

At the beginning of every Board meeting, we read our mission statement: Nurturing Each Child, Educating All Students, Building World Citizens. We take our mission seriously, and as a body we have adopted a number of policies to ensure a safe and nurturing educational environment and a culture of respect for our students, educators, and school leaders in every aspect of our District.

On Monday, April 22nd, a number of questions and comments directed at students from the Board did not meet the standards we have set for our District, and were contrary to the spirit of our mission and policies. For that, we sincerely apologize. We recognize that the power dynamic between Board members and student presenters makes it such that our students cannot easily decline to answer questions or walk away from the podium if the conversation should become uncomfortable or hurtful.

To the student presenters and other students involved in organizing the professional development, please accept our apology. After many months of hard work and dedication on your part, it was our responsibility to listen carefully and to learn from your work, not to offer critique. We are proud of the students in the East Lansing Public Schools and deeply value your voice and contributions. Thank you.

To our administrators and teachers who encouraged and engaged in this professional development, please accept our apology. We thank you for supporting this important student-led work.

We empower our teachers and administrators to facilitate intellectual growth and learning among our students in a constructive manner. As Board members, we must respect these important roles, as well as the process that our students and teachers engage with every day. The Board is developing guidelines that we will be discussing shortly to assure that in the future the elected officials in this Board Room maintain a constructive and positive space for all of our presenters.

Erin Graham, Board President
Terah Chambers, Secretary
Kath Edsall, Treasurer
Kate Powers, Board Trustee
Chris Martin, Board Trustee
Hillary Henderson, Board Trustee