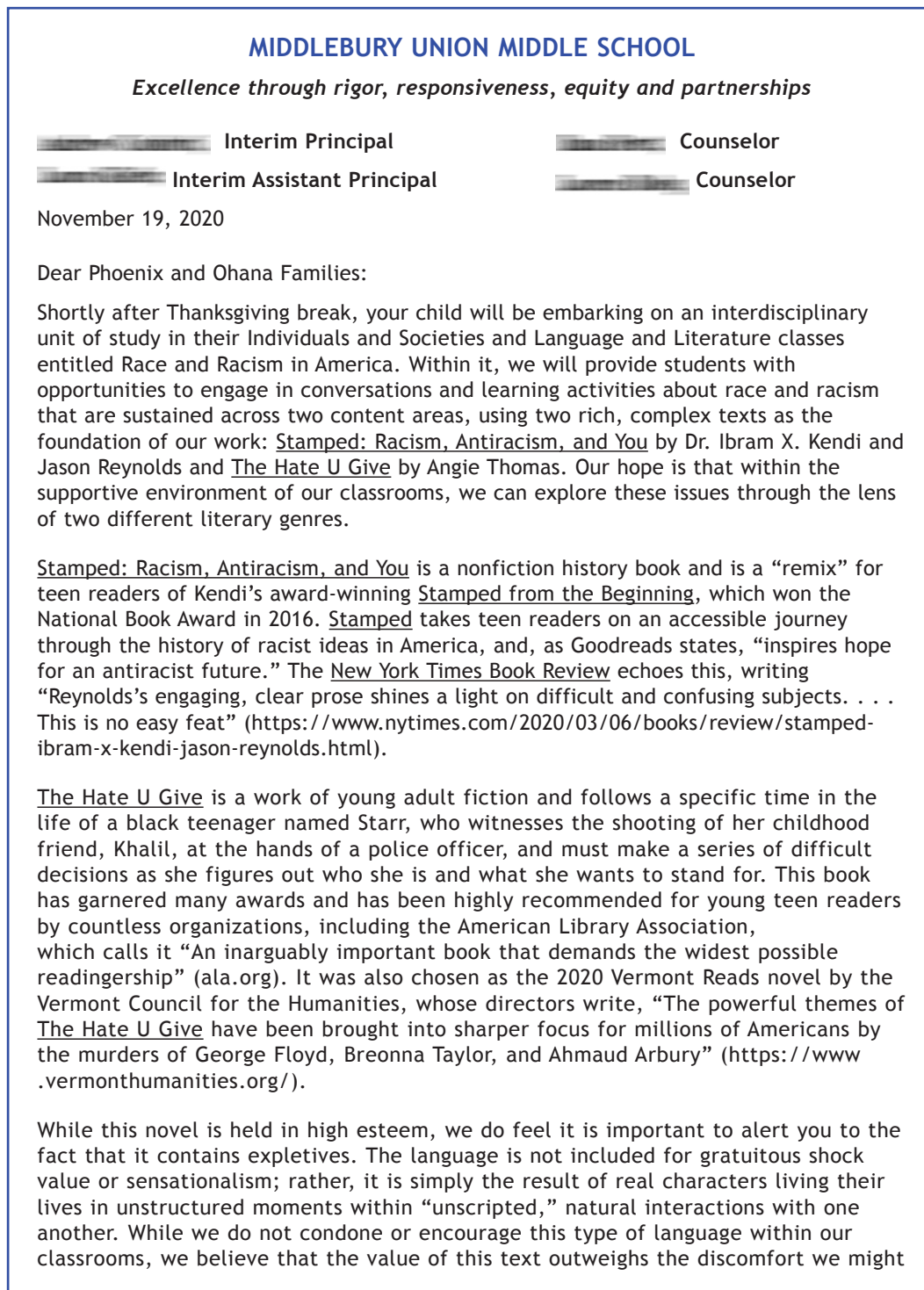


FIGURE 5.2 Letter to Families



initially feel at seeing some of these expletives in print. We will certainly discuss this with students before beginning the book and make certain that our expectations for interactions with one another around this issue—and other sensitive issues that The Hate U Give and Stamped highlight and illustrate—are guided by classroom norms and agreements that we have decided upon ahead of time with the students. Already, we have invited all students on both teams to anonymously share their ideas for creating norms around having difficult conversations in a Google Survey, and the results will be collated, shared with students, and used to create our list of agreements so everyone can feel safe in our classrooms, is able to learn and grow, ask hard questions, and gain a greater understanding of these complicated, timely, and important issues.

Finally, a couple of logistical notes. First, we will distribute these books to students very soon. We would like to recognize and thank the Vermont Council for the Humanities and Vermont-NEA for awarding us grants towards the purchase of some of the title copies, as well as The Vermont Book Shop for its generous discount so that we may offer these titles to all our Grade 8 students. Each student will get a borrowed copy of both texts (assigned a specific MUMS number), and we would like them to leave these books at home; we will have a class set that remains in our classroom. This way, students will not accidentally leave them at school, rendering them unable to read at home on their “remote” days. They will be expected to read each week, and both classes will supply students with a weekly reading calendar to keep them on track. Additional scaffolding will be provided to support students (e.g., key excerpts for analysis, chapter summaries, plotline, etc.) that reinforces important ideas from the reading. Both classes will keep reading journals, which will invite students to interact with Stamped and The Hate U Give in a variety of ways (e.g., art, quote analysis, summary, photography, creative writing, argument writing) and receive feedback from us throughout the unit.

It will be essential for students to keep up with their reading; any support you will be able to offer at home would be much appreciated. And on that note, we hope that this unit will inspire conversations at home. Ask your child what they are reading and learning and studying, and together, we can support students as they become more informed citizens of our world! Of course, if you have any questions, thoughts, or concerns, please feel free to contact us.

With great appreciation,

Darcy Annino, Phoenix Team Individuals and Societies

Sara Nadeau, Ohana Team Individuals and Societies

Martha Santa Maria, Ohana Team Language and Literature

Eileen Sears, Phoenix Team Language and Literature

---