



Statement – Efforts to End Racism

June 2, 2020

It was a tough week last week, watching the horror of a Black man dying violently and unnecessarily at the hands of a police officer. The events since, with protests and more violence, remind us that the fight against racism must continue. We must acknowledge the impact of historical and current practices of anti-Black racism and the continued effects they have on Black people today. We also have the responsibility to monitor our own actions and words, and understand their impact on all in order to recognize and interrupt overt and unconscious bias. We must also use this as another opportunity to reflect on these events and the impact they have in our schools through our own professional learning. As educators and school leaders, we need to increase our own understanding of systemic oppression and act to dismantle policies and practices that exist in our schools.

If adults are feeling anxious about the events, we know that students are as well. Unfortunately, the pandemic makes it even more difficult for us to reach out and support students who are struggling and confused with what is happening in their world. We all need to be aware that current events may trigger anger, sadness, confusion and fear in our students, our staff and ourselves. We encourage you to reach out to the families in your school community, help your staff do the same and share any resources your board may have to assist. At the OPC, we have work to do, not only in terms of our structure, but also in the way we assist you in your role. We are committed to listening, learning and engaging to ensure equity, inclusion and diversity are priorities for our organization.