

Dear School Board members,

Tonight, I am incredibly honored to recognize a remarkable student-parent duo from our district, Ellen-E Hirt and her mother, Ashley Hirt.

Ellen-E was recently named a 2025-2026 Trailblazer Fellow by the Ann Bancroft Foundation. This prestigious fellowship provided her with the opportunity to launch a powerful and deeply personal project: a podcast titled "Mom and Me: Navigating Mental Health Together."

What makes this project truly special is the partnership between mother and daughter.

Ashley has stood by Ileini's side as a co-host, and together, they have shown immense bravery by opening up to their audience about their own personal experiences with mental health illness.

By sharing their journey so publicly, they are breaking down barriers, reducing stigma, and providing a sense of community for others who may be facing similar challenges.

Please join me in congratulating Ellen-E Hirt on her fellowship and thanking both Ileini and Ashley for their vulnerability and dedication to mental health awareness!

Sincerely,

Anthony Bonds

Assistant Superintendent