

April 2021

Dear Southwest Minnesota State University School of Education Stakeholders -

Given the volatile acts in our society in our recent shared history and experienced each day, we need to pause to examine our contributions to society and how we can each and collectively impact society moving forward. We are living in a time when we can truly be the change we want to see.

Our School of Education focuses on inclusive practices as noted in our mission and vision statements.

Mission: The mission of the Professional Education program at Southwest Minnesota State University is to create inclusive communities of practice where each learner is an active participant in the investigation of learning, teaching, and leadership processes. Teachers and learners will engage in educational theory, research, inquiry, critical reflection, and application in pursuit of excellence in a culturally responsive education.

Vision: Inclusive communities of practice investigating learning and teaching.

As educators, let us not be reserved in our work to build anti-racism, social justice, and restorative practices into our inclusive communities of practice investigating learning and teaching. We cannot simply say we support this work; we must demonstrate our engagement in doing this work as we disrupt inequities in education. Each step forward is no small feat; let us not allow the great lifting needed to elevate our learners and each other from persuading us to infuse and employ equity and inclusion in our work and in our lives.

Resources available as we move forward:

[Southwest Minnesota State University - Office of Diversity & Inclusion](#)
[Minnesota State Office of Equity and Inclusion](#)
[MDE – School and Staff Resources](#)
[Learning for Justice](#)

We embrace our future – and you are our future. Let us not tolerate the status quo, and let us move forward in our work together to build a better tomorrow starting today.

As Maya Angelou so clearly stated, “Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.”

Sincerely,

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Dr. Sonya Vierstraete
School of Education Chairperson
Southwest Minnesota State University