



May 28, 2020

Dear Affinity Family -

When I joined the mentoring program nine years ago, I had no idea what an incredible journey I was in for!

Since then, the mentoring program has grown from 122 matches in one school to 280 matches in four schools. In 2016, we launched Affinity Mentoring as an independent 501c3 organization to be able to chase the vision of a community where every student has the support of a mentor. Together, we are learning and growing together as we strive to promote inclusion, celebrate diversity and uphold equity.

The Affinity family has also grown from just a couple of staff members and 122 volunteers to now six staff, a strong board, 280+ volunteers and over 30 community partners. I'm grateful to have had the opportunity to know you all personally!

You have taught me a lot about the power of relationship, the beauty and strength of the human spirit and the force multiplier of collaboration. It has been an honor and privilege to lead this effort and journey with each of you.

Because relationships and closure are so important, I am disappointed that we can't gather to celebrate the end of the school year and the change in leadership together. But, I leave you with a heartfelt THANK YOU and a promise to stay in touch. You are in good hands and so I am stepping away with peace and confidence in the very capable team and board to continue this important work. And I'm looking forward to spending this next season with my family - planting a garden, walking the dog and enjoying the sun. :)

In gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laura Ward". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Laura Ward