



June 3, 2020

Dear Faculty and Staff,

The murder of George Floyd has brought to the forefront the deep roots of racial injustice that exist in our country. This tragic event is sadly not isolated and comes at a time when people of color are also disproportionately impacted by Covid 19. There are many more black and brown Americans, named and unnamed, who have been victims of racism and racially motivated violence as well as institutional racism.

It is critically important that we provide our students and staff with opportunities to process these recent events and to understand them within a historical context. SPS educators have both permission and the mandate to talk with students, each other, and members of our community about race and racism. There is no other choice but to work through the discomfort that we all share, including me, as we process this and other difficult events that may surface nationally and in our own community.

In an effort to provide SPS educators with resources to support talking about George Floyd and racial inequity, a group of SPS educators convened this past Monday to collect and curate a collection of videos and readings to use in facilitating these important conversations. Each principal will receive, and we will post in the summer PD brochure, a full list of the resources for deeper work personally or with colleagues. Below are four categories that the team felt were appropriate for framing discussions about these events.

Common Truth—What happened?

- [Wee the People](#), a Boston based social justice project
- [“What is Your Reaction to the Days of Protest That Have Followed the Death of George Floyd?”](#) from the New York Times Learning Network

Historical Context—What’s the broader context?

- [Talking About Race](#) from the National Museum of African American History & Culture
- [Teaching about Race, Racism and Police Violence](#) from Teaching Tolerance

The Why—Why do we need to respond?

- [Speak Up!](#) From Teaching Tolerance

Foster Conversation—How do we talk about the event(s)?

- [Speak Up!](#) From Teaching Tolerance
- [Talking About Race](#) from the National Museum of African American History & Culture
- [Wee the People](#), a Boston based social justice project

It is equally important that we provide spaces for our teachers of color to process, share, and reflect. My heart is with you as I know these injustices weigh heavily on you and your families. Our colleague, Omar Longus, who is an ESL/Bio teacher at Salem High School, is inviting

colleagues of color to participate in an [SPS Educators of Color Affinity Group](#) that is convening for the first time on June 5th from 3:00-4:00. Thank you, Omar, for launching this group.

We cannot let our outrage for injustice be fleeting. Let's have the courage to face our own biases and continually examine the district's core values, beliefs and practices to ensure that Salem Public Schools are inclusive and welcoming places for all of our students, staff and families.

In partnership,



M. Kate Carbone