



Greetings Families,

I hope that you and your children are well. Mental health is more important than anything right now, and I want to remind you that we are here for your kids. Managing loss, the pandemic, and the loneliness our children are experiencing without physical in-person interaction creates feelings of uncertainty and instability. We can't and won't ignore this.

Reach out. Call. Email. Text. We speak to families and students daily.

### **National - and Local - Incidents of Racism**

Like you, we have begun the week shaken by the brutality of racism. The death of Ahmaud Arbery, the death of Breonna Taylor, the disturbing and false accusation against Christian Cooper in Central Park (our own neighborhood), and the recent murder of George Floyd have all of us dealing with a wide range of emotions including anger, helplessness, and the desire to act.

The challenges of the pandemic combined with the inhumane acts unfolding before our eyes necessitate conversation and action. I am confident that our Lafayette Academy families feel a sense of urgency and the same call to action on your part as humans, parents, and members of a school community so focused on social justice.

We have created a survey for students, which will be sent out soon, who wish to participate in listening circles in the very near future utilizing a specific [listening circle on George Floyd](#) protocol from [The Morningside Center](#). **This is entirely optional.**

For people unfamiliar with the organization's work, the center works with educators to deliver curriculum resources that promote peace and democracy. I have utilized their resources in the past, we have received professional development from them around Restorative Justice, and Morningside works closely with NYC public schools. The protocol is a tight one that provides clear guidelines for facilitating such conversations, including background, discussion prompts, and a play-by-play for facilitation.

### **What do we stand for?**

Lafayette Academy became notable for countless reasons, and one was for creating an environment, where students are empowered and become globally responsible citizens. You and your children understand our mission and vision in ways I couldn't have imagined when we first opened Lafayette Academy. Please maintain open lines of communication with us and continue those dinner time conversations that have become more important now than ever. You joined Lafayette Academy for a reason. We must be agents of change.

I look forward to continuing this dialogue and thank you for your unwavering support of our collective work.

