



Rochester CUSD #3A

4 Rocket Drive Rochester, Illinois 62563-9282, United States

Dear Parents, Friends, and Guardians:

The Rochester Learning Family is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all students and staff. This core belief will never be compromised.

Following a recent Board meeting, a member of the Rochester community posted a video of public comment on TikTok and included the contact information for our special education director in the social media post. The post has gone viral. Unfortunately, the video contains false and misleading information. Because of student records and confidentiality laws, we are limited in our ability to respond to the specific information posted. However, we want to make clear that the characterization of our students, staff, and school community by online commenters does not reflect the Rochester we know and see every day. We want to assure the community that we investigate every report of bullying and harassment in school when parents and students provide us with the information we need to do so. Behavior that fails to uphold the expectations of this District is addressed in a timely manner as we can.

The negative responses to the post are causing a significant disruption to our operations. In addition to the volume of communication we have received, our special education and high school staff have received harassing and threatening voice and email messages. We appreciate the community's patience as we navigate this unusually high volume of communications and work to respond as promptly as possible.

Our staff are outstanding and dedicated professionals who do not deserve this unfair and unsettling treatment by our community, let alone people from other states and countries. Most importantly, our students do not deserve to be painted in the light that many of these individuals have painted them in.

As many of you know, Rochester CUSD 3a has been home to service animals for more than a decade. The ongoing interactions students have with these service animals provide a valuable lesson in acceptance and accommodating differences. This opportunity is one of a thousand things that make Rochester a great place to learn and grow.



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Defamation and slander not only hurt individuals but also undermine the trust and respect that should exist between families and schools. We urge all parents and community members to reach out directly to the school to address any concerns with classroom teachers or administration rather than making salacious allegations on social media.

Thank you for your understanding and support.

Sincerely,

Rolf Sivertsen, Interim Superintendent

Amy Reynolds, Rochester CUSD #3A Board President