

## **A NEW NARRATIVE FOR TEACHERS, EDUCATORS AND PUBLIC EDUCATION**

### **We are committed to building a just and equitable society.**

American public schools are vital in preparing students to become active and informed participants in democracy. As educators, our responsibility is to help each student learn to understand each other, to work together, to take personal responsibility for their world and to become world citizens. Schools should be places where our students can debate ideas, challenge established thought and construct new meaning for themselves as they better understand the world around them. As educators we must support this learning with a strong grounding in established knowledge and an open mind toward new solutions, recognizing that we are preparing students for a world we do not yet know.

### **We believe in honoring the value of and cultivating each student.**

As educators we recognize that a quality education does not look the same for every one. Students from every background – race, sexual orientation, gender, and abilities – come to us with unique qualities and needs. We work to honor and nurture their similarities and differences. Everyone should have the opportunity to fully develop their potential and be recognized as multi-faceted individuals whose worth cannot be determined by one measure alone.

The true purpose of public education is to shape the future of our society by building educated citizens who are caring, healthy, and productive, and who are fully prepared for the world ahead of them. Fulfilling this purpose means ensuring students become life-long learners through the creation of equitable educational experiences.

### **We believe working with community is essential to student success.**

A strong public school exists in a context of, and collaborates with, its community. Community engagement in schools works to support all students, in order to address the societal injustices of transience, poverty, and discrimination. By working together, community, family, and schools will lead the relationship building to ensure that all students are provided with real opportunities to apply their learning and develop a just and equitable society.

### **We believe educating students is a craft that requires talented and committed professionals.**

Education is one of the most complex tasks in our society. Students must be served by a diverse and talented workforce. We are skilled professionals who combine experience in the classroom, extensive knowledge of content, and an understanding of how students learn to create engaging lessons for our students every day. Because learners are different, educators become innovators and develop variety and depth in their techniques and approaches. We match these skills with deep concern for students' progress and well-being. The relationships we develop with students help them build and reach their own potential and passions.

The most important work in public education occurs in the classroom between educator and student. This vital relationship must be valued and nurtured by everyone. Effective decision-making in education must arise from the classroom through a partnership between the educator, the students, and the families.

### **We are committed to working collectively as a powerful force for justice, change, and democracy.**

Because we believe a high quality education is at the heart of a just and equitable society, Saint Paul Federation of Teachers has a long tradition of initiating policies and developing values that have improved public education. We have actively created structures critical to recruiting, supporting, and retaining diverse, high quality professionals. We advocate for students tirelessly and work diligently to end racial disparities and ensure a climate where real learning takes place so that all students are provided an excellent education. We believe all students can be successful in school and in life.