



September 24, 2021

For Immediate Release

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In a follow-up to the statement you received from the Wausau School District on Wednesday evening, we'd like to share this message with you. It went to the parents of Wausau West High School students in U.S. History 1.

Dear Wausau West High School U.S. History 1 Parents:

We are reaching out to you to extend an apology for the classroom experience in U.S. History 1 that occurred on Wednesday, September 22. The following message was shared with your child in class this morning:

"Students, we would like to recognize a huge mistake we made during our last large group, "Who Discovered America". In our attempt to create a fun learning environment, we failed to recognize the disrespect we showed the culture and heritage of the people we portrayed. The manner in which we presented the lesson perpetuated stereotypes that we actually stand against. Though we strive to honor the sovereignty and unique culture of each Native American tribe, we did not achieve this. We have heard from many students and families who were offended and/or uncomfortable. We sincerely apologize to each of you, and are grateful so many of you had the courage to speak up.

Going forward, we, along with other members of our school and district, including Mr. Steckbauer, are helping us work through our lessons to be certain we move forward in a more sensitive and inclusive manner. You can expect to see positive changes in future lessons. If

you have suggestions or feedback at any point, please let any of us know. Again, please accept our sincere apology.”

In alignment with the Wausau School District’s Shared Key Interests, specifically #2, which specifies “Utilize research-based curricula that reflects 21st Century themes and applications and are responsive to the needs and potential of all students, preparing them for a global society,” we are doing a thorough review of our curriculum and its delivery to ensure it’s sensitive and inclusive. If you have any questions, please reach out to either your student’s teacher or me. You may reach me at jsteckba@wausauschools.org, or 715-261-0855.

Respectfully,
Jeb Steckbauer

--End of Release--

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