



Education Policy Innovation Collaborative

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Dear EPIC Community,

We hope that this message finds you all as well as can be given the increasingly challenging times in which we find ourselves.

We wanted to write with a personal note, because it is at exactly these times we are reminded how grateful we are for our supportive community at EPIC and in the MSU College of Education, as well as our with our partners across Michigan and nationwide.

We have both spent a great deal of time thinking over the weekend about how or if we should respond to what we see going on around us, not because we were not immediately appalled and heartbroken, but because we recognize the privilege from which we benefit. We did not want to risk drowning out the voices of those with lived experiences that demonstrate the deep-rooted problems we must all work to address. However, we also realize that silence can be viewed as complicity. In the end, any fear we may have of saying the wrong thing pales in comparison to the daily fear of members of our community who could fall victim to violence as a result of their race. So, we are not going to try to say the perfect thing. There is no perfect thing to say. But we are going to say something to let you know where we stand as an organization and as people.

So, let us start with what we hope is obvious: Black lives matter. We are devastated by the senseless murder of George Floyd and too many others who face persecution simply because of the color of their skin. And we are devastated by the violence that has unfolded over the weekend. We stand with MSU and the College of Education to condemn racism in all forms and commit to working actively to call out and address the injustices that too many face on a regular basis.

We want to affirm our commitment to doing everything in our power to help through our everyday lives and work. We as an organization do not and will not tolerate racism. We will start by continuing to make EPIC a place that is inclusive and values all perspectives, but also recognizes that our reality today is shaped by the systems of white supremacy that existed before us. We recognize that it is not enough to continue to exist passively within those systems, but rather it is our responsibility to work to actively dismantle them. We believe we can do this through our work and our operations. We will continue to work with equity in mind, and advance our mission through recognizing and supporting our EPIC community and extended colleagues who work together to address the inequities that exist in and are perpetuated by our system of education.

Again, we hope you will all take the time to take care of yourselves in this troubling time, and we welcome any ideas you may have on how we can further these aims.

Stay well,
Katharine & Emily