



**The Public Schools of Brookline**  
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**Ben Lummis**  
Interim Superintendent

June 2, 2020

Dear PSB Parents, Guardians and Staff,

The killing of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police officers has thrust our nation into further turmoil. Mr. Floyd's death has forced Americans to recognize that we can no longer ignore the second class citizen status under which our African-American neighbors are forced to conduct their lives. The racism, structural and insidious, to which they are subjected infects all aspects of our society and must be rooted out.

We must not turn away. We can't avoid the hard truths that are before us. The injustices faced by our African-American students, friends and neighbors will not resolve themselves without direct and peaceful intervention and action by all of us. We must all continue the forward march of progress toward greater racial equity.

As a school system, our responsibility is tremendous in times like these. Indeed, the mission of the Public Schools of Brookline includes enabling our students to achieve success "...in a *diverse* and evolving global society." The emphasis is mine, and it's critically important. Diversity has always been the hallmark of our nation and it will continue to be our strength in the decades to come. Acknowledging and celebrating that diversity is a continuing responsibility for us as educators.

Let me be clear, as the school district has stated before and as I assert again today, the Public Schools of Brookline unequivocally rejects racism and all forms of hatred. We reject hate and hate language in all its forms. We are steadfast in our commitment to building safe, bias-free classrooms in which all of our students can thrive. We accept the hard work ahead as we all continue to strive to address these difficult challenges.

Below you will find links to resources that can help families and educators as they work with and support students and children to make sense of the tragic event in Minneapolis and too many others like it. In addition to these resources, K-8 social studies coordinator Gabe McCormick has shared other resources for teachers to use in classes as they see fit. As always our school guidance counselors, social workers, and psychologists are available for any support you or your child may need.

Brookline High School students and staff are helping to organize a virtual [Community Vigil](#) in honor of George Floyd on **Wednesday, June 3 at 6:00 p.m.** We hope you can join with your family. The vigil is silent, with some prepared content, and will run for about 30 minutes. If you can't join the Zoom link, you can watch the live stream on [Brookline Interactive Group \(BIG TV\)](#).

At this time, we all need to stand and take action in any way that we can to honor George Floyd and our brothers and sisters who continue to face racial injustice. All of us - educators, staff, and families - need to continue to work with our students and children, helping them to build the strong foundation upon which they will grow and become the community leaders we all need them to be. It is my hope that by teaching our children and working together, we will help them build a more just Brookline, a more just state, and a more just nation.

Sincerely,

Ben Lummis  
Interim Superintendent

**Resources for Families:**

[Your Kids Aren't Too Young to Talk about Race - Resource Roundup](#)

[100 Race-Conscious Things You Can Say To Your Child](#)

[Anti-Racism For Kids 101: Starting To Talk About Race](#)

[Being Nice is Not Going to End Racism | Robin DiAngelo](#)

[How to Talk to Your Kids About Racism: PSB Presentation to Parents by Dr. Kalise Wornum, Senior Director of Educational Equity and Dr. Suzie Talukdar, Driscoll School Principal](#)