

Statement on Tragic Death of George Floyd from Guadalupe Guerrero, PPS Superintendent

May 28, 2020



Guadalupe Guerrero, PPS Superintendent (Photo by Beth Conyers)

My heart breaks.

My heart breaks for the Black lives that continue to be lost to racist brutality and the failure of recognizing our shared humanity.

As the Superintendent of the largest school system in Oregon, I am enraged and disheartened to know how easily and senselessly Black lives are taken. I feel frustrated that, even in broad daylight and in front of cameras and eyewitnesses...

there seems to be no slowing of this type of racist violence:

George Floyd.
Ahmaud Arbery.
Titi Gulley.
Michael Brown.
Tamir Rice.
Quanice Hayes.
Aiyana Jones.
Eric Garner.
Stephon Clark.
Sandra Bland.
Kendra James.
Trayvon Martin.

As we go into the weekend, I will remember their names and reflect on how we can proactively create the conditions so that every Black student at PPS is seen, heard and supported.

This past Tuesday, in the shadow of incredible tragedy, we presented and reaffirmed to the community our values and commitment to racial equity and social justice, centered on the experiences of our Black students. Our city's --and country's-- history can make any person of color feel like these are platitudes and empty words. As a man of color who knows this feeling all too well, my commitment as an anti-racist educational leader is that we will work to educate our students to be critical thinkers, prepared to lead in a more socially just world.

We cannot remain neutral about racism. We are ready to stand shoulder to shoulder in solidarity with our community in the fight against anti-Black racism.

These violent acts traumatize us as students, family members, educators, and community members, and I share in your grief and anguish. Now more than ever, we must remain resolute in our commitment to Black students.

Guadalupe Guerrero
Superintendent