

It is hard to believe that we are already here at another school year. Albeit, this school year looks like none we have ever encountered before. It is a time full of uncertainty, lots of questions (with no real answers), and hard definitions of right and wrong. I believe that we are seeing great divisions between families, friends, loved ones, sisters and brothers, coworkers and countries... whether over a mask, a politician, the Black Lives Matter movement, rights for LGBTQ, rights for Dreamers and immigrant families, whether to go to school or not... the scale of the world's conscience has been tipped by a global pandemic, Covid-19. These are life issues that at one time as parents and teachers we would have taken great pains to hide from our children. Some of the issues were always there, but not so blatant and in our faces. And not necessarily subjects that we felt the need to talk about. Some of these issues have arisen because of Covid-19. Regardless this was the type of conversation that would be hushed when the children walked into the room or a genuine question would be given a fanciful answer instead of an honest straightforward and real response. But now with the quarantine and the virus, it has tipped the scale of my conscience and I feel very strongly about being an avid participant in righting these wrongs. We have tried to shield them from the excruciating pain and embarrassment of our behavior as adults and as leaders, with the mindset that we are protecting them. But in order to protect the children we must first look deep inside of ourselves and decide where do we stand? Where is our heart and soul throughout all of this?

By the sheer nature of the unseen force of the viral enemy, in order to protect our children, we must teach them that we adapt with a willingness to change, learn and grow. We must teach them that when questions arise that we don't know the answer to, we are honest with them and say, "I don't know, but let's find out together". These children, these young adults, our future of the world deserve our best selves as teachers and as leaders.

Here at Louisville Academy of Fine Arts we encourage students to see the world around them and to analyze the path they follow because it is our responsibility to create artists with not only a passion for their discipline but a passion for life. Louisville Academy of Fine Arts is a place where all are welcome, a shared world of creativity. There is an artist in each and every one of us, no matter Who we are called, What we look like, Where we came from, How we dress, or Why we are here.

In order to maintain the reputation and integrity of Louisville Academy of Fine Arts, we must be active in our listening, our understanding, and participating in our communities' voice. We must recognize the need for change, the need for action, and the need for honest communication. We must listen for and hear the rumbling and take notice that we all need to do better and to be better. To educate and to communicate. To hold one another accountable. To acknowledge our mistakes. And to be an active participant in the learning and gaining of knowledge necessary for change.

We have a chance to make a difference. We have an obligation to stand up and fight against the racial injustices and social inequities in our community. It is our responsibility as parents, leaders, teachers and artists to create a culture of inclusion, and equality. A culture where we show dignity, respect and kindness to all. For this reason and in order to create a safe place for all, as a place where we welcome people of all colors, genders, races, religions and groups, Louisville Academy of Fine Arts stands in solidarity and in support of the Black Lives Matter movement. We will be a part of history that works to dismantle the historic systemic racism that inflicts suffering on Black people, and other marginalized groups. We will do this by and through our love for children and the arts. We can make a difference; we want to make a difference and we will make a difference.

Louisville Academy of Fine Arts promises to be a place of honesty, integrity, and social responsibility.

Louisville Academy of Fine Arts promises to be a place where all voices are heard.

Louisville Academy of Fine Arts promises to be a place where you will find kindness.

Louisville Academy of Fine Arts promises to be a place where you will be one of the helpers.

Louisville Academy of Fine Arts promises to be a place where we will grow.