

From: "Henke, Heather" Heather.Henke@edinaschools.org

Date: April 16, 2021 To: EHS All Staff HSAllStaff@edinaschools.org

Subject: Message from Shaun Pakenham (Dean at Highlands Elementary) seeds of AntiRacism

Hello, Some of you may have already received this update from Shaun, but I thought I would share it with you as I found it important. It is part of an on-going newsletter that he sends to his staff on seeds of Anti Racism. Happy Friday and take care of one another.

Heather T. Henke

WEAR BLACK ON MONDAYS

The Minneapolis Federation of Teachers has been encouraging Minneapolis Schools' staff to wear black on Mondays to show "solidarity for Black Lives Matter and the fight against ALL forms of racial injustice" (MFT 59). All schools in the Hopkins district are also participating. I am asking all of us to join this effort and wear black on Mondays for the rest of this school year in order to send a message of support to our Black, Indigenous, Latin(a/o/x), Asian, Somali, Hmong, and all other students and colleagues of color:

- We see you.
- We support you.
- You matter.
- You are important.
- We've got your back.
- We love you.

BLACK LIVES MATTER

In the 2020 book [Black Lives Matter at School](#), Jesse Hagopian writes that the movement to value Black lives is only viewed as a radical idea because the US has never fully acknowledged its foundational transgressions. Additionally, since there has never been a state-sanctioned, national reckoning of the marginalization of Black lives, "every era in American history has required its own rallying cry for racial justice. The long freedom struggle has gone by many names, including abolition, Reconstruction, the Civil Rights Movement, Black Power," and now, finally, "Black Lives Matter" (2020, p. 4).

This past Monday at the Edina Public Schools School Board meeting, several student leaders presented about their efforts and community involvement related to Black Lives Matter. It is yet another example of how leaders and teachers exist in all ages. You can view their presentation on YouTube by [clicking here](#) [1]. The presentation starts at the 8:00 minute mark and ends at around 21:00 minutes.

The US Office of Special Counsel [released a statement](#) [2] in July, 2020 stating that neither Black Lives Matter (BLM) as a phrase nor the Black Lives Matter Global Network (BLMGN) are considered inherently political. As described in the statement, the In this [two-minute video clip](#) [3], BLM co-founder Alicia Garza touches on the only reason "Black Lives Matter" would be an offensive phrase: If one believes Black people should be inferior.

Finally, please listen to this [45-second audio-clip of Michael Eric Dyson](#) [4] reading from his 2020 book [Long Time Coming](#). In the clip, he is speaking directly to Sandra Bland. Allow his voice and his words to be a powerful ending to this week.

Spanish Teacher EHS (She/her) Racial Equity Team Member

I will do my best to respond to all emails within 24 hours. The best way to reach me is via e-mail. Virtual Office Hours [5]: M, T, TH, F by appointment 8:00-8:25 (please send me a remind text or email) M-F drop in 3:16-3:45 (I would still appreciate a text or email).

“What if we realized the best way to ensure an effective educational system is not by standardizing our curricula and tests but by standardizing the opportunities available to all students?”

— Ibram X. Kendi

Links:

[1] <https://youtu.be/2QtCcPGGf90>

[2] <https://www.usgs.gov/media/files/office-special-counsel-advisory-black-lives-matter-and-hatch>

[3] <https://www.youtube.com/watch>

[4] <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MheUYIhiMpLMwMoQ99xffgeoU6wYtbUV/view>

[5] <https://meet.google.com/yts-djwk-eqb>

[6] tel:952-848-3116

[7] tel:651-492-5556

[8] <http://tcomn.com/>