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### **Statement from Byron V. Garrett, CEO, Equal Opportunity Schools On The Murder of George Floyd and The Current State of Affairs**

“In these moments, reflection is one of our most powerful tools. The beginning of June, we witnessed ongoing nationwide civil unrest as a result of the murder of George Floyd at the hands of police officers. As the leader of an organization of dedicated professionals who strive to ensure our students have an equal opportunity to succeed, I take seriously our role and responsibility in light of the murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and so many others. In that mission, we stand in solidarity with those who seek justice and who highlight, by their presence in the streets, the urgent need for unyielding structural change.

It is important that everyone understands that this crisis affects our communities and our children and how they perceive the world around them, how they learn, and what they learn. We are at the forefront of helping our educational partners navigate the difficult conversations, deep-rooted feelings, and desire for immediate change. Our leadership team will continue to evolve our approach and recommendations to our partners as the situation evolves. Beyond our own feelings, it's important that schools and educators identify and leverage the tools necessary to allow our youth to learn how to channel their voices.

While the circumstances are terrible, they provide our entire educational community yet another opportunity to soberly reckon with our obligation to use the platform of school and schooling to actively combat racism and inequity. Frederick Douglass reminds us that “it’s easier to build children than to repair broken men.” I hope everyone will join us on this mission.”

#### **About Equal Opportunity Schools ([eoschools.org](http://eoschools.org))**

Equal Opportunity Schools is a national organization serving school districts of all sizes. We are here to help you better serve students of color and low-income students and improve the accessibility of advanced learning classes. We provide tools, real-time data analytics, coaching, and an innovative system for the identification and enrollment of students of color and low-income students in advanced academic opportunities along with shared best practices from more than 600 schools in 200+ districts across 30 states, and offer support to make equity a district priority and improve access to rigorous courses.

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