



Teaching students with learning differences how to learn, how to be independent, and how to be successful.

June 12, 2020

Greetings to Our de Paul School Community,

Our school, city and nation are experiencing great pain, grief, and anger as we confront injustices and systemic racial inequities. Our School is reflecting deeply on how we can respond in meaningful and enduring ways. De Paul was founded on a commitment to justice and equity for students who learn differently; it is vital that we are part of the community work that will ensure these same principles for everyone throughout our society, regardless of race, ethnicity, or any marginalized status.

We state unequivocally that we are committed to the cause of equality, not only in terms of social justice but in being a school community in which everyone is enabled to thrive unhindered by bias.

The de Paul School's vision statement includes the aspiration that our students will be tomorrow's leaders and healers for our community and beyond. To prepare for these roles, our students need experiences of diversity, inclusion, self-examination, and respectful dialogue. They need to hone their skills in listening and understanding others' viewpoints and experiences. They need to experience their life-changing capacity for compassion. Along this journey, our school's Core Values of dignity, respect, restoration, high expectations, and compassion serve as proven guideposts.

Upon our return to campus, we yearn to engage collectively in conversations regarding our challenges and opportunities and our obligations toward a just and peaceful future. We will schedule meetings which invite parents, trustees, teachers, staff, students, and alumni to exchange ideas which will help our school thrive constructively and gracefully. Additionally, we will commit to these actions:

- Our Personal and Social Success classes will continue to develop peace-making and conflict resolution skills, while creating a safe space for students to make sense of what they are hearing and seeing in their world. Dignity, understanding, affirmation, and security will be emphasized.
- History, Civics, and other courses will increase their connections between their topics and issues of diversity, equity, individuality, and justice.
- As students try to make sense of what they see and hear outside of school, they may say things that offend or hurt others. We will continue to treat these situations as restorative teaching opportunities that deepen compassion for others and strengthen our community.
- We will implement a heightened dimension of hands-on service and connections throughout Metro Louisville as we embark on our Compassion Projects for SY 2020-2021.
- We will expand upon the excellent work our librarians have done to feature resources which teach about many different aspects of diversity.



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- Our Board and Administration will expand initiatives which help our families overcome barriers related to accessibility and affordability.
- Faculty and Staff will resume professional development in areas of diversity, inclusion, and understanding. We will continue to access and learn from resources such as the book we shared last school year, So, You Want to Talk About Race. We are considering ways to include our families and alumni in those opportunities.
- We are creating a special link within our website where we will post our school's recommendations and resources which our school community can access. That link will be titled *Equity and Justice*.
- Members of our Faculty and Staff will participate within community discussion groups and task forces which identify solutions for peace, justice, and equity throughout Metro Louisville.

More commitments will be shared in future correspondence. These are first steps in our wholehearted commitment, and it is important to announce them now.

Peace to Each of You and All of Us!

The de Paul School Board, Faculty, and Staff