



MSEA Black Lives Matter at School Year of Action Grant Policy

PURPOSE:

To provide funds to assist local affiliates and members with expenses related to activities and events planned to support the Black Lives Matter at School movement.

AMOUNT OF GRANT:

Grants are limited to \$1,000.00 per local affiliate or individual member.

REQUIREMENTS:

- Submission of the Black Lives Matter at School Year of Action Grant application form by the deadline.
- Events should take place during the school year in which the grant was awarded.
- Applicants must be MSEA members or local affiliates.
- Grants must be aligned with at least one of the national demands and principles of the Black Lives Matter at School movement. (See below)
- Grants must ensure participation of and impact on Black and Brown students and/or communities.
- A final reconciliation of the grant financial form, receipts documenting expenses, and completion of a survey detailing how your grant was utilized and its ultimate impact must be submitted to MSEA no later than June 1.

Failure to complete an expense reconciliation may result in denial of future applications and/or issuance of a 1099.

PROCESS:

- Grant applications must be submitted to MSEA by the deadline. Late applications or incomplete will not be considered.
- The MSEA Minority Affairs Committee will review all grant applications and make recommendations to the MSEA Board of Directors.
- The MSEA Board of Directors will take action on the recommendations at its November meeting.

DEADLINE: October 25 of the school year in which the grant is being requested.



MSEA Black Lives Matter at School Year of Action Grant Guidance

In this era of mass incarceration, there is a school-to-prison-pipeline system that is more invested in locking up youth than unlocking their minds. That system uses harsh discipline policies that push Black students out of schools at disproportionate rates; denies students the right to learn about their own cultures and whitewashes the curriculum to exclude many of the struggles and contributions of Black people and other people of color; and is pushing out Black teachers from the schools in cities around the country.

With this analysis, educators in the Black Lives Matter at School movement developed these **Four Demands:**

- **End Zero Tolerance. Focus Our Schools on Restorative Justice.** The use of zero tolerance in public schools stops now. The over-policing, out of control suspensions, and expulsions must be brought to an immediate end. To rebuild our structures, we will focus our resources on restorative justice-the organic appointment of community leaders; mediation and processing; and equitable perspectives on rehabilitation. Ending zero tolerance and focusing our schools around restorative justice will honor an autonomous voice and vision for students, staff and faculty.
- **Black Teacher Pushout Ends Now! Hire More Black Teachers in Our Schools.** Nine U.S. cities demonstrate a rapid decline in the number of Black teachers: Boston, Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, Cleveland, New Orleans, Philadelphia, San Francisco and Washington DC. This leaves a mighty burden on the Black teachers and service providers who are left behind and viewed as “disciplinarians.” Racist policies in schools and biased skills exams eliminate Black and Brown teaching candidates. We must increase teacher retention and opportunities for teachers of color.

The elimination of Black teachers is an aggressive push towards homogenizing education in America, creating the School to Prison Pipeline, and honoring the pervasive system of racism from which our country gains its roots. Studies show that students excel academically when they are taught by someone in their own racial group. This message of inequity negatively impacts our students’ aptitude for learning and limits the scope of their dreams. Our Black teachers need our support and deserve to no longer be abandoned.



- **Black History/Ethnic Studies Mandated in K-12.** A classroom is incomplete if there is only one history taught to its students. The exclusion of Black History and Ethnic studies curriculum ends now. Our students of color deserve to feel empowered in the classroom, by seeing themselves in the curriculum and reading materials. Black History and Ethnic Studies must be included in K-12 classrooms. To effectively do this, all teachers are mandated to participate in university and certification programs before blindly infusing Black History or Ethnic Studies into their curriculum. This will ensure that these changes occur with informed tools and dedication.

- **Fund Counselors, Not Cops.** Our newest demand is simple: children need counselors not cops. Schools today spend an enormous amount of their financial resources hiring School Resource Officers and local police officers. These same schools often lack enough counselors for students to receive the support they need. We have seen videos of horrifying interactions with police officers and Black students in school and each week we hear of Black people having the police called on them for simply existing while Black. The reality is our schools need counselors for children. The amount of racial trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences Black students experience continues to increase. We demand that schools provide counselors who have manageable caseloads that allow them to provide quality service to all students.

The lessons that educators taught during that week of action corresponded to the **Thirteen Guiding Principles** of Black Lives Matter:

1. **Restorative Justice**

As we forge our path, we intentionally cultivate and sustain an environment that is rooted in compassion and empathy, where we can make mistakes, grow, and express the fullness of our humanity.

2. **Empathy**

We cultivate empathy by seeking understanding and engaging comrades with the intent to learn about and connect with their contexts.

3. **Loving Engagement**

Our interactions are guided by a commitment to embody justice, peace, and liberation.



4. **Diversity**

We recognize, accept, and celebrate the unique qualities that make us different and the shared perspectives, circumstances, and commonalities that connect us.

5. **Globalism**

We recognize that we're part of the global Black family in a common struggle toward liberation. We stay attuned to the different ways we are impacted including our privilege as Black folx who exist in different parts of the world alongside our other contexts.

6. **Queer Affirming**

We reclaim the word queer as an act of defiance and in solidarity with those who have paved the way for us to live openly. When we gather, we do so with the intention of freeing ourselves from the tight grip of cis-heteropatriarchal assumptions. We foster a network in which all people can be genuine and express their authentic, embodied selves.

7. **Trans Affirming**

We are self-reflexive and consistently do the work required to dismantle cisgender privilege. We hold space for our siblings who are agender, intersex, transgender, and gender expansive to participate and lead. We uplift Black trans folk, especially Black trans women who continue to be targeted and subjected to violence. We work outside of the binary to achieve full liberation.

8. **Collective Value**

We are guided by the fact that all Black lives, regardless of sex assigned at birth, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, economic status, ability, disability, education, location, age, immigration status, religious beliefs or disbeliefs, matter. None of us are free until we are all free.

9. **Intergenerational**

We cultivate a communal network free from ageism and adultism because of our belief in the leadership and learning potential of all people, regardless of age. We recognize and celebrate the intergenerational relationships that have always been and must continue to be when working for justice.

10. **Black Families**

We make our spaces family-friendly and enable caregivers to fully participate with their children. We oppose the practice that demands double duty, where one is expected to



parent in private but engage in public work. We recognize that family includes our chosen families.

11. **Black Villages**

We disrupt the narrow Western prescribed nuclear family structure expectation. We support each other as extended families and villages that collectively care for one another, especially “our” children. We believe that radical care belongs in the public sphere.

12. **Unapologetically Black**

We are unapologetically Black in our positioning. In affirming that Black Lives Matter, we need not qualify our position. To love and desire freedom and justice for ourselves is a necessary prerequisite for wanting the same for others. We proudly embrace our Blackness.

13. **Black Women**

We build a space that affirms Black women by centering their experiences. We recognize the many ways patriarchy shows up so consistently work to maintain a space free from sexism and misogyny, actively disrupting patriarchal culture.

For more information about the National Black Lives Matter at School movement, visit <https://www.blacklivesmatteratschool.com/>