Dear Newport Community,

I am reaching out to students, parents, families and members of the community to introduce myself as the new superintendent of the Newport Independent Schools. I thank the Newport Board of Education for their confidence in me, I express admiration for the job performed by Superintendent Kelly Middleton and I look forward to serving the school district and the community for many years to come.

While we have much to celebrate, including our 2020 graduating class, we are also dealing with unprecedented situations outside of our control that are demanding our patience, fortitude, resilience and understanding.

We are eager to see all of our students for the 2020-21 school year. We continue to face the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 epidemic and are considering several options for what school may look like this fall. There are so many variables to consider, and we continue to get updates from the Northern KY Health Department and Kentucky Department of Education. Our goal is to provide the best instruction possible while keeping all students and staff safe. We will keep you updated as we get more information.

Meanwhile as a society, we are once again witnessing the horror of unarmed African-American males being killed by law enforcement. As I watched the rallies for justice take place across our nation on social media and television, I have experienced so many emotions over the last several weeks. It reminds me more than ever that all of us must work together to overcome discrimination, prejudice and racism in society.

I have been encouraged seeing the different races coming together to rally for Social Justice. That makes me hopeful that maybe we can finally experience true change through a quest for equality and unity in standing up against racism. It is clear more people are speaking out and willing to join in to ensure there is truth, justice and equality for all people. As a school district, we will engage our community and have conversations with our students, our education leaders, our business owners and operators, and our elected officials. As we challenge ourselves to keep this momentum going, I truly feel we will be able to make a difference.
As a former principal of Newport High School, I know this is a tight-knit, proud and caring community. We have great challenges before us. But together, we shall overcome. If you have questions, concerns or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Tony Watts
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Superintendent
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