regarding both ongoing and future efforts to enhance inclusion of all students. Together, we believe all students must feel safe and accepted in the school community. It is our goal to enhance and improve inclusive practices emphasizing regard for all races, cultures, abilities, and religions, while also having respect and tolerance for views that may differ from our own in the district's workforce and student body.

Regardless of any upcoming policy decision by the School Board, our district will continue to broaden our inclusive practices to create learning opportunities where all students feel safe and accepted. We believe our district will have greater success by leveraging the support and partnership of local service agencies, organizations, and professionals in our community. As such, BHMSD has started the process to strengthen connections with our community partners to best serve our greater school community as we firmly believe inclusion and acceptance does not begin and end at the school but rather extends throughout our community to our homes, places of worship, local businesses, and service agencies.

BHMSD has developed a working group to discuss, consider, and recommend options related to access, equity, diversity, acceptance, and success. The working group is planning to hold its initial meeting the week of September 20th. Members of our community willing to serve on a working group to provide recommendations to the district regarding core elements of inclusion are as follows:

- Julie Meitzler, Assistant Superintendent, Bluffton-Harrison MSD
- Tim Miller, Pastor, Bluffton Church of the Nazarene
- Beverly Balash, Teacher, Bluffton-Harrison MSD
- Dan Pfister, Pastor, Apostolic Christian Church
- Abbie Grandlienard, Therapist, Grace & Truth Counseling Services, LLC
- Jodi Leas, Guidance Director, Bluffton-Harrison MSD
- Carla Castro, Regional Manager, Lifeline Youth & Family Services, Inc.
- Deane Lee Holderman, Director, Department of Child Services
- Steve Surbaugh, Pastor, Life Community Church
- Steve Huggins, President, Wells County Council
- Jinny Broderick, Manager, Park Center - Bluffton
- Stephanie White, Social Worker, Bluffton-Harrison MSD