



June 2, 2020

To the Middletown community:

Like all of you, we have spent the last week mourning the death of another Black American, George Floyd, at the hands of a police officer. Like all of you, we have watched with anguish an eruption of violence and unrest across our country in response to that injustice. And like all of you, we have contemplated what Middletown will do in response to these events.

The answer has begun to take shape. First, Middletown will stay peaceful, with the knowledge that work is being undertaken in pursuit of justice. We were proud to participate this past weekend in a quickly-planned, heavily-attended demonstration on Main Street, from the North End to the Middletown Police Department. It was at some times heated, but at all times peaceful. It made two things clear to us as leaders of the community: that Middletown is making positive change, and that Middletown must still do more.

Second, Middletown will become more transparent. Both of us entered public service in Middletown on a pledge to improve relationships between the city and the community through better communication and outreach, and in this critical moment we intend to keep that pledge. Starting this month, we will offer weekly updates on what the City of Middletown and Middletown Public Schools are doing to promote social, racial, and economic justice in our community, including our work to close the achievement gap and preserve positive police-community relations.

Third, Middletown will work towards justice. We commit to a strong partnership between ourselves and stakeholder groups including the Common Council, Board of Education, Human Relations Commission, and Middletown Racial Justice Coalition to study and implement anti-racism policies in our city. On issues ranging from education to policing to housing to healthcare, the racial disparities that we and our neighbors experience every day not only must be addressed, they *can* be addressed. We are excited and committed to working with the Middletown community to bring this about.

Our community is no stranger to the dynamics that have shaken our nation to its core in these last few days. Our community-- with its compassionate spirit and collaborative approach-- is also uniquely positioned to address them in a manner that moves us closer to justice.

We could not be prouder to serve you and your children, and we recognize this work cannot be done without buy-in from you as community members. We invite you to join us in our effort to turn mourning into action by visiting middletownct.gov and middletownschools.org, connecting with us on social media, or reaching out to us by calling or emailing. We are looking forward to sharing more information in the coming days and weeks.

Thank you for reading. We are devastated, but we are also determined. Together we can make our community stronger, safer, and more just for ourselves and our children. Because we can, it is our duty that we do.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Florsheim', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Benjamin D. Florsheim
Mayor

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. T. Conner', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. Michael T. Conner
Superintendent of Schools