

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
November 30, 2021

### **WESTFIELD WASHINGTON SCHOOLS RESPONDS TO VIRAL BLACK FACE PHOTOS**

On Saturday evening, two great football teams played an amazing game to crown the Indiana Class 6A champion. Our Rocks represented our community at the highest level on the biggest stage and showed what happens when you out-work and out-love. We didn't get the outcome we wanted, but we are proud of our players and coaches, not only for that game, but for all of the hard work that helped get them to the state championship game.

The Westfield Washington Schools administration wants its community to know that it stands with Popeye Williams, his family, our families of color, and anyone else impacted by the black face photos.

"It is unfortunate that the recent media coverage has nothing to do with the great football that was played on the field," said Dr. Paul A. Kaiser, superintendent of Westfield Washington Schools. "Instead, the lasting image is of a player in black face, mocking a Westfield community member. We've been in constant contact with Popeye, his family and other people who may have been impacted to support in any way they need. We want all Westfield families who may have been impacted by that act of racial bias to know that we stand with you and support you as well."

Alicia Denniston, principal of Westfield High School, also extended her support and commitment to students' inclusion.

"We stand in support of Popeye and the Williams family as they process and face this act of racial discrimination," Denniston said. "While we know that people make mistakes, we hope we can all use this opportunity to learn from our actions. WHS remains committed to standing up against racial discrimination, supporting our students of color, and promoting diversity and inclusion efforts in our school and community."

Everyone plays a part in bringing an end to racism and we can only accomplish that by working together. Westfield Washington Schools remains committed to making sure all of our students and families feel safe, seen and valued. We cannot let actions like this go unnoticed and we are confident that Center Grove High School will take appropriate action with regards to their investigation.