



A letter from Lynn Vásquez of the New Mexico Public Education Department:

In the wake of increasing racism and violence toward Asian Americans and other people of color, and as an educator in service to New Mexico schools (and a mother of three children), I am compelled to make a plea to all school leaders. I ask you to have an open dialogue with your students, staff, and community and share your commitment to ensure the safety of all students and to acknowledge and express respect for their self-identities. The schoolhouse has a responsibility to serve all students. It is a powerful place where young people's identities are affirmed or ignored, accepted or rejected. Racist words can become pathways to racist actions.

In addition to considering our students, I implore you to also extend your support to our teachers and support staff of color as well, and allow them to help you to lead in this space. Our collective leadership will be a reflection for posterity of what we stood up against as much as it is of what we stood behind while we served our posts, and now is as momentous a time as ever.

In service to students and families,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Lynn Vásquez'.

Lynn Vásquez (she, her, hers, AAPI)
Division Director
Assessment & LMS
New Mexico Public Education Department