



May 31, 2020

A note about last night and where we go from here.

Dear Families,

Today, I'm writing to you as a mother of a black boy who is worried for him, and the millions of other black boys in our country. I worry that when he leaves our home to ride bikes with his friends, he will come back to me as a headline, a hashtag, a rallying cry—an Ahmaud, a Breonna, a George.

My mother raised me to never bring up a problem without a solution, but today, I can only share with you my hurt and sorrow for our community. Tomorrow and in the days and weeks to come, we will have to have some real and difficult conversations about the worth of a person—not only in death but also in life.

We must acknowledge that far too many of us have come to accept fear and pain as part of normal life. Fear should not be the first thing we feel in the morning and the last thing we feel at night but it is for many in the African American community. If we are going to progress as a society, this moment must lead us to confront racism — in all of its forms — on a daily basis.

Racism is all around us, but for too long, our nation has locked it away in the Civil Rights chapter of our history books. We taught and talked in terms of segregation, bus seating, and Bull Connor, while not giving enough attention and voice to what's happening today. I'm challenging our community—parents, teachers, students—to call racist behavior out when we see it. We've tolerated intolerance for far too long, and the time has come for us to act.

This work is not easy but that cannot be an excuse to delay progress. Black lives matter, and it's past due for us to prove it with action. Families of all backgrounds have a role to play, and it starts by speaking honestly with our children and our own respective communities. These will be undoubtedly difficult conversations and we will be sharing resources beginning Monday to help you begin these conversations.

We are here for you today, and we will be here for you tomorrow. Together we have a responsibility to ensure each day is safer, fairer and more just than the last.

Janice K. Jackson, EdD
Mother of CPS students

Updates for the Days Ahead

The safety of all our students and staff is top of mind, and the district will be monitoring the situation in the days ahead to determine if any modifications to planned activities are

necessary. Please see below for updates on significant activities and resources.

Family Support: If your family is in need of assistance during this challenging time, please contact the CPS Command Center, which can help connect you to vital support services. The Command Center can be reached at 773-553-KIDS (5437) or familyservices@cps.edu.

Grab-and-go Meal Sites: CPS will continue to provide free grab-and-go meals for all students. For the current list of active meal sites, please visit cps.edu/mealsites.

Scheduled Item Retrieval: Earlier this month, we provided schools with guidance on how to distribute personal items that were left in schools at the end of in-person instruction. Schools will continue with item retrieval as scheduled and notify families of any changes.

End-of-Year Activities: Schools throughout the city have scheduled a variety of socially distanced end-of-year-activities, and CPS will continue to monitor the situation to determine if any changes to school plans are necessary. Please look out for updates from your school in the days ahead.