

# The Tragic Death of George Floyd

A statement from the Albuquerque Public Schools Leadership Team



*Protesters in downtown Albuquerque. Photo by Adolphe Pierre-Louis of the Albuquerque Journal. Used with permission.*

The senseless killing of George Floyd cannot be explained, accepted, or ignored.

This isn't a time to throw our hands up and dismiss what's happening all around us. This case of police brutality took place in Minneapolis, but it's not the first, and sadly, will not be the last. Before anything can change, we have to ask ourselves what we are willing to do as individuals to help our communities heal and advance.

Historically, we've always been willing to defend our American values. Our courage to stand up to anything that threatens our ideals, our way of life, and personal safety is what makes us a great nation. Yet, relentless acts of racism and inequities that touch us all never cease.

Public education plays an important part in promoting equity, dignity, and respect. As educators, we strive to create safe and welcoming environments for all students and staff to come together to learn and thrive. But our students are not just our students, they are citizens of the world, and they see and hear for themselves the ugly realities we face. Perhaps more importantly, they learn by example.

No one should ever fear for their life because of their skin color, religion, sexual orientation, or disability. But, the tragedies we've seen play out tell us the fear is real.

We have to be engaged to right these wrongs. We encourage you to stay informed, ask questions when necessary, and expect more from one another. Racism isn't a problem for any single government agency, community group, or think-tank to solve. The responsibility to end racism belongs to each of us.

Please talk to your children, your friends, and your family about George Floyd's death. If your children are too young to discuss hatred, violence, and ignorance, start with conversations about the importance of empathy, acceptance, and kindness in our world.

Our country's response to George Floyd's death in Minneapolis is complicated, troubling, and ongoing. Some say what we allow continues. We cannot ignore the images and pleas coming into our homes via audio and video clips on our phones, TVs, and tablets. Please, add your voice to those who say enough.