



---

# Guidance for School Districts on Responding to Recent Events and Racism in America

Published by Partners in Restorative Initiatives - June 4, 2020

As the nation grapples with the recent and historical violence against Black Americans and the ensuing protests and police response, PiRI encourages all school districts to rise to this occasion by providing staff, students, and families with a courageous, restorative response. You have an important part to play at this moment in history. We encourage our school district partners to speak out in solidarity with all those who are demanding justice for Black Lives and to hold space for all the emotions that our students, staff members, and families may be holding. We are here to assist you in this journey together, because silence is not an option. Here are some ways that you can act and support your school communities during this pivotal moment:

## 1. Publish a statement from your school district condemning racism.

[6 Considerations for School Leaders Making a Statement About George Floyd](#)

[Teaching Tolerance - Don't Say Nothing](#)

[George Floyd. Ahmaud Arbery. Breonna Taylor. What do we tell our children?](#)

**Read PiRI's Statement here:**

[http://www.pirirochester.org/t2t\\_feature/june-1-2020-statement/](http://www.pirirochester.org/t2t_feature/june-1-2020-statement/)

**Sample letter to parents:**

[Letter to Parents May 31st, 2020](#)

## 2. Extend individual messages of care to Black staff, students, and families.

[How to Check In On Your Black Friends and Coworkers](#)

[How you can be a better coworker or manager to your black colleagues right now](#)

### **3. Offer Circles and lesson plans for students to discuss racism in America.**

#### **Circles & SEL Supports:**

[Restorative Circle June 1st, 2020 - By 4th Grade Teacher Shane Weigand](#)

[Listening Circle on George Floyd](#)

[Circles and discussions - Say Their Names](#)

#### **Teaching About the Death of George Floyd:**

[Death of George Floyd: Racism & Law Enforcement | Blog](#)

[Death of George Floyd sets off massive protests](#)

[K-8 Distance Learning Activities for Justice for George Floyd](#)

#### **Lesson Plans and Resources:**

[National Museum of African American History and Culture - Talking About Race Portal](#)

[Addressing Racial Injustice with Young Children](#)

[Discussing Hard Topics With Students: Facing Painful or Polarizing Subjects](#)

[Addressing Race and Trauma in the Classroom: A Resource for Educators](#)

#### **Book Lists:**

[31 Children's books to support conversations on race, racism and resistance](#)

#### **Resources for Parents:**

[Talking With Children About Racism, Police Brutality and Protests](#)

[8 Tips for Talking to Your Child About Racial Injustice](#)

### **4. Train teachers and share resources on anti-racism and cultural responsiveness.**

[SURJ Toolkit: Calling People in Around "Violence"](#)

[Scaffolded Anti-Racist Resources](#)

[Showing Up For Racial Justice \(SURJ\)](#)

[Teaching Tolerance | Diversity, Equity And Justice](#)

## 5. Support national and local Black-led organizations and businesses in your area.

### National Organizations:

[Black Lives Matter](#)

[SURJ - Black-Led Organizations](#)

### Rochester-area Black-led organizations (identified by Rochester BLM organizers):

[The Avenue BlackBox Theatre | Community Theatre | Rochester, NY](#)

[Flower City Noire Collective – Elevating Womxn of Color in Western New York](#)

[540WMain, Inc.](#)

[Home | yoga4agoodhood](#)

## 6. Seek Support.

If you need support, PiRI is here to help. We offer:

- Staff trainings
  - Anti-Racism 101
  - Responding to Racism Through Restorative Practices
- Facilitating student circles
  - Safe Space: A Support Circle for Students of Color to Process Recent Events and Racism in America
  - Brave Space: A Talking Circle about Recent Events and Racism in America
- Educator Support Circles

In solidarity,

Your friends at PiRI

[Partners In Restorative Initiatives](#)