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*To inspire each student to  
extraordinary achievement  
every day*

Feb. 4, 2022

To Staff and the Twin Rivers School Community,

February is a month full of celebrations: Black History Month, National School Counseling Week, and a favorite among children of all ages, Valentine's Day.

Black History Month, also known as African American History Month, provides an incredible opportunity for all of us—students, families, staff and the community—to acknowledge and celebrate the comprehensive history of African Americans and to also reflect on the vital role education plays in highlighting diverse cultures. Our students and staff will engage in meaningful conversations and celebrations about our collective history because Black history is American history. They will share knowledge and experiences. And they will listen, learn and grow in nurturing classroom environments as they examine the complexity and richness of the African American experience.

**Did You Know?**

- Since 1976, every U.S. president has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month. Other countries around the world, including Canada and the United Kingdom, also celebrate Black History Month.
- Recently, the U.S. Mint announced that a new quarter will feature the late poet and civil rights activist Maya Angelou, the first African American woman to appear on the coin. The celebratory coin features a young Angelou with her arms and head held high and light emanating from her image, which is described to be a reference to her famous memoir *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, written in 1969.

More information on Black History Month and topics for discussion for students and families can be found at: <https://blackhistorymonth.gov/>. We hope you will take some time to share these facts and stories with students and families and use them to underscore the message that integrity, tenacity and compassion are a most powerful combination.

### **National School Counseling Week, Feb. 7-11**

TR counselors serve students across all grade levels, bringing their talent and passion to the job. They work closely with our teaching professionals, administrators, support staff and others to identify and meet the needs of our students. Often behind the scenes and without fanfare, our TR counselors make sure that students are on track to graduate and are preparing for success in college and career. They play a powerful role in building trusting relationships with our students so they can be there if a student needs a shoulder and some solid advice. Please join me in thanking all of our wonderful counselors for their great work.

As our incoming ninth graders and current high school students prepare to meet with counselors in the coming weeks to set their courses for the next school year, please consider these wonderful programmatic offerings:

- **Career Technical Education (CTE)** – Twin Rivers has 29 CTE pathways for grades 7-12. Students have access to the best Career Technical Education (CTE) programs that focus on special areas of study such as: business finance, marketing & merchandising, engineering, culinary, the performing arts or partnership academies (these schools-within-a-school incorporate business partnerships, mentoring and internships with academic and career-oriented education).
- **Dual Enrollment** – The program allows high school students to take college courses and receive college and high school credit for these courses. This option is available to our 9-12th grade students. Students take online classes at their high school through American River College. In some cases, we have students graduating from our District with both a high school diploma and their first year of college completed! The program is available at all TR comprehensive high schools. The District pays all fees. Students should contact their high school counselor for more information or visit the website <https://getahead.twinriversusd.org/>.

As for Valentine's Day, I will share that my favorite Valentine's Day memory is when my entire elementary school turned the day into a month-long celebration called Kindness Month. I learned at an early age that being kind to others is empowering and fulfilling. Of course, like most kids, I enjoyed the candy too!

With warm regards,



Steve Martinez, Ed.D.  
Superintendent, Twin Rivers Unified