



Black Lives Matter: DEA Statement on Education justice

The Dexter Education Association is committed to empowering and uplifting all students. The violence inflicted on Black Americans at the hands of police and the racist policies allowing such violence to continue without justice have ignited a long overdue sense of urgency among educators. Educators must take a stand against racism in all of its forms. We are inspired by students, both locally and across the country, who are demanding justice. We are failing our students if we do not take a critical look at the systemic racism in schools and commit ourselves to doing the work of anti-racism.

DEA leaders acknowledge that American schools themselves have upheld white supremacy and that teachers have been complicit in this. We acknowledge that we have an urgent and important role to play in making Dexter Schools a safer and more socially just place for everyone. We stand united with our Black students and their families. When we say Black Lives Matter, we commit to being leaders of change in our school. We commit to doing our own heart work as we learn to become more effective anti-racist educators. We commit to uplifting and amplifying voices that are not always heard. We commit to celebrating diversity through the images on our walls, the texts and media that we use, and the curriculums we develop and deliver. We commit to intentionally teaching Black history beyond slavery and the civil rights movement. We commit to intentionally pointing out racism and stereotypes when they appear in texts, media or discussions. We acknowledge that the work requires significant and sustained effort. We commit to prioritizing the safety of our Black students and students of color even if this pushes our white students and colleagues out of their comfort zone.

Additionally, we make the following requests of our district administrators to ensure that staff is supported in their efforts:

- The hiring of a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion coordinator to serve the district
- The hiring of a Black, indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) facilitator to hold regular meetings for BIPOC families
- Required intersectional social justice training for ALL staff members, including teachers, administration, liaison officer, support staff and school board
- Required Restorative Practice training for all staff
- The use of the Education Justice Assessment and Transformation Tool (EJATT) to inform decisions regarding curriculum and text adoption
- A Social Justice Committee or Equity Team in each building, using the EJATT as a guide
- An established process for recruiting and hiring a more diverse teaching staff
- At least one member of a building's Social Justice Committee/Equity Team on all interview hiring committees
- A policy stating that confederate flags and other hate images are not allowed on school property
- An evaluation of the purpose and necessity of a police liaison officer in the district and an examination of other effective alternatives.

The author bell hooks reminds us, "If we want a beloved community, we must stand for justice." The DEA commits to making the community we love a more just place for all of our students.