

**From:** Communications Department <comm@psed.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 29, 2020 3:55 PM  
**Subject:** We Stand With You

Dear PSESD and WSRMP Staff,

It is with heavy hearts that we reach out to you to acknowledge the pain, anger and trauma resulting from George Floyd's [murder](#) by a Minneapolis police officer on Monday. Our Black friends, colleagues, loved ones and leaders are living through enduring, perpetual and overt racism that has been sustained for more than 400 years in the United States. We feel and stand with you in this struggle.

It is not only the lives of George Floyd and [Breonna Taylor](#) that we are mourning right now. We also reel from the threats, weaponized bias, and deaths of many Black people over many centuries, that pile on weight and hurt for Black people and other people of color. George Floyd's murder follows [Ahmaud Arbery](#) being shot and killed by his white neighbors, and [Christian Cooper](#) being terrorized by a white woman, invoking the [long and ugly history](#) of white women using their power to instigate police violence against Black men.

We reach out to you because we strive to be in relationship with one another, across PSESD, in our personal and professional journeys of antiracism. We also know that government institutions, grounded in the values of white supremacy, have failed Black people and other people of color since inception. PSESD has committed to interrupt this long and persistent history by becoming an Antiracist, Multicultural Organization and leading with racial equity. With daily reminders of how much further we have to go, we feel many emotions, from discouragement to outrage. Still, we stand together to pursue our End together.

White colleagues, this is a pivotal time for us to interrogate our own anti-Blackness that society has conditioned within us, and to be here for our Black colleagues. Reach out, ask how your friends and coworkers are doing in an authentic way, and give grace, knowing this is a deeply personal and painful time. Take Dr. DiAngelo's [White Fragility](#) off your shelf, if you were with PSESD when we read the book in 2018 (or check the e-book out of the library). Watch [Vernā Myers' talk](#) on how white biases can be dangerous and deadly. Talk to your white friends, family and coworkers about what you are learning and feeling, and explore how you can use your power to interrupt and speak out against racism.

Black colleagues and colleagues of color, our hearts are with you. White supremacy has taught Black, Indigenous and people of color to continue to work through the pain. More now than ever our work and life balance is intertwined. Please take time to mourn and don't feel the need to explain or apologize. The importance of community is prevalent more than ever, we are with you.

Please remember our agency supports during this time, should you need support. The agency's free [Employee Assistance Program](#) (password = PSESD) is available always, as are [Diversity Coaches](#). The Transformation Team is working on developing Affinity Groups and will announce the plans next week. Please come to

the [Interracial Dialogue](#) on Monday. Although we aren't together in person, these resources are still here for you.

We wish you peace during this tragic time of hardship. As an ELT, we took solace in this heartfelt [song](#) and would like to share it with you. We stand in solidarity with you, in pursuit of our End, *Success for Each Child and Eliminate the Opportunity Gap by Leading with Racial Equity*.

With Heart,

PSESD Executive Leadership Team

John P. Welch  
Denise Altheimer  
Brad Brown  
Clairmonte Cappelle  
Jessica de Barros  
Kay Lancaster  
Amber McCulloch  
Felisciana Peralta  
Julie Rolling  
Sarita Siqueiros Thornburg  
Joli Valentino

**Communications, Government & Public Relations Department**

Puget Sound Educational Service District | 800 Oakesdale Ave. SW | Renton, WA 98057

T: 425-917-7600 | 800-664-4549 | TTY: 711

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[www.psesd.org](http://www.psesd.org)



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