

# SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OKALOOSA COUNTY



## **EVERYONE IS IMPORTANT OR NO ONE IS IMPORTANT... has never been more meaningful**

As we reflect on the events of the past several weeks, we've seen sadness, anger and divisiveness overwhelm our nation. Countless words have been spoken at protests, at governmental meetings, in churches, and in many other locations calling for an end to the racism and aggression that exists in our country. As a school district, our voice joins others in condemning racism in all forms.

But, our voice is not enough. Words are not enough.

Okaloosa County Schools understands the profound impact it can have on students of all races and accepts the responsibility to be a leader in a community that must continue to value diversity. Our classrooms are not only places where we teach reading, writing and arithmetic; they are also where children learn to recognize, understand and respect their differences. To that end, we intend to redouble our efforts to provide concrete age-appropriate opportunities for our students to better understand each other, foster empathy and to appreciate how their attitudes and actions impact others.

Some of the actions we plan to take this summer and next fall include:

- creating student-led diversity councils in our schools and encouraging current student leadership groups to address important issues;
- reaching out to other community-based organizations for dialogue and to develop plans to support students; and
- continuing the work in our schools with the best School Resource Officer unit in the State of Florida, who demonstrate to our students each and every day that law enforcement done right is part of the solution in Okaloosa County, not part of the problem.

In Okaloosa Schools, it is our goal to ensure that all students receive the highest quality education in a safe, inclusive environment. We know we have work to do. It will take all of us, students, parents, school and community, working together to ensure Okaloosa County serves as a model for racial equality.

Ours will continue to be a message of hope and resolve that we can and will do better, be better and live better, together.

Marcus D. Chambers  
Superintendent