



ASSOCIATION OF MATHEMATICS TEACHER EDUCATORS

Contact Dr. Shari Stockero, AMTE Executive Director
Telephone 906.487.1126
Email stockero@mtu.edu
Website <http://amte.net>

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AMTE STATEMENT ON SYSTEMIC RACISM



Le tengo rabia al silencio
por lo mucho que perdí;
que no se quede callado
quien quiera vivir feliz.

(Atahualpa Yupanqui)

*I feel rage towards silence
because of all that I lost;
Do not keep quiet*

Whomever wants to live happily.

(translation)

With thanks to Dr. Nico Gomez, who shared this poem at the 2020 AMTE Opening Session

Houghton, MI, June 3, 2020 – The Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators (AMTE) stands in solidarity with Black Americans in the face of racial injustice. We are dismayed by the inhuman and unjust treatment of Black Americans by law enforcement personnel in recent months with the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery. We acknowledge the inequities that the pandemic has illuminated related to health care, economic standing, and education. As an organization, AMTE believes that racism must be interrogated in this country. We cannot look at what is happening to Black Americans and other oppressed groups as problems that they alone need to solve.

As mathematics teacher educators, each of us must become cognizant of the lived experience

of Black Americans by reading the history of the United States through a social justice lens. Next, we must learn ways to empower and provide access to students who often are judged by the color of their skin and not by their knowledge and abilities. We must ensure that we foster well-prepared teachers of mathematics who:

- recognize the difference between access to and advancement in mathematics learning and work to provide both access and advancement for every student,
- recognize their responsibility to cultivate positive mathematical identities with their students,
- identify and implement practices that draw on students' mathematical, cultural, and linguistic resources/strengths, and challenge policies and practices grounded in deficit-based thinking,
- understand the roles of power, privilege, and oppression in the history of mathematics education and are equipped to question existing educational systems that produce inequitable learning experiences and outcomes for students, and
- are knowledgeable about, and accountable for, enacting ethical practices that enable them to advocate for themselves and to challenge the status quo on behalf of their students (AMTE, 2017, p. 21 - 24).

Through these actions, we as an organization strengthen our own ability to serve as advocates for those whose voices have been muted and prepare a generation of teachers who are willing to address the systemic problem of inequity in our schools, nation, and world.

In our lives as citizens, we must look to organizations whose mission is to respond to continued racial injustice and to eradicate white supremacy and build local power to intervene in violence inflicted on Black communities by the state and vigilantes. We must stand with organizations like Black Lives Matter that seek to elevate awareness of the lived experiences of Americans of color and dismantle systems of continued racial oppression.

We must act. We (Mike and Megan) issue this call to action to white mathematics teacher educators, including ourselves. It is long past time that we assume the burdens that have been largely left to mathematics educators of color. All of us must affirm and support the lived experiences of our students and colleagues of color who are and have been suffering. We must actively work to be anti-racist in our acts of teaching, research, and service. Today we call on you to not simply express allyship, but to engage with a new resource to strengthen your own ability to see and to act in ways that are anti-racist and to critically examine your own practices and the potential biases implicit within them.

To our colleagues of color, to our students, and to all who are suffering in this moment: we see you, we love you, and we support you. Together as mathematics teacher educators, we will bend the arc towards justice.

Yours in Service,

Mike Steele, AMTE President

Megan Burton, AMTE President-Elect

While the words in this statement were assembled and edited by President Mike Steele, President-Elect Megan Burton, and Executive Director Shari Stockero, they originate in large part from the lived experiences of educators of color within AMTE leadership who contributed

their perspectives and wisdom. This statement includes contributions from AMTE Past Presidents Marilyn Strutchens, Christine Thomas, and Randy Philipp; AVP for Equity Carlos Lopez Leiva; AVP for Advocacy Zandra DeAraujo; VP for Professional Learning Jennifer Suh, and VP for Publications Babette Benken.

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If you would like more information about this topic, please contact Dr. Shari Stockero, AMTE Executive Director at 906.487.1126 or email at stockero@mtu.edu.