



NORTH CHICAGO COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT 187

2000 Lewis Avenue ▪ North Chicago, Illinois 60064

Phone: 847.689.8150

District Leadership Statement on Race and Equity

June 10, 2020

District 187 Community:

As members of the district leadership team for District 187, we have a special responsibility to make clear our purpose and intent with regards to racial justice and social justice. At this time of reckoning for our country, the district's leadership team stands united in our urgent commitment to do more to support students of color in our schools.

*To begin, we join and affirm the refrain heard today in towns and cities across America that **Black Lives Matter**. We believe that in confronting and changing the conditions that lead to police brutality, and other expressions of deep-seated racism, that our district has a special role to fight for equity and justice for the children in our district, Black and LatinX, who have received underinvestment and prejudice.*

Too often in the history of education in the United States, educators and educational institutions have perpetuated and exacerbated the systemic racism that has denied Black and LatinX children the education they deserve. Jim Crow segregation in north and south; efforts to eliminate our children's native languages; the systematic underinvestment in educational communities serving low income and minority students; the "soft bigotry of low expectations" - these are all realities that as educational leaders we must confront and change if our future is to be different than our past. Black, LatinX, and White educators must be allies for change.

The work that we have done thus far as a school district has been good work, and we have certainly begun to change the trajectories of hundreds of students. But, the events of the past weeks highlight for us that we have not done enough, and that we must move with urgency. We need to examine the adult expectations that impact children everyday in classrooms across the district.

This summer our team will:

- *Create a plan for anti-bias training for all staff members and will implement that plan this school year;*
- *Recommend the adoption of an equity policy;*
- *Begin to use those tools to re-evaluate our current policies and practices;*
- *Develop a plan and partnership for increased parent engagement and outreach;*

- *Engage in individual study and reflection to improve our knowledge and skills in leading organizations towards greater equity.*

Cornel West said, "Empathy is not simply a matter of trying to imagine what others are going through, but having the will to muster enough courage to do something about it."

As a leadership team, we plan to do something about it. This will take all of us. This will mean changes in every department:

- *In technology: removing all barriers*
- *In finance: equitable school level budgeting*
- *In HR: recruit and retain teachers of color and remove bias in hiring practices.*
- *In Curriculum and Instruction: identifying personal bias*
- *In Leadership and Operations: Leadership development and services to families with a commitment to racial equity*
- *In policy: implementing policies that are founded in equity for students*

We believe that we have both an individual and a collective responsibility. And, this will take time. We are prepared for the journey, long after the inevitable fade of publicity and public urgency.

We are on a mission, together, to empower each child in District 187 to write their own story of success.

Sincerely,

The North Chicago District 187 Leadership Team:

John P. Price, Superintendent

Oscar Hawthorne, Deputy Superintendent

Yesenia Sánchez, Chief Academic Officer

Kim Andes, Director of Human Resources

Greg Volan, Director of Finance and Operations

David Collins, Director of Technology