



To our Beloved NDSJ Community,

Let me first say, that I completely accept the failure to adequately respond to the issues of systemic racism in this current moment. I and the administration see this very clear call for accountability, tangible solutions, and leadership, and we are committed to prioritizing this immediately and swiftly with action. We have read the clear demands listed in the open letter from alumnae, read every piece of feedback, every social media post, and will continue to maintain an open line of communication that will be moderated by neutral staff not employed by Notre Dame San Jose.

We completely understand the sentiments that have been shared and believe that we as individuals and as an institution have a responsibility to live out the social justice lessons and values we teach and that are at the foundation of our community. We take seriously the Hallmarks that guide the Notre Dame education. We know that with Hallmark 2, "We honor the dignity of each person," we have failed. We believe that NDSJ has a responsibility to build a more just, more accountable, and more equitable world.

A note to our Black students, alumni, staff, and family: we see you, we support you, and we stand in solidarity. The anti-Black racism on display so painfully and vividly over the past several weeks—not only in Minneapolis with the murder of George Floyd, not just in Central Park, and not only in the killings of Breonna Taylor, Nina Pop, Ahmaud Arbery, Dreasjon Reed, Tony McDade, David McAtee, and too many others—is neither new nor transitory as we know it dates back over 400 years ago. This is why we have to affirmatively and simply state that we believe **Black Lives Matter**.

Additionally, we acknowledge that racism is in the air we breathe and the water we drink. We know that we must commit to tangibly addressing it, as well as issues of sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, xenophobia, classism, and Islamophobia. To do that Notre Dame San Jose is committing to the following process and actions:

- **Immediately establishing a Race, Equity, and Inclusion Taskforce:** This task force will be comprised of students and alumnae, with limited representation from administration, faculty, and staff who will participate to ensure that we are institutionally accountable to the recommendations coming from the task force. This taskforce will work to develop policy recommendations to the school addressing the issues that have arisen.
- **Launching our online [Grievance Intake Form](#):** We want to ensure that we are taking full responsibility for issues—past, and present. The [intake form](#) allows for anonymous responses to protect the interest of anyone who has been victimized. Submissions will go directly to an outside firm, not Notre Dame. In addition to this, we are offering restorative justice processes for any student or alumna who would like to participate. We know that healing is not linear and often requires accountability from the offending body, so we are committed to taking this on to repair harm where it has happened.



- **Implementing a long-term faculty /staff and board training program on race, equity, and inclusion:** We know that we do not have all the tools we need and have already begun implementing a training program to support the development and resources for our staff and board.
- **Implementing an audit and review of institutional policies and staffing:** This process will review all internal infrastructure to evaluate how we operate as it relates to race, equity, and inclusion, and implement concrete changes that reflect a more equitable educational system.
- **Making and Leveraging a Donation to the Movement for Black Lives:** Notre Dame San Jose's administrative team will make a donation to the Movement for Black Lives. In addition, we will coordinate outreach to invite our board and other stakeholders to pool additional funds to donate.
- **Partnering with our alumna from the Movement for Black Lives:** Jessica Pierce, alumna from the Class of 2002 and co-founder of Black Youth Project 100 (BYP100), has decided to partner with us as we begin addressing the systemic issues that have arisen. This cannot be a process that happens behind closed doors, without the leadership of those most impacted, and without leadership from outside of NDSJ staff. She will work with administration, students, and alumnae to ensure that a thorough process with the taskforce, training, and future policy recommendations is transparent and rigorous in its approach. You can outreach to her directly at: [jess@piecebypiecestrategies.org](mailto:jess@piecebypiecestrategies.org)

We have the opportunity to realize the mission of Notre Dame San Jose with greater clarity, strength, and equity for the members of our community—past, present, and future. This begins now with accountability and commitment to the work. We have prayed and will continue, and now we will work.

Ora et labora,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Beth Riley".

Mary Beth Riley, Principal