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Brooklyn Arts Community –

We hope this finds you and your family well. While we continue to celebrate the heroic efforts of our community's students, families, and staff during these trying times, we also believe that given recent events, we cannot proceed with business-as-usual. As educators it is our moral and professional obligation to address the larger world around us as well as the events shaping our local communities.

We are saddened, frustrated and outraged by the senseless death of George Floyd at the hands of law enforcement and by the ongoing loss of life and continuing unequal treatment of the Black community in this country. It's heartbreaking, it's tragic, it's persistent, and it's unacceptable. We cannot and should not stay silent among this clear and ongoing injustice. Change is needed now. And change can only come when we speak out and pledge that we will no longer tolerate racism. It's on all of us to create change, one-by-one and together-across, not just within our school community, but as a nation.

While the struggle can appear too big, too entrenched, and too rooted in American history and society for any one of us to confront, there are meaningful actions each of us can take. No action is too small when its intention is to create a more just society. We can march and protest. We can talk with family and friends who might be in need of a broader perspective of the struggle. We can listen to and empathize with each other. Hopefully, if eligible, we will all vote. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. stated, "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice." We at Brooklyn Arts are committed to helping our community progress down that arc.

While these troubled times make it tempting to feel as if we are victims of circumstances beyond our control, at Brooklyn Arts we remain firmly grounded in the values that led us to becoming public school educators. We remain dedicated to the belief that every child is deserving of caring professionals and a high-quality education. We affirm the notion that communities and society are strengthened by the partnership of educators, families, and students. We want to reassure students and families that we are committed to cultivating and protecting a learning environment where *all* members of the Brooklyn Arts community feel safe, valued, and heard. Above all else, we believe - with unwavering conviction - that every human life has value and everyone should be treated with equal respect and dignity.

These are truly unprecedented times, and no one can be expected to navigate such uncharted territory alone. That is what community is for. If we listen to each other, learn from each other, and provide help when others are in need, we will become stronger and more resilient. If you ever find yourself wanting a helping hand or a listening ear, please do not hesitate to reach out to one of us. We are better together,, and it will only be through the cooperative efforts of our collective actions that we can hope to shape a fairer, more just, and equal society.

In Solidarity,

Staff at Brooklyn High School of the Arts.