

Requests - Demands from a Black Parent in America



Penny Christian is a mother, advocate and leader in Kentucky, who is striving for equity in public schools for all students. She is an Equity Coalition Member, ED Trust and CIPL Fellow.

White parents of my child's classmates

- TALK TO YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT RACISM. Explain the history of this country, enforcing that they do not have to perpetuate the beliefs of those who came before them.
- Teach them respect and empathy. Model It. Expect It. They need to know they do not live in this world alone, nor do our children have to bend to their will to be accepted.
- Recognize and admit privilege. Demonstrate how to use it successfully to speak on behalf of those who daily experience what happens when it is weaponized.

White classmates of my children

Be allies. Think for yourself and let your heart guide your actions. No offensive jokes about police brutality or slavery, no slurs you think will get a laugh. Don't ask them if their father lives at home or if he is in jail. Comments like these need to stop.

"I NEED YOU TO DO THIS BECAUSE, COME AUGUST, YOU WILL SEE OUR BROWN STUDENTS IN SCHOOL, AND I NEED YOU TO BE PREPARED TO GREET THEM."

White teachers administrators/staff

Implicit bias is real. When our brown students walk into a classroom check your face, check your bias. Don't assume that they will be a behavior problem simply because you cannot relate to them. It is a guarantee that these events will impact all of our students in some way. Do a little research before you circle his name, all the while expecting to be rescued. Which brings up the next demand. STOP. CALLING. THE. RESOURCE. OFFICER. ON. BROWN. STUDENTS. Is refusing to sit down a criminal offense? That is a trauma waiting to happen. If you can't handle basic classroom management, that is on you. Take the time to get to know your students.

Resource Officers

CARE. When families were asked their concerns about having officers in schools, overwhelmingly the largest was how children of color would be perceived and treated. In response, we were told that to be successful, the officers would have to-and wanted to-cultivate RELATIONSHIPS with ALL students. Well, here is the perfect time to put those words into action. Our kids will need GRACE; they need peace. Traditional stereotypes of how law enforcement relates to communities of color must be challenged. To deny that we have a reason to be apprehensive is both disingenuous and delusional. CARE.