

To the Board of Trustees, Chancellor Pan, our vice chancellors, our campus presidents, and each of the nearly 50 other individuals who were present in the zoom meeting when Camila and I gave our joint oral report on Thursday: thank you. Thank you for the support, thank you for being open and receptive, thank you for joining us in thinking about how we can be better and do better as a community. I wasn't sure what I would feel after presenting this to you all, I was grateful that of the many emotions I felt, hope was prominent. It's been such an honor to work with each of you. As Camila and I prepared for this, we felt it was important to include our own individual voices in making these joint requests. Racial equity is personal not only for us, but for every student we have consulted with. I want to thank you again for your patience and support. I have included our requests as well as both of our written statements outlining our desire for the future of the Seattle Colleges District.

#### Our Requests:

- First, we ask that you establish a district taskforce designed to do three things in the name of public safety. (1) Evaluate the Seattle Colleges' relationship with the Seattle Police Department and make changes, as necessary. This includes any contractual relationships as well as all policies establishing when to call the police. We believe that police presence can be a major distraction to the learning environment, and we need to get clear about what our relationship with the SPD is. (2) Demilitarize our campuses by reorganizing our security departments. We believe it is necessary to add emergency response caseworkers to our security teams. We additionally believe that we need to start prioritizing experience outside of law enforcement when hiring for these teams. (3) Explore ways to empower our communities to promote public safety internally. This includes but is not limited to mental health training, de-escalation training, antibias training, and bolstering mental health resources available across the district.
- Secondly, we request that the district explore options to establish a class around Black and Indigenous history that includes a focus on white privilege in America. We ask that the district move to make this a graduation requirement starting with the class of 2022. We believe that to promote real change, we need to normalize antiracism in the classroom. We believe the first step to doing this comes by increasing antiracism literacy across the board. We also ask that administrators be incredibly careful and thoughtful about who is entrusted to lead these classes.
- Additionally, we ask that the district recognize the work of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion on our campuses as essential work. We urge the district to avoid cuts from these areas. Moving into next year we are going to need the EDI team operating at full capacity.
- Our next request is that the support station at Central be fully funded throughout the month of June. Currently, the station is being maintained at \$200 dollars/day and is funded for the next 2 weeks approximately. We ask that the district supplement any deficit in their funding so the station can remain open during June.
- We finally ask that Seattle Colleges be willing to boldly declare their commitment to antiracism by doing two things. (1) Establish a scholarship program for Black Students

attending Seattle Colleges in the spirit of the "say their names campaign" and build opportunities for professional development and mentorship into that program. The lives, successes, and futures of Black students' matter, and we need to be explicit about that. (2) We ask the district to donate an amount of \$8460 to three Seattle-based organizations including Black Lives Matter Seattle King County, Creative Justice, and Not This Time. If this funding is not readily available, we ask that the foundation work with us to establish a fundraising campaign. These amounts are specific and pay tribute to the life of George Floyd who was mercilessly held down for 8 minutes and 46 seconds while he was murdered. Though we know giving money will never be enough, it is more powerful to say "we support you" with a check than with a tweet, an email, or a letter.

#### Sarah's Written Statement:

I am a proud NSC student. Some of the most meaningful work of my life has been done on the NSC campus. Because of the deep love I have for my school. I am compelled to be honest in this moment. We have before us an imperative to examine our institution, to identify areas where we fall short, and to root out our own institutionalized racism. We must do this without compromise, without caveat, and without self-preservation. In the last three weeks, I have worked with students to identify the areas that we feel need the most work in the name of racial equity and in partnership with Camila have put together a list of improvements we believe to be fundamental in the effort to reaffirm our EDI values. I want to be clear this isn't an exhaustive list and we certainly aren't experts on this. This conversation needs to continue beyond this particular discussion.

In the last three weeks, we have watched the world turn over yet again. I, like almost every single student I've talked to have grappled with the significance of what is happening across our country and around the world. The death of George Floyd wasn't a call for justice it was an excruciating reminder that we have failed utterly to answer this call countless times in the past. The difference between empowered action and learned helplessness is knowing not only what your sphere of influence is but knowing how to leverage it. What words can I use to convince you that the change so many people are sacrificing for doesn't lie outside the sphere in which we have influence? A line has been drawn through us and our next move will define Seattle Colleges for every former student, every current student, and every future student coming to Seattle Colleges. Words of solidarity are simply not enough. In this moment we must choose to be resolute advocates for justice without compromise, without caveat, and without self-preservation. We must be willing to hold a mirror to our institution and to ourselves. We ask that the Board of Trustees as well as our district leadership consider these requests carefully, with the knowledge that not only is the world-changing in this moment, the world is watching.

### Camila's Written Statement:

Often, I have said that Seattle Central College is my second home, and it truly is. At Central I spent the best days of my life since moving to the US from Brazil. That is the reason why I totally agree with Sarah. It's time for us to take a look on our own institutionalized racism, to figure out ways to fix it, for the sake of our students and our community.

Sarah mentioned the importance of maintaining the integrity of our EDI departments by protecting them from the inevitable budget cuts. So too must we do the same for our mental health providers and counselors. These are essential resources to combating student fatigue and internal racism, and for supporting our students, to ensure their success.

The Support Station idea came from one of our students, Jade Linton that wrote a petition asking Seattle Central College to offer more support to the student, faculty and staff who has been in the protests. In the first day the petition was out, it received district wide support. Since we are unable to use Student and Activities fee for this matter, we I created a GoFundMe account to fund the station. I want to take a minute to thank Dr. Sheila for her prompt response in supporting us in this effort. Thank you for allowing us to use the south plaza area, for providing portable restrooms and hot spots for our volunteers to get their homework/work done while still helping the community. The station was first set up on Sunday, June 7 and we hope we have enough funds to be there for the whole month of June.

Any extra funds that are not used for the station will be donated to Black Lives Matter Seattle King County, Creative Justice which is an organization that focus on young people that are impacted by the school-to-prison and/or deportation pipeline, and the Not This Time organization that works with Native Tribes, Black, Latino, Asian communities and with people with disabilities to reform policing in Washington state.

In closing, I want to urge Seattle Colleges to represent our community to the fullest possible. What is the point of these foundational, community institutions if we're not serving the communities they are located? Capitol Hill has been the epicenter of Seattle protest for the past week. Seattle has been the advocate for the underrepresented, the misfortunate, and the oppressed for decades. We, students and student leaders and community members cannot sit idly by while this perpetuation of systemic injustice continues. We urge you to consider our requests in full support of the Black, Indigenous and POC communities. We are strong without you. We are stronger with you. Thank you!