



Dear Marist Community,

The message of solidarity shared with the Marist community a couple of weeks ago was a first step; an expression of our sorrow over the horrific killing of George Floyd and ongoing national violence and discrimination toward all people of color.

At Marist, we are committed to creating a safe school environment for all of our students, especially our black students, students of color and the most vulnerable in our community. The Black Lives Matter movement has raised that racism is visible to those it impacts directly but it is often invisible to those whom it doesn't.

In order to affect true, systemic and lasting change we are being called to examine our own educational programs and practices around racial issues; we must listen openly and respond purposefully. These efforts call us to lead from a place of courage, not comfort. We cannot do this work alone. We will create a committee comprised of people from diverse backgrounds from inside and outside of the Marist community to help Marist grow and improve. The incoming president, David Welch, and I look forward to forming the group, determining the charge, setting the agenda and encouraging the committee to work with Marist to create a more inclusive, equitable and diverse community.

We recognize the important role and responsibility we have as Catholic educators to lead by example and to educate the whole student. As Pope Francis shared in a message to the U.S, "We cannot tolerate or turn a blind eye to racism and exclusion in any form and yet claim to defend the sacredness of every human life." We also recognize that words are not enough.

We care deeply and are committed to making our school and community stronger. We want to hear from you. We are open to conversations and know that some of what you share may be hard and uncomfortable to hear. Listening is the only way to improve and move forward.

Please pray with us for wisdom, grace, patience, understanding and hope.

Blessings,

Stacey Baker
Principal