

June 11, 2020

Dear Fullerton School District Community,

The Fullerton School District Board Members are among the millions of Americans who find the unjust murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and others abhorrent. These deaths are a stark reminder that racism continues to propagate through our institutions and in our communities. While racial violence led to the senseless and tragic deaths of these people, the indifference of institutions and the silence of good people to speak out against the destructive impact of racism continues to perpetuate the pattern of injustice that robs people of color from basic human rights.

Fullerton School District is fortunate to have a long-standing, strong relationship with our Fullerton Police Department (FPD). Based on our experience, we have been fortunate that in our most difficult times FPD has protected our district during earthquakes and fires. They have helped us during COVID-19 food box distributions and mentored our students in our various programs. We will do everything to make sure the district maintains a strong relationship with FPD while also promoting community officers who continue this tradition of mentoring. We commend them, and all our first responders in Fullerton and throughout the nation, who each day protect our children, families and community.

Unfortunately, George Floyd's 6-year-old daughter, Gianna, did not receive the same protection. The justice system failed to protect George Floyd, his daughter Gianna, his family and his community. We are reminded that different people, different communities and even different individuals within communities receive contrasting justice or injustice because of racism and bigotry. Our voices need to be heard so that the silence of institutions is not mistaken for tacit approval.

While the justice systems have perpetuated inequities for many people of color, our Nation's educational system has had its own history of stark inequality that has perpetuated racism, poverty and injustice. In the Fullerton School District, we are committed to continuing the examination of our own practices. We want to affirm that the children, staff and parents from our Black community and other communities of color are safe at school and free from racism and discrimination. We will raise our voices and act when we see racial injustice. We will take action to expand our Rising Stars program in which we provide mentorship and support for our at-risk-students and at-risk students of color. We will continue to work together with our Partnership between Administration and Labor (PAL)'s, Parent Teacher Association (PTA),

District English Language Advisory Committee (DELAC), and our other parent and community advisory/input groups to listen, plan, and act, taking action steps based on the voices within our Fullerton School community. Our community is better when we are united and we stand together with a common vision. As we move forward towards greater equality, we as an FSD community will do this together by supporting and caring for each other and ensuring the needs of all our children are met. It is crucial that we achieve racial equality, and how we achieve this goal is also important. Our children learn from us; they are watching how we collaborate and can see whether or not we are working together with care, kindness, and respect. We are committed to working with our community and each other with respect and kindness in order to teach our children that a context of care and love will guide us "until the bright day of justice emerges" (Dr. Martin Luther King).

We invite you, our community, to work with us towards Dr. Martin Luther King's dream: "Children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character."

The Fullerton School District Board of Trustees declares that the lives of our black students matter, the lives of our black families matter, the lives of our black teachers and staff members matter, and that all black lives matter.

Sincerely,

  
Jeanette Vazquez, President

  
Hilda Sugarman, Vice President

  
Beverly Bergman, Clerk

  
Aaruni Thakur, Trustee

  
Janny Meyer, Trustee