



# RIDGEFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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*Susie Da Silva, Ed.D.*  
*Superintendent of Schools*

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Dear Families and Faculty,

The injustice facing people of color is unimaginable. Racism. It doesn't feel real, yet it is. As an adult, I am trying to make sense of it all, imagining only what this may feel like for people of color, and children. Children come into this world with love and the willingness to embrace all, yet are thrust into a world that at times can seem filled with inequity, racism and bias. Somehow, somewhere, something changes. We have to ask ourselves why? For the past couple of days, I have been trying to find the 'right' words for this communication, and realized that perhaps that is one of the problems. Perhaps the quest to find the 'right' words is the reason words or conversations aren't had. Perhaps the fear of being 'wrong' is what prevents us from speaking and being courageous about what is right. I'm described as being someone who 'wears my heart on my sleeve.' My heart is broken, and I know this feeling is shared by many. Many *isn't enough*, it needs to be all of us. We need to be better, we have to be better, and we can only do this by being brave and honest.

At a recent Budget meeting, I spoke about being 'responsible.' It is the duty and responsibility of educators and schools to teach our students the tenants of advocacy, activism and social justice. Schools can do a lot, and can always do more. That said, we know that schools cannot do it alone. It is the responsibility of the school. It is the responsibility of the home. It is the responsibility of the community. It is a responsibility that never ends. It doesn't end until each and every one of us, regardless of the color of our skin, stands tall, together.

I have included a few resources below. In the coming days, you can expect additional developmentally appropriate resources for educators and families as we guide and teach our children during this complicated and sad time. I encourage you to use them to help navigate what your children may be seeing and experiencing on social media or images across the news media. Additionally, please do not hesitate to call upon your school psychologists, should you or your child need additional support.

Respectfully,

*Susie*

## **Resources for Families:**

Teaching Tolerance: [Student texts that are leveled based on themes of understanding race and racism.](#)

NASP: [Resources for educators and families on how we can engage with children during these difficult times](#)

Edweek.org: [Resources for discussing police violence, race, and racism with students](#)

Oakland Public Library: [Resources for talking to kids about racism and justice](#)

Teaching Tolerance: [Resources for teaching about race, racism, and police violence](#)

NASP: [Call to action to end racism and violence against people of color](#)

NASP: [Resources on social justice](#)

NASP: [Understanding race and privilege](#)

American Psychological Association: [Talking to kids about discrimination](#)

Early Childhood Education Assembly: [Resources for educators focusing on anti-racist learning and teaching](#)

Cult of Pedagogy: [A collection of resources for teaching social justice](#)

CSDE Recommendation [How White Parents Can Use Media to Raise Anti-Racist Kids](#)

[Teaching and Talking to Kids About Race](#)

[Teaching Tolerance 2020](#)

[Teaching Tolerance Kids 2-5](#)

[Healthy Children.org](#)

[Child Mind 2016](#)

[School Social Workers of America](#)

[National Geographic Talking about Kids](#)