



To Whom it May Concern:

In working with various school districts, we have discovered that schools are struggling to address with students the critical issues of racial inequity and injustice without also endorsing “Black Lives Matter (BLM)” or using BLM as their framework for discussions around anti-racism.

BLM is commonly approached from two different angles: ***the slogan*** and ***the political organization***. Most often, people will say, “Black Lives Matter” to denounce racism and to express their solidarity with a historically marginalized community. There are others, however, who will use the term “Black Lives Matter” in support of the BLM ***political organization***.

We have heard of some school districts claiming that their public support for BLM is ethical because BLM is “only a movement for social justice reform” and is not a ***political organization***. Social justice advocates often push for policy reform in areas such as healthcare, immigration, or the criminal justice system to remedy potential or perceived biases toward certain demographic groups. The word ***POLITICAL*** is *literally* defined as: “relating to the ideas or strategies of a particular party or group in politics.” BLM is advancing their agenda by using political strategies to affect systemic and/or governmental policy changes. ***Politics*** are the business of BLM.

Unfortunately, most people have not studied the BLM ***political organization*** and its principals. Uninformed supporters have no idea how the group originated, how it is funded, what the goals are, or what tactics BLM uses to accomplish them. Several factors propel the BLM ***political organization*** forward. These can include good intentions, ignorance, and the very real fear of the mainstream media and community members branding one as racist for not supporting BLM. It is important to educate yourself and the schools. In particular, know the differences between ***the slogan*** and ***the political organization***. The ***political organization*** takes the position: “If you’re not with us, you’re against us because you’re racist.”

Putting the “Black Lives Matter” message on your Zoom avatar, on your shirt, in your classroom, etc. links you to the BLM organization that shares the slogan. Teacher’s avatars don’t display: “Black Lives Matter \*I support the message, not the organization”.

Many families are hurt and offended by the display of BLM propaganda at their school. It is disruptive and unsupportive for some students. In the interest of inclusion and equity, the simple solution would be to prohibit the display of this specific message and to substitute it with an alternative message





that is not linked to a violent, divisive, and subversive political entity. A teacher could simply use an avatar that says: "Against Racism". There is no need to bring politics into the classroom. Especially when people, in the name of "Black Lives Matter", are promoting the assault and murder of police officers and working to dismantle the profession of your students' law enforcement family members or friends.

It is important for teachers to be able to express their support for equity and anti-racism without displaying "Black Lives Matter" propaganda. How are students to know whether the teacher wearing a Black Lives Matter shirt believes in BLM the *message* or if they support BLM the *political organization*? How would any student know which teacher believes in the total abolition of police "by any means necessary" or if they are merely supporters of racial equity? How would they know if a teacher with a BLM sign on their wall supports the people trying to burn down police precincts with their family member/s and their colleagues trapped inside? Do you think it's appropriate or reasonable for students to ask their teachers such things?

BLM members have been harming and attempting to murder police officers, yet your school continues to endorse BLM, believing that to be the only way to be anti-racist. Can you think of any other circumstance where a school would willfully ignore an issue of this magnitude? It is important to work against racism **and** it is equally as important to not romanticize BLM by picking and choosing the parts that you approve while disregarding the organization's principles.

One simply needs to go to their website, listen to their speakers, and read the news to understand this organization/movement. BLM has recently softened its rhetoric on their website in an attempt to appear less hostile to gain greater mainstream support. Simple searches on archived versions of their webpage expose their goals to "abolish the police", "dismantle religion", "dismantle the nuclear family", and to "dismantle the judicial system".

BLM is a loaded, controversial, provocative, and *political organization*. We respectfully request that schools teach anti-racism instead of supporting BLM in any manner. Since BLM is a *political organization*, it should be treated as such. BLM is not the only narrative in which anti-racism and racial equity can be discussed. When BLM is inevitably discussed, we ask that it be discussed thoroughly. Teachers need to know the nuances of the movement. BLM should be discussed as a *political organization* similar to discussions surrounding other political entities.

Conversations about BLM typically lead to discourse on relationships between the police and marginalized communities, police brutality, and the implications of institutional and systemic racism.





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VBB adamantly disagrees with BLM's allegation of institutional and systemic racism within modern-day police departments. There is **NO** scientific research to support their claim. Conversely, there are multiple scientific studies showing just the opposite to be true.

Lastly, we request that schools take steps to promote positive interactions between their students and police officers. We request that schools teach students to follow directions from police officers even if they may not understand or agree with the reasoning behind them at the time and that students not physically resist arrest or assault/murder police officers in the name of "Black Lives Matter". We ask that schools reinforce the fact that rioting and looting are crimes and not legitimate means of peaceful protest. It is important that schools support the message that police officers are safe and that one can go to a police officer for help.

Some questions to think about:

What protocols does the school have for addressing controversial and provocative topics?

What is the school doing to address virtue-signaling, bias, and implicit bias with their staff?

What supports are in place before and after controversial and provocative conversations for students? Specifically, the minority voice of students in your school who have family members in law enforcement or are supporters of law enforcement?

How is the school working to support their IEP and 504 students with the least restrictive environment possible?

We implore you to distance your school from the BLM message and political organization, as they are undeniably intertwined, and just be simply against racism. School **MUST** remain an emotionally safe learning environment for **ALL** students.



[info@www.voicesbehindthebadge.org](mailto:info@www.voicesbehindthebadge.org)