

Dear School of Education Students, Staff and Faculty:

For days I have hesitated to write this statement. My hesitation has hinged on the purpose of such statements and whether or not they matter or make a difference. As a Black woman who is the mother of a Black boy, wife to a Black man, daughter of a Black man, sister to Black men, and aunt to Black men, I personally, do not need another statement. In the words of civil rights activist, Fannie Lou Hamer, “I am sick and tired of being sick and tired.”

I am sick and tired of the senseless murders of Black people. There are no words for the sadness and rage in my heart for the murder of George Floyd and how millions have watched this heinous act. I am sick and tired of the senseless harassment of Black people for simply existing (i.e. bird watching in the park, sitting in Starbucks). I am sick and tired of the weaponization of whiteness and everyday anti-Black racism that is so normalized that even those with good intentions cannot recognize how they are complicit in perpetuating it. The Black community and the families of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and Dreasjon Reed do not need another statement. We need action. The kind of action that explicitly dismantles the institutionalized dehumanization of Black bodies.

We all have the agency to engage in individual action, but I strongly believe that collective action is more powerful for dismantling institutional racism and inequity. Collective action comes in many forms such as the protestors in cities across the country. Through the words of our mission, we have agreed to collective action as a School of Education.

We have agreed to:

- examining our collective role in improving the human condition.
- develop leaders, educators, and counselors equipped to critique and disrupt longstanding inequities and address the changing dynamics in urban educational contexts.
- to positively impact youth and adult learners in educational systems and serve the welfare of communities through engagement in strategic alliances to promote equitable, just, culturally relevant and sustaining practices in teaching and learning

While we have made some progress, there is a need to do even more. Focusing on anti-Black racism will remain a strategic priority for our collective professional capacity building for next year. Collectively, we can counter anti-Black racism beyond a statement but through purposeful and courageous action.

In struggle for justice,
Tambra

We who believe in freedom cannot rest
We who believe in freedom cannot rest until it comes
Until the killing of black men, black mothers' sons
Is as important as the killing of white men, white mothers' sons
[-Ella's Song, sung by Sweet Honey in the Rock](#) (Reagon, 1988)

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