



# BLACK LIVES MATTER AT SCHOOL

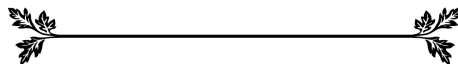
A Day of Understanding and Affirmation



## RESOURCE TOOLKIT FOR SCHOOL STAFF

Our District will observe Friday, February 17, as Black Lives Matter at School: A Day of Understanding & Affirmation. The Rochester Board of Education, Rochester Teachers Association, and Association of Supervisors and Administrators of Rochester recently passed resolutions to proclaim this day. The resolutions state that schools “should be places for the practice of equity, for the building of understanding, and for the active engagement of all in creating pathways to freedom and justice for all people.” It is our hope that teachers, students and schools will create opportunities to “explore and grapple with the past, present, and future status of Black lives in our society and to affirm that status as equal to, and not secondary to, the lives of others.”

As educators, we need to have courageous, honest dialogues about race, and about what is happening in our society and in our students’ lives. Building strong relationships with students and colleagues is a critical component of our work to know “Every Student By Face and Name. Every School, Every Classroom. To and Through Graduation.” This document is intended to provide you with resources to use in preparing to participate in this day of affirmation. **Thank you for partnering with us in this work to improve the Rochester community.**



### EDUCATING YOURSELF

Before we talk with our students about an issue, it is important that we ourselves feel centered and grounded in the issue and are prepared to facilitate student conversations. You may use the resources below to support yourself in becoming more informed, more comfortable, and more prepared to talk with your students:

#### Resources for Preparing a Positive Classroom Environment:

- [Difficult Conversations - A Self Assessment](#): a tool to reflect on your own vulnerabilities, strengths, and needs.
- [Responding to Strong Emotions](#): another tool to think about how you can create emotional safety in your classroom.
- [Teaching About Controversial of Difficult Issues](#): guidelines from the Morningside Center for Teaching Social Responsibility.
- [Teaching Young Children about Race](#): a

#### Resources for Learning About Black Lives Matter:

- [Black Lives Matter](#) official website
- [How a Hashtag Defined a Movement](#): video featuring the founders of #BlackLivesMatter
- [Black Lives Matter on The New Civil Rights Movement](#): video brief from AJ+
- [Need to Know - Teaching Black Lives Matter in School](#): WXXI Rochester video piece
- [TED - An Interview with the Founders of](#)

guide for parents and teachers.

- [Begin Within](#): a guide to help build confidence and prepare for conversations about race and racism.

[Black Lives Matter](#)



## CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

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Educators may choose to take part in this day of understanding and affirmation in many ways. Teachers may design lessons, facilitate conversations, invite local experts or guest speakers, or work in other ways. The following are some activities and ideas that you may use with your students on February 17:

### Lesson Plans & Activities

Lessons and activities for teachers to adapt and implement in their classrooms.

#### Elementary-Level

- [Looking at Race and Racial Identity Through Critical Literacy in Children's Books](#): lesson to talk about racial identity and the harmful potential of racial stereotypes.
- [Different Colors of Beauty](#): Lessons to help students openly develop and discuss their racial or ethnic identities.
- [Understanding Prejudice Through Paper Plate Portraits](#)
- [Black Youth Matter](#) coloring pages
- [Anti-Racism Activity - The Sneetches](#)

#### Secondary-Level

- Morningside Center Black Lives Matter Lesson Series:
  - Lesson 1: [An Introduction](#)
  - Lesson 2: ["All Lives Matter" versus "Black Lives Matter"](#)
  - Lesson 3: [What is Black Lives Matter Working Towards?](#)
- [Black Lives Matter - From Hashtag to Movement](#)
- [Racial Disparity in the Criminal Justice System](#):
- [Using Editorial Cartoons to Teach Racial Profiling](#)
- [What is the School to Prison Pipeline?](#)
- [What Happened in Ferguson and Why?](#)
- [Black Lives Matter - Continuing the Civil Rights Movement](#): from the Choices Program

### Circle Scripts

For those who do not implement circles within their classroom communities, these scripts can simply be used as discussion prompts. They span grade levels, and can be adapted for your class.

#### Circles designed for this day

- Sharing our experiences of race - [Circles 1-3](#)
- Learn about Black Lives Matter Movement and why All Lives Matter isn't the best response: [Circle 4](#)
- Respond to Jesse Williams's BET speech: [Circle 5](#)

#### Circles & Activities on Related Topics

- [Circle Forward book](#) provides circles on identify, privilege and oppression.
- [Circle Guidelines](#)
- Run a circle where you read the District's letter to staff/families about the day, and ask students how they'd like to mark it.



## CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

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As a district, we've decided to make February 17th A Day of Understanding to Affirm that Black Lives Matter at School. The work doesn't stop here; talking about race and equity to promote social justice is something that can happen throughout the school year and be weaved into regular class activities. The following are some resources you can use to continue the conversation beyond our day of affirmation:

### Curriculum & Instruction Resources

- [Social Justice Standards - The Teaching Tolerance Anti-bias Framework](#): The Social Justice Standards feature age-appropriate learning outcomes divided into the domains of Identity, Diversity, Justice, and Action. These standards can be used to guide curriculum development and make schools more just, equitable, and safe.
- [Black Lives Matter - San Francisco Unified School District Teaching Page](#): a compilation of resources and lessons from San Francisco

### Articles & Websites

- [Preparing to Discuss Michael Brown in School](#): Discussion guide and references created by the Washington DC public Schools
- [Let's Talk](#): Guide to discussing race published by Teaching Tolerance
- [White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women's Studies](#):
- [Don't Say Nothing](#): from the Fall 2016 issue of Teaching Tolerance magazine
- [Teaching and Mentoring for Racial Justice](#): Resources for talking about race in and around our school communities.
- [Unpacking the Knapsack of White Privilege](#): classic article by Peggy McIntosh
- [Black Lives Matter Syllabus](#)
- Oakland Public Library #BlackLivesMatter Resource listings on [Institutional Racism](#), [Talking to Kids About Racism and Justice](#), [Protest Traditions, Social Movements, and Community Visions for Racial Justice](#), and [Police Conduct, Race, and the Justice System](#).
- [A System of Racial and Social Control](#): Frontline interview with Michelle Alexander
- [A Talk to Teachers](#) by James Baldwin - 10/16/63

### Books

- [The New Jim Crow](#) by Michelle Alexander
- [For White Folks Who Teach in the Hood... and the Rest of Y'all Too: Reality Pedagogy and Urban Education](#) by Christopher Emdin
- [Privilege, Power, and Difference](#) by A.G. Johnson
- [Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome](#) by Joy Degruy
- [All American Boys](#) by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Keily
- [Daddy, There's a Noise Outside](#) by Kenneth Braswell
- [A is for Activist](#) by Innosanto Nagara
- [White Rage](#) by Carol Anderson

## Video & Film

- [13th](#): Documentary by Ava DuVernay which explores how the Thirteenth Amendment led to an epidemic of mass incarceration in the United States. (available on Netflix)
- [The Consciousness Gap in Education: The Equity Imperative](#): A short TedTalk for educators about why we must see, reflect and talk about race. A great starting point for staff.
- [5 Ways of Understanding Black Lives Matter](#) : Watch NYU Professor Frank Leon Roberts break the BLM Movement down, keeping it real. His talk starts about a minute into the video.



## DISTRICT COMMUNICATIONS

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Use the links below to access district communications and information for students about this day of affirmation:

- [“What Does BLM Mean to You?” Art Contest](#)
- [Template for Letter Home to Families](#)
- [Superintendent’s Communication to Staff](#)
- Black Lives Matter at School 8.5 X 14 [poster template](#). (Original is black with white lettering, but if that’s too much for your copier, here’s a [black-on-white version](#).) Many schools are posting outside of each classroom, to affirm students in a visible way.
- Have a button maker? Here’s a [template to make buttons](#).