



Statement on Building Community through Racial Equality

As Americans witness the devastating effects of individual and systemic racism in our nation, we are saddened and outraged. In navigating the many challenges we are facing related to race and violence, it is imperative that we lean into our resolve and hope that the greatness of our people lies within the pillars of democracy, faith, and justice.

The Board of Directors of the Science Teachers Association of Texas (STAT) is firmly committed to equality and social justice. We join countless associations, companies, and individuals, including many from the field of science, in solidarity to call for an end to systemic racism and to denounce racism, bigotry, violence, and inequity in our country.

For more than 60 years, STAT has pursued equity in science education and will continue to further that cause in our profession and in our world. The diverse field of science pushes America forward to lead the world in innovation, invention, and inspired leadership, and we, as science educators, call for equal representation and equal treatment of everyone in the science community and in the broader American society.

The historic wrongs inflicted upon people of color have real consequences today and we see this in social, economic, educational, and health disparities. Within STEM, those disparities are markedly pronounced in the workforce. This lack of diversity among STEM role models prevents students from seeing themselves in these roles, robs us all of experiencing new ways to solve problems, and reinforces barriers that prevent change. As educators, we have the unique privilege of working with children and young people to help them understand and appreciate the vast diversity of the wondrous world we inhabit and their unique place in it. More importantly, we bear the great responsibility of exemplifying the values and principles that will make this a better and more equitable world for our students, regardless of race.

As an organization representing more than 5,000 science educators, STAT is committed to welcoming, developing, and supporting educators through an association culture that embraces individuals with diverse life experiences. This includes engaging a broad representation of individuals who promote science education, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, mental or physical ability, age, gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation. STAT promotes the values of equity, diversity, and

inclusion and we will not tolerate bias, prejudice, disrespect, or inequity in our association, in our schools or in our communities. We are also committed to empowering educators to develop and support students from diverse backgrounds and to provide equitable opportunities for all children. Inclusion is not just a word educators use to build trust among communities. Inclusion gives purpose to our teaching. Inclusion lives within our pedagogy. Inclusion grows with each teacher/teacher and teacher/ student moment.

We recognize the need to continue to develop and implement real solutions that make a genuine difference in the fight against injustice and discrimination. STAT is committed to action that will confront the challenges that perpetuate racism within our profession and our communities. In an effort to be part of the needed change:

- We will create a hub of resources dedicated to promoting diversity and inclusion within STEM and creating awareness of the issues affecting minority communities.
- We will use our platform to spotlight educators of color making a difference in the lives of students across Texas.
- We will invite all members of the science education community to use our community platform, STAT365, to express, console, commiserate, contribute, share and value each other with support and goodwill.
- We will seek to ensure racial diversity in our leadership and volunteer representation by appointing a task force to recommend meaningful ways to increase representation for educators of color to serve and lead.

In 1976, the first African American congresswoman from the South and Texas' own Barbara Jordan said, "*We are a people in a quandary about the present. We are a people in search of our future. We are a people in search of a national community.*"

Together, we will continue to inspire discovery of the world through science and together we will strengthen our future and our national community.