

Eastport-South Manor Central School District

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Dear Eastport-South Manor Families,

Late last evening, the school district was informed of an inappropriate video circulating social media that featured several Eastport-South Manor High School students in a classroom dancing to a song with racially derogatory lyrics. The district immediately conducted an internal investigation into the matter, and the students responsible for the video have been identified. Per our Code of Conduct, the students involved are now facing the appropriate, strict disciplinary action.

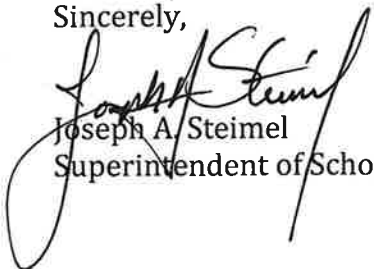
I wish to assure you that our school district does not take these matters lightly, nor was the material posted in any way reflective of our school community's standards or expectations. Over the years, many of our school buildings have been designated by the Anti-Defamation League as "No Place for Hate" schools, an honor merited by our work to cultivate student leadership, unity and encouragement of anti-bias actions. In addition, throughout our K-12 program, students are engaged in training on the appropriate use of the internet/technology as reflected by the "Digital Citizenship" recognition of our schools. Our students are taught to not only be respectful of one another's differences, but to celebrate them.

As technology – in particular, social media – continues to influence our daily activities, events such as the one we were informed about are vital reminders that one's actions have consequences, and that our district will hold the responsible parties accountable for inappropriate actions.

To our parents and guardians, I ask for your partnership in helping to educate our students about the dangers of using these resources inappropriately. I know that many find it enjoyable to emulate and repost a video to such platforms as TikTok, but I encourage all to take pause before doing so in order to assess the appropriateness of the content with which they are associating themselves. Like this recent inappropriate video, these types of hurtful activities have no place in our school or community.

These are serious conversations that we must continue to engage in as we encourage our students to act with forethought and respect.

Sincerely,


Joseph A. Steimel
Superintendent of Schools

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