



**Statement From ETA President Barbara Bettis
6-01-2020**

“Every man must decide whether he will walk in the light of creative altruism or the darkness of destructive selfishness. This is the judgment. Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, ‘What are you doing for others?’”

-- Martin Luther King Jr.

To Our ETA Community,

I have wanted to communicate with you over the past few days, but I have been unsure where to begin because it didn’t begin with George Floyd in Minneapolis. What happened in Minneapolis is a continuation of the systemic racism that is plaguing our country, and these events make me think about what we are doing as a union and as a community to advance the cause of equality for all of our students.

In various corners of our U-46 community, we have had conversations surrounding social justice and equity. A number of us have attended the Northern Illinois University Social Justice Camp with Ron Raglin. Many of you participate in the social equity committees and training offered in our district, and our school departments and school improvement committees focus largely on ensuring all students receive the education they need and deserve.

In times like these, we all need to ask ourselves, “are we doing enough?” Are we speaking loud enough when we see the inequities of social injustice? Are we teaching our children to respect and appreciate all cultures and races? As if this pandemic was not enough, or perhaps because of this pandemic, we all need to reflect on how we improve the lives of our students, families, and teachers. I do not have the answers but it starts with listening to those that have experienced social injustices and prejudices. As teachers, we lead by example and we must do so in this time of crisis.

Barbara Bettis
ETA President