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## Our Welcoming and Safe Schools!

The greater Albany Public Schools are committed to educating every kid, every day in a welcoming, safe and supportive setting. We want to make sure that **all** students are valued as members of the Greater Albany Community. Our job is to ensure that every kid graduates and goes on to a successful post high school outcome. This means we expect students to successfully serve in the military, a vocational certification program, or attend a two or four year college.

I have previously outlined our Five Pillars for being a Great School District and they are: We believe we have a responsibility to produce good citizens who are responsible and respectful members of our community. In partnership with our local businesses and other local governmental agencies (police, fire, the city and county) we make our community a great place to work and live in. We partner with all of these groups in order to maximize our resources and operate as efficiently as possible. Our hope as a school district is that we produce equitable outcomes for every student in our district and finally, we continuously seek to improve our performance as a school district.

In light of recent national events around immigration and gender identity, I wanted to assure parents, students and staff, that nothing has changed for us as a school district in terms of how we treat our students or do our business. Oregon Law (ORS181.850) prohibits local police from enforcing immigration laws. All our local law enforcement agencies are focused on community policing and building bridges in our various communities. The Oregon Department of Education has directed us to serve every student that enters our schools and provide them with a free and appropriate public education. Finally, the United States Supreme Court in Plyler v. Doe (1982) held that undocumented students are entitled to a free public education. Clearly, our job is to serve **all** kids!

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”), prohibits school districts from releasing student education records without prior parental consent except in limited situations (presence of a search warrant or subpoena). We are very sensitive about maintaining our student and their parents privacy. As a school district, we need verification of address to determine what school a student would attend. We need parent contact information to be used in the event of an emergency situation like sickness or injury. We do not need to know social security numbers or information regarding immigration status.

Finally, we want every one of our students to feel valued and safe in our schools. We do whatever we can to assure that students are treated respectfully and are not subject to intimidation, bullying or harassment. We are always looking for ways to assure that **all** students have a successful learning experience that gives them the skills necessary for them to eventually graduate and go on to a successful post high school outcome. Please feel to contact us if you have any questions!

Jim Golden  
Superintendent Greater Albany Public Schools