

June 5, 2020



Dear Colleagues:

Hatching Results stands in firm solidarity with those who are protesting the relentless racial injustices that have ripped at the seams and souls of the Black community in our nation for far too long. We also stand with those advocating for and working toward real systemic change in the fight for equity and justice. Silence is not an acceptable option.

Nowhere is this more urgent than within our educational system which continues to perpetuate these larger societal issues, turning a blind eye to institutional racism with a passive acceptance of the marginalization of Black students. This week President Obama called for policing reform, so too do we call for educational reform to address the systemic needs of our Black students, families, and communities. As a White-/female-dominated profession, school counselors **MUST** respond to these immediate needs by taking action to stop the complicit acceptance of prior practice.

We recognize that this vital work takes time, humility, commitment, grace, and an acknowledgement that we are all striving to improve ourselves. At the same time, to the extent we as school counselors are standing by and doing/saying nothing to intervene as racist policies, practices, and procedures are strangling the futures of our Black students, we are complicit. For example:

- When we clearly “see” the students in detention after school are predominantly Black students and we do nothing to change the policies that brought them there, we are **COMPLICIT**.
- When we stand by while policies systematically eliminate access to AP and Honors classes for Black students, we are **COMPLICIT**.
- When we school counselors serve Black students but do not actively participate in self-transformative work around our own implicit biases, we are **COMPLICIT**.
- When we say nothing as Black students are assigned to the lone Black school counselor because “they understand them,” we are **COMPLICIT**.
- When the demographics of our rigorous courses do not match the demographics of the school as a whole and we say nothing, we are **COMPLICIT**.
- When we celebrate a minimal improvement in the graduation rate for Black students but the rate is still far behind that of White students, we are **COMPLICIT**.
- When we exempt ourselves or our school from addressing issues of race because “we have a mostly or all-White student population,” we are **COMPLICIT**.

In this work, school counselors are either agents of positive change or enablers of the racist status quo - there is no middle ground. School counselors are ethically obligated to advocate for the dismantling of policies, practices, and procedures that sustain institutional racism in our schools. The power structures that perpetuate White supremacy must be challenged to truly realize equity and justice in our schools. School counselors are in a position of both servitude and leadership—we must take the lead, using data to clearly show the gaps that exist between Black students and their peers. We must actively seek out injustice and institutional racism in our schools and school counseling programs, while engaging in uncomfortable courageous conversations.

Every educator is privileged in some way. We encourage school counselors to leverage whatever privilege they have to effect the systemic change that **MUST** happen if we are to truly begin acting as if #BlackLivesMatter.

- IF you need to examine your own biases, **START NOW**.
- IF you haven't yet sent a communication to parents and families with resources for having conversations with their children around race and racism, **WRITE ONE**.
- IF you haven't yet disaggregated your discipline/academic attendance/graduation data to clearly see the gaps, **DO IT**.
- IF you can't find or access the data, **DEMAND IT**.

- IF you haven't recently held a listening session to elevate and amplify the voices of your Black students and families, **SCHEDULE IT.**
- IF you don't have a Tier 1 anti-bias classroom lesson/unit to deliver when school returns this fall, **FIND or CREATE one.**
- IF you haven't begun Tier 2 interventions to close racial achievement and opportunity gaps, **GET STARTED.**
- IF you haven't led a faculty discussion on implicit/explicit bias and its impact on students, **STEP UP.**
- IF your school counseling program doesn't yet support student achievement with an intentional focus on those furthest from opportunity, **CREATE one that does.**
- IF you haven't explicitly recruited school counselors of color to apply for job openings, **RECRUIT them now.**

Each of us is in a different place on the continuum of racial identity development and this work is never done. Likewise, we at Hatching Results can do better. This week we held an open forum with our Professional Development Specialists to discuss our vision, mission, and theory of change as a company and the actions we can take personally and professionally to further racial equity in the school counseling profession. We are committed to this work.

If you are interested in engaging with Hatching Results around issues of racial equity or would like to suggest opportunities for our organization to work with you collaboratively toward positive systemic change, please reach out to us.

To the Black community: We see you. We support you. We stand with you. We are with you.

-The Hatching Results Team