Dear Orchard Park families,

I wanted to share the message I sent to our faculty and staff this morning regarding the hateful event that took place in our home city this past Saturday. Hate has no place in our community. It is moments such as these when we must come together in an effort to understand and heal. Our work and focus within the Orchard Park Central School District will continue to be centered on ensuring all members of our school community have a voice, feel heard, welcomed, and supported. Though we have much work to do in our school community, we are appreciative of the strong foundation of partnership that we have with our families and community in the Orchard Park Central School District. If your child needs to speak with someone at school regarding Saturday’s tragic event, please reach out to your principal, or your child’s counselor/social worker.

Sincerely,

David Lilleck
Superintendent of Schools

See below for the message that was sent to faculty and staff regarding Saturday’s events.

OPCSD-

This past Saturday a senseless act of violence occurred in Buffalo. This act of evil and hate took place in our home city. It is difficult to comprehend the full impact of the white supremacist shooting in Buffalo, but we know it will be far-reaching. Orchard Park CSD sends its thoughts and prayers to the victims and the families of those that lost their lives.

We know that our schools, our classrooms, play a significant role in shaping our culture and social norms. While there is much work ahead for us as a district, we will immediately focus on the trauma in our Western New York community in the coming days. Our regional group of superintendents has reached out to our colleagues in Buffalo to offer any support that may be needed. I will update our school community as necessary regarding those developments.

You may also come across challenging conversations with students, and adults, over the next few days. The first thing we can do is to acknowledge and listen to concerns and feelings. From there, understanding and healing can begin. I have included a resource that may be helpful for you from the organization Learning for Justice (formerly known as Teaching Tolerance).

https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/showing-up-strong-for-yourself-and-your-students-in-the-aftermath-of-violence
As always, I appreciate the work that each of you does for our kids and families each day. We should not take for granted how special a place Orchard Park is as we mourn with our neighbors in Buffalo.

DL