

As a school community with a mission to inspire and empower compassionate, global learners, we celebrate and stand with those rising up and advocating for human rights in our nation right now. Civic engagement is essential to bend the arc of justice toward liberation. More importantly, those voices shaping our nation's conversation and action in defense of Black lives and against oppression are bringing about necessary and long-overdue change.

It is important to say, "Black Lives Matter." It is also important to address the injustices that necessitate the Black Lives Matter movement. We know from history that the protests happening all over the country right now will not, by themselves, dismantle the structural racism and white supremacy that we as a society have failed to address for too long.

Educators have a responsibility to impart the practices of civic engagement, social justice, and collaboration to the next generation. Mastering these disciplines catalyzes positive change for each life, especially those most vulnerable. In short, empowered and compassionate learners see unfairness and act to make the situation just.

Human rights education must begin with our earliest learners. They construct and internalize their understanding of what is fair or unfair from a very young age. A necessary and important part of this learning must center on stories of the heroes of movements that lead toward liberation, such as those in the Civil Rights Movement who fought injustice and achieved major advancements in voting rights, anti-discrimination policies, and more. Most importantly, we must then give our students the opportunity to learn by experience: to work alongside others, build coalitions, and engage in civic life to advance justice, thereby meaningfully engaging in purposeful action.

Students who learn to listen, empathize, engage, ask questions, activate, and stand up for themselves and others, become citizens who act and affect change. We need students to learn about civics as well as to authentically engage in our public institutions. By doing so, they will ultimately be able to change outcomes when they see or experience imbalances of power that negatively impact Black lives, or any vulnerable population in need of compassion and justice.

This will remain our continued mission.