We offer this short guide as an incomplete blueprint for moving forward as anti-racist people working to build communities that support and actualize anti-racist schools. This guide is organized with immediately recommended actions first, suggestions for group processing second, considerations for content third, and finally, our reflection on commitment and fortitude for systemic change in the current paradigm.

I. INITIAL RESPONSE: STANCE & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

A Humanitarian crisis is occurring; The system of American democracy (in the form of healthcare, law enforcement, environmental conditions, voting rights, and education) has consistently failed to protect all its citizens.

The schools where we work are an extension of that system.

It is imperative that all members of school communities hear acknowledgement that this crisis is occurring, that it is real, and that school leadership affirms that Black lives matter.

How?

- Write an email that goes out to the entire community-teachers, as well as caregivers and families. It is thoughtful to communicate this message using a pre-recorded video declaring acknowledgement of crisis and affirmation of Black life from school leadership.
  - EX: NYC Superintendent Anita Skop writes an open letter to D15 here.
  - This is an open letter from NCTE taking a stand against racism.
- All students should receive and participate in developmentally appropriate discourse from school staff addressing the crisis—whether it be an advisory teacher, grade team collaboration, etc.

II. CREATE INTENTIONAL SPACE FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO BEGIN AND CONTINUE ONGOING DIALOGUE

To process, reflect, begin and/or continue to support the needs of all community members, it's important to develop affinity space for various groups' needs and concerns. Affinity groups allow for persons to more safely express their needs and concerns. For example, white community members may feel the need to discuss what can I do to become more anti-racist? If groups are racially mixed, often the labor of answering that question falls upon the shoulders of BIPOC folk.

To center the concerns of each group; for example, allowing Black folk to process and grieve police brutality. It is imperative that they have a separate space to do so. Additionally, other members of the community may wish to create their own space, for example, Asian-Americans and LGBTQIA folk may wish to discuss intersectionality and allyship.
How?

Include this article, Making Space (Teachingtolerance.org), with a short description of the school's purpose for creating space for discourse via affinity groups. Ensure that each group is supported by school staff. It's important that these conversations do not dissolve into blame-gaming or gaslighting. You may also wish to create affinity groups asynchronously on a digital forum such as a padlet that has moderating abilities. This will most likely be extra labor on someone's part, time and labor should be compensated for those staff supporting discussions.

III. CONTENT CONSIDERATION & WAYS TO PROCESS

Different groups of people will need different kinds of information and content to support their learning as a change agent in an inequitable system. Identity, positionality, and experience affect the way information is internalized and actualized; and ultimately, how it impacts the student body, for better or for worse.

When digesting content that causes discomfort, clearly stated learning objectives, protocols, graphic organizers, and discussion questions steer discussion towards ongoing and deeper learning. Open conversations with little planning and preparation often lead to community paralysis.

Here is suggested content that Cornelius and Kass have created over the past few years, as well as a few protocols/discussion questions, that can be used to develop anti-racist change and decenter white supremacy culture within school communities. The goal is to yield positive impact for all students, centering those who are marginalized. Here is a collection of The Minor Collective’s work that you may choose to use to develop a community learning plan:

**TARGET GROUP:**
All grown ups in a school & High Schoolers

**TEXT**: Disrupting a Destructive Cycle: How Literacy Drives Social Change (Nikole Hannah Jones & Cornelius Minor) (Video)

**PROCESSING ACTIVITY:**
(Before Watching)
- Literacy is...
- The connection between literacy and social change is....

(after watching)
- Now I think the connection between social change and literacy is....

This resource is offered at no cost. However, The Minor Collective members, Kass and Cornelius, accept compensation at the reader’s discretion for the intellectual and emotional labor put forth to create this guide. Venmo: @misterminor Paypal: Paypalm.me/MisterMinor
ENGAGING IN COMMUNITY LITERACY WITH FORTITUDE IN RACIALLY DIVERGENT TIMES

A GUIDE & CURATION OF RESOURCES FOR THOSE WHO PARTICIPATE IN SCHOOLS

TARGET GROUP: Specifically, teachers. However, appropriate for all grown-ups in a community and High Schoolers

TEXT: Why #BlackLivesMatters In Your Classroom too by Cornelius Minor (article)

PROCESSING ACTIVITY:
Make a list of patterns of systemic racism in school you’ve noticed throughout your life… as a student, in college, as a teacher, parent, friend.

Compare this list with an accountability partner.

Before and after reading this article. How has your perspective changed? What anti-racist actions are within your sphere of influence? Do you notice differences between people who have different racial and/or other identity markers?

TARGET GROUP: White educators
*Affinity groups necessary

TEXT: Black Boys and White Educators by Kass Minor (article)

PROCESSING ACTIVITY:
Paired study guide for use with blog:
Embedding Inquiry and Awareness into our Professional Practice

TARGET GROUP: People who want to hear how adults engage with kids about their questions on race, Kids

*Affinity groups necessary.

TEXT: Kojo for Kids: Jason Reynolds talks about Racism and the Protests (podcast with transcript)

PROCESSING ACTIVITY:
Self Reflections: Do students ask you questions about race? Police brutality? Why or why not?

After listening to the podcast, are you surprised by kids’ questions?

What are the similarities and differences between the 8 year old’s question and the 17 year old’s question?

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IV. REFLECTION

Throughout the Co–VID 19 era, all communities of people on Earth have been exposed to a collective trauma that few generations of humans have met. It has been painful. Within that collective trauma, systemic racism continues to disproportionately impact Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), by lots of measures, including, and especially, school. Who gets to learn? Who doesn’t?

Worse, police brutality has reared its ugly head during this collective experience, and all people in this country have witnessed, AGAIN, the murdering of Black people. As we create this guide, protesters march along Fulton Street in the center of Brooklyn, we see them through our window, and we listen to the blistering sound of hundreds of people chanting the names of Black people who have been killed.

Roxane Gay reminds us that scientists will eventually find a cure for covid. Scientists and healthcare workers will work hard, they will work endlessly, they will try and err and try and err until there is no possibility for the disease to harm people. Systemic racism runs deep in schools, and we educators are the social scientists of school. How hard will we work? Will it be endlessly? Will we try and err and try and err until there is no possibility that racism will harm children and their families in our schools?

This guide is simply an initiation, a short spark, an in–road to anti–racist school community, but its merit goes nowhere if it is not met with continued action that meets our most systemically hurt kids, if it is not met with action from committed humans who can see even when the fire in the street is not lit.

We look forward to continually supporting and learning from those who are committed to this work. We hope to see you in the summer, in the Fall. On the twitter. @misterminor @MsKass1

TERMS TO KNOW & REFERENCES

**Affinity Spaces** are places where people who share identity, typically (but not always) a marginalized identity, gather to talk about issues related to their identity, and transfer that discussion into action that makes for more equitable life experiences (Monita K. Bell, Teaching Tolerance).

An **Anti-Racist**, as defined by Dr. Ibram X. Kendi, is someone who is expressing an antiracist idea or supporting an antiracist policy with their actions.

**White Supremacy Culture** is not any one white person. It is a concept used to describe the fabric in which almost all hegemonic structures and institutions are rooted in, including school, church, and business enterprises. In short, it is the idea that white people and the ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions of white people are superior to BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) and their ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions (Tema Okun).

**#BlackLivesMatter** movement is an international human rights movement, originating in the African–American community, that campaigns against violence and systemic racism towards black people. (DeRay McKesson)

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