



# PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



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**Donnie W. Evans, Ed.D.**  
*State District Superintendent*

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Dear Parents/Guardians:

Recently, you may have heard about several serious issues involving Paterson students who are engaging in unbecoming and/or illegal activity. These incidents range from participating in inappropriate sexual behavior and posting such activity on social media sites to calling in bomb threats. Further, we had a grave incident involving two students who threatened the lives of their classmates.

It is discouraging that I have to write you today to share such disturbing stories. During the past four years, the Paterson Public School District has remained steadfast in its commitment and focus on four top priorities: Effective Academic Programs; Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools; Family and Community Engagement; and Effective and Efficient District Operations. Among the goals associated with these priorities is to **“Create Schools with Healthy School Cultures and Climates.”** But we cannot accomplish this alone. We need your help in reminding your children about the seriousness of issuing threats, and the dangers of posting information via social networks (e.g. Facebook, YouTube, etc.).

Our district’s *Student Code of Conduct* is posted on our web site under the “Parents/Students” section (click from the homepage). I am asking you to review the expectations of student behavior with your children and to please note the following:

#### Sexting

The taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing of obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or photographs, whether by electronic data transfer or otherwise (commonly called texting, sexting, emailing, etc.) may constitute a crime under state and/or federal law. Any person taking, disseminating, transferring, or sharing obscene, pornographic, lewd or otherwise illegal images or photographs will be subject to the disciplinary procedures of the school district; and reported to law enforcement and/or other appropriate state or federal agencies, which may result in arrest, criminal prosecution, and LIFETIME inclusion on sexual offender registries.

#### Harassment/Intimidation/Bullying

This district strictly prohibits the harassment, intimidation and/or bullying of any student. Prohibited conduct includes written, verbal and physical acts of harassment, intimidation and/or bullying, including cyber-bullying. Further, any student found to have sexually harassed or assaulted any student or adult will be disciplined which may also include expulsion. All cases involving sexual assault of students and/or adults will be referred to law enforcement and other appropriate agencies.

Your assistance in helping to ensure that our schools continue to be safe for all students and staff is much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Donnie W. Evans, Ed.D.

**“Our Children, Our Future”**