



Connecticut Association of School Psychologists

An affiliate of the National Association of School Psychologists

For Immediate Release June 9, 2020

The Connecticut Association of School Psychologists (CASP) represents school psychologists across the State of Connecticut, for whom advocacy for social justice is a foundational part of comprehensive school psychological practices. As school psychologists we have an ethical responsibility to operationalize anti-racist actions. The recent deaths of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd are horrific. They are the latest examples of the reality of continued systemic racism and our nation's deeply embedded inequities and prejudice that far too often end in unjustifiable, heartbreaking tragedy for a Black individual, their family, and their community. Racism and hateful acts have no place in our communities or in our schools.

Race can be defined as a social construct intended to maintain societal norms and decide by racist rules who will have access to resources and privilege. Across Connecticut students from historically marginalized and minoritized communities and/or historically disadvantaged backgrounds, by virtue of being black or brown, are managing unequal levels of systems-inflicted inequity, trauma, violence, and oppression. CASP stands firmly against discrimination against persons of color and strongly for equity and social justice. CASP is committed to addressing the issues of race, privilege, prejudice, and power in actionable and meaningful ways to affect systems level changes.

In order to promote and advocate for better, more just outcomes for all students, school psychologists, as trusted guardians of student well-being, have been trained to function in the role of systems level change agents working toward supporting diversity, equity and inclusion in the form of improved school systems and policy reform efforts. The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services emphasizes practices that place school psychologists in a position to be leaders in improving the outcomes of students by promoting safe and supportive schools and equitable practice for diverse student populations.

“Social justice is both a process and a goal that requires action. School psychologists work to ensure the protection of the educational rights, opportunities, and well-being of all children, especially those whose voices have been muted, identities obscured, or needs ignored. Social justice requires promoting non-discriminatory practices and the empowerment of families and communities. School psychologists enact social justice through culturally-responsive professional practice and advocacy to create schools, communities, and systems that ensure equity and fairness for all children and youth.” - (Adopted by the NASP Board of Directors, April 2017).

CASP makes a commitment to support schools and school psychologists to:

- Take care of the mental and emotional health of our youth, our colleagues, and ourselves.
- Engage in active listening. Engage in dialogue about race, racial violence, racism, Black Lives Matter, and elevate youth voices.
- Be attentive to the news, media, and other information sources.



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- Work to be actively anti-racist and engage in self-reflection of any implicit biases.
- Evaluate each aspect of our role through the lenses of social justice, equity, and inclusion.
- Focus on our shared humanity and prioritize learning and talking about the root causes of the current protests and the interracial activism. This is a time to come together, listen, learn, share in grief and in hope, and act for a more just, equitable, and racially conscious world.

CASP stands with the APA Division 16 School Psychology, Trainers of School Psychologists, Council of Directors of School Psychology Programs, Society for the Study of School Psychology, the American Board of School Psychology and the National Association of School Psychologists in their charge to create and publish the **School Psychology Unified Anti-Racism Statement and Call to Action**, which will be published in the School Psychology Review and other journals.

CASP stands against racism, oppression, and inequality for all people and we are committed to being agents of change within our communities.

References:

National Association of School Psychologists. (2016). Understanding Race and Privilege [handout]. Bethesda, MD

National Association of School Psychologists (2020). Professional Standards Bethesda, MD

New York Association of School Psychologists (2020). Statement on Discrimination Against People of Color

Chicago Public Schools (2020) Say Their Names Toolkit