

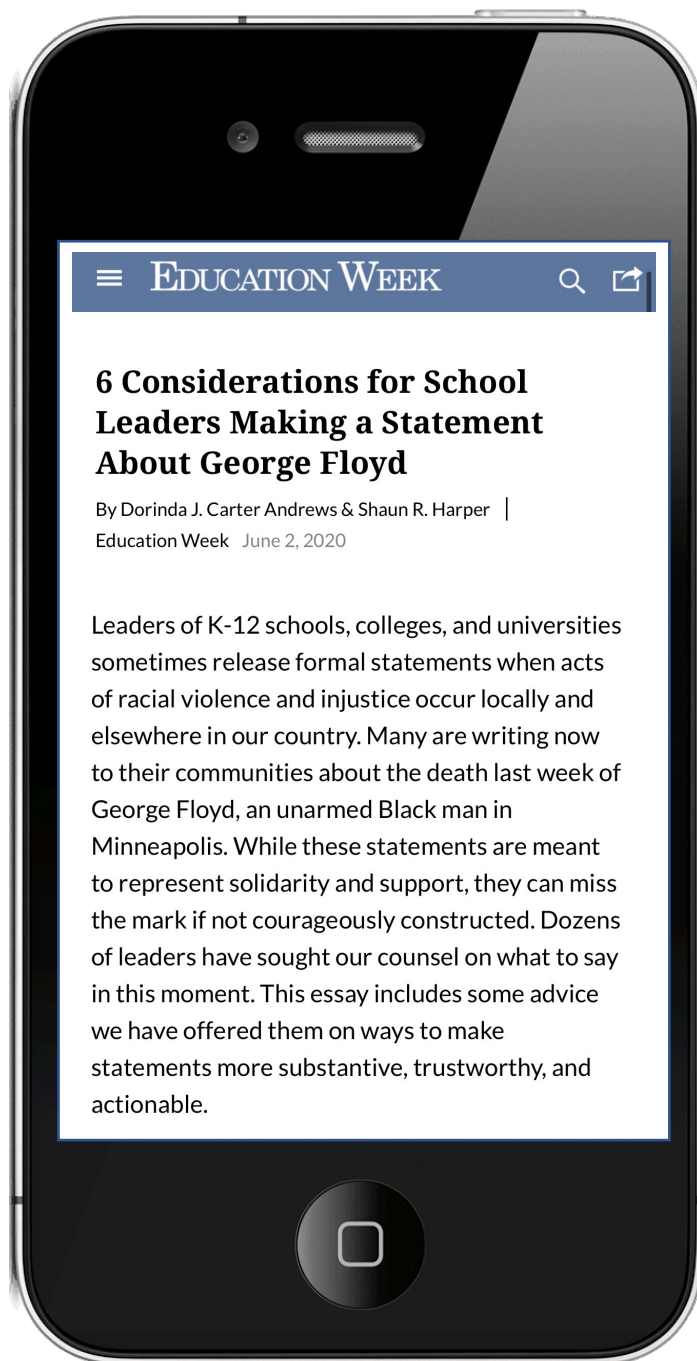
USC Race and
Equity Center

Leading
Conversations
About **Racism at
School**



1. The murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery
2. Police killings of other unarmed Black people without consequence over time
3. Other manifestations of systemic racism, anti-Blackness, and white supremacy
4. **INACTION** on racism, racial inequities, and racial problems

What People
are **Protesting**



Statements About the **Murder of** **George Floyd**

1. Avoidance
2. Talking only in small groups – oftentimes only with one other colleague
3. Only in the aftermath of a **significant** racial crisis at school
4. **Rarely** in the aftermath of a significant racial crisis in the nation or city
5. Mostly led by Black teachers and administrators

Talking About Racism – Typical Approaches

1. **Avoidance**
2. Talking only in small groups – oftentimes only with one other colleague
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Talking About Racism – Typical Approaches

1. Avoidance is cultural at most schools
2. Personal and professional inexperience
3. White colleagues don't want to make mistakes, don't want to be seen as naïve, and don't want to be seen as racist
4. Colleagues of color don't feel safe, don't want to be perceived as the angry person of color, and are tired of having to always be the one to raise issues
5. People are afraid these conversations will be explosive and divisive

Explaining **Avoidance**

Ask every employee to write a 1-2 page **personal** racial history (give some prompts). Have colleagues share discoveries and reflections in pairs.

How to Make Conversations **Productive**

Ideal number of participants: Any size

How was race treated and talked about in your family?

How diverse were your neighborhood and schools?

What did you learn about race in school?

What did you learn about Black men from watching the news?

When and how did you unlearn racism?

Ideal number of participants: Any size

Personal Racial History **Sample** **Questions**

Facilitate opportunities for
reflections on firsthand
encounters with racism outside
of school

How to Make Conversations **Productive**

Ideal number of participants: Any size

Invite seemingly taboo
questions about race

bit.ly/racequestion

Ideal number of participants: 10 or more

How to Make
Conversations
Productive

Invite examples of encounters
with racism on campus

bit.ly/thatwasracist

How to Make
Conversations
Productive

Use polls to ascertain
perspective range

How to Make Conversations **Productive**

Ideal number of participants: 50 or more

1. [REDACTED] has serious racial problems (Multiple Choice)

Strongly Agree (179/748) 24%

Agree (380/748) 51%

I Don't Know (112/748) 15%

Disagree (80/748) 11%

Strongly Disagree (10/748) 1%

Share Results

Re-launch Poll 1

Zoom **Polling**

Use Vignettes to Stimulate
Conversations and
Collaborative Problem Solving

How to Make
Conversations
Productive

Formally assess the school's
racial climate – use those
findings to inform and sustain
subsequent conversations
about race in the school

How to Make
Conversations
Productive

MAKING RACE SALIENT:
TRAYVON MARTIN AND IMPLICIT BIAS IN A NOT YET
POST-RACIAL SOCIETY*

CYNTHIA LEE**

This Article uses the Trayvon Martin shooting to examine the operation of implicit racial bias in cases involving self-defense claims. Judges and juries are often unaware that implicit racial bias can influence their perceptions of threat, danger, and suspicion in cases involving minority defendants and victims. Failure to recognize the effects of implicit racial bias is especially problematic in cases involving black male victims and claims of self-defense because such bias can make the defendant's fear of the victim and his decision to use deadly force seem reasonable. The effects of implicit racial bias are particularly likely to operate under the radar screen in a society like ours that views itself as post-racial.

Recent social science research on race salience by Samuel Sommers and Phoebe Ellsworth suggests that individuals are more likely to overcome their implicit biases if race is made salient than if race is simply a background factor—known but not highlighted. Making race salient or calling attention to the relevance of race in a given situation encourages individuals to suppress what would otherwise be automatic, stereotypic congruent responses in favor of acting in a more egalitarian manner. In the Trayvon Martin case, race was made salient by the huge public outcry over the Sanford Police Department's failure to arrest George Zimmerman and accusations of racial profiling, which received extensive media coverage. Most criminal cases, however, do not receive the kind of media attention received in the Trayvon Martin case. In most criminal cases involving a minority defendant or victim, race is a background factor but is not something either party tries to highlight. The parties may think race is not

From Avoidance to
Making Race **Salient**

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