

Dear Eastlake Students and Families:

I graduated from high school in 1992, shortly after the Rodney King verdict and LA uprising. As I witnessed the recent death of George Floyd, I am ashamed at how little has changed in those 28 years, and how little I have done to support that change. Right before the closure we revised our Eastlake Values to make them more active and explicit. I had not even asked to change the Values on the Eastlake website because I thought this work could wait. I thought that we could develop a strategic plan around our future equity work over the next few months. I know now that my privilege allowed me to let this work unfold over time. I know now as a leader and follower I can no longer be patient.

Over the last few weeks our organization has wrestled with our role in leading and supporting social change in our larger community. We know now that our silence has been complicit in a system of systemic racism.

Our Black students' lives matter, and we love and support them, and we will do a better job showing it. We believe in their excellence, and we will do a better job promoting it.

Our educational system plays a pivotal role in creating a more just and racially equitable society. Over the past two years we have started a student and staff equity committee. Our teachers have learned more about cultural competence and culturally responsive teaching. We try to help students understand issues of social justice and empower them to make change. I have recently received messages from students that show we have not gone far or fast enough on this journey.

We have a new Value of "Justice through equity and inclusion of diverse lived experiences." I have now asked that this new Value be put on the website, but I understand it's performative if we do not follow up and follow through with urgency.

Black Lives Matter.

Dr. Chris Bede, Principal
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