

A Call to Recognizing Our Humanity - Black Lives Matter

Family,

My heart is shattered by the continued injustice and brutality experienced by black communities everywhere. I share the same agony, indignation, and frustration that many of you feel.

This moment is painful. Sadly, over the past few weeks black communities have ubiquitously felt the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic compounded by the deep affliction of systemic racism that we experience daily. The impact of racial violence experienced by black communities throughout our country's history, deeply illustrated once again by the killing of George Floyd, further reveals how much ground we need to cover before the humanity of all people is truly realized.

Our black students continue to bear the burden of institutional racism and racial violence. For that, it is incredibly difficult to proceed in our work without the acknowledgment of the obstruction that systemic racism invites as we push to create equitable outcomes for all students. If our students are ever going to lead and shape better futures for themselves, we have to collectively position our work to confront systems of oppression. If we don't, there is a tremendous cost--our students will never be able to evade the plight of being black in America, which will continue to lead to gravely inequitable life outcomes.

My hope and optimism run deep. I know that, alongside you, we can fundamentally change the systems that impact our students. Together, we can reinvent systems and structures so that all of our students may one day become "the architects of their own lives." This will require deep learning from each of us, a willingness to dismantle institutional oppression, and imagine a world different than the one before us.

As we continue our commitment to school redesign, let's imagine more radically, a school, and a world free of inequity and suffering. Let's continue to design a school model that elevates racial justice and emanates our design anchors:

Love, First
Rooted Right Here
There is No Normal
Everyone Owns Everything

Yours for the cause of Peace and Hope,

Donnell
Donnell Cannon
Principal
North Edgecombe High School