

Dear Superintendent Elkington, School Board Members, and Members of the RSU 9 Community,

I am writing to address the recent situation involving a Facebook post, showing me wearing an "ICE" costume on Halloween. I want to express my sincere regret that this image has caused concern or discomfort within our community. It was never my intent to create harm, offend, or target any group or individual. The costume was chosen in a lighthearted spirit, without consideration for the broader implications it might have, and I recognize now how it could have been perceived differently by others.

As a longtime educator, coach, and community supporter in RSU 9, I have always strived to model integrity, inclusion, and respect. My work with students, families, and colleagues has always been grounded in the belief that every child deserves a safe, supportive, and equitable learning environment. I care deeply about this community and the relationships that make it strong.

I want to be clear that I fully support all students and families universally, regardless of background, race, nationality, or personal circumstance. Every student in our district deserves to feel safe, respected, and valued, and I remain deeply committed to that mission as an educator and member of this community.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to me and please know that I am committed to moving forward with professionalism, humility, and care, and continuing to serve our community in a positive and respectful manner.

Sincerely

James Black

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Black', with a stylized, cursive script.

Mt. Blue Middle School Principal