



My heart aches as I try to write a message of support and care to our community as we experience a culmination of centuries of injustice and the darkest hour in modern times. While I know that the pain cannot be lessened by words, we want you to know that we, in the IUE, stand in solidarity with each of you, with communities of color and all who have been (and continue to be) marginalized and oppressed. In this hour in particular, we stand with our Black community on whom the trauma of the recent events has largely fallen. We affirm our commitment to preparing and supporting teachers for America's richly diverse communities and we recognize the importance of our role as educators in tearing down systemic barriers that have long resulted in educational inequities.

The time is now: Education and the preparation of teachers is critical in uplifting our society and promoting educational equity and social justice. Schools are places of significant influence. Racism and oppression are both learned and practiced throughout societal institutions, including schools, and, in particular, through the socialization of children and youth. The role of a teacher is critical in breaking this cycle. Teachers help children and youth interpret, make sense of, and view the world around them. Therefore, it is critical that teachers understand the power they yield; teachers must understand their influence and the importance of implementing a culturally responsive and anti-racist curriculum. It is also our duty as educators to identify and eradicate racist policies and practices within educational systems and communities.

During this time of unspeakable pain and tragedy, the IUE is not only re-committing to our mission of preparing and supporting exemplary teachers for historically underserved communities, but we are also taking time to reflect on our own roles, privilege and responsibilities. We are committed to social justice, anti-racism and the strength of those who make up the communities we have the honor to serve.

In the coming weeks, we will reach out to our students and alumni to process current events and the justifiable emotions we are all experiencing. We will look for opportunities to discuss how we can work together toward change. We always welcome input and discussion from the larger community.

Now is the time for all voices to be heard. We stand with you, together, now and always.

In Unity,

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