

June 6, 2020

To the Brescia community,

From the start of this year, 2020 has challenged us as a community to respond to situations based on our Ursuline values of wisdom, justice and compassion. The recent events in the United States surrounding the tragic death of George Floyd have also challenged us to respond, reflecting on our Ursuline values and take real action to create change in our community and beyond.

The last week has been a time for listening, learning and thoughtful reflection on how Brescia can continue to work toward positive change. Brescia has always been opposed to racism and discrimination of any form. It has never or will ever be tolerated on our campus. Brescia strives to create a diverse, inclusive community that allows for access to education and cares for all communities—where diverse voices are both heard and celebrated. Brescia was founded upon these principles, equity and justice are part of our history and mission.

However, living our principles means that we must press further than simply publicly denouncing racism or discrimination. We have the responsibility to take action. This is why prior to releasing a statement opposing all forms of racism, Brescia needed to ensure we had taken the necessary steps in order to commit to an action plan that can be implemented right here, on our campus.

I can now share with our community that Brescia will move forward, with our partners at King's University College, to establish a working group that explores and discusses themes of racism, inequality and discrimination on campus. Over the summer months exploratory work will take place on our campus, where we will be able to work together to ensure a broad representation of diverse voices. The plan will engage students, staff and faculty across our community in addition to consulting with external partners as necessary.

Brescia will engage our student leaders—including those who have already come forward who want to learn from each other, understand our unconscious biases and acknowledge certain privilege. Our action plan will be rooted in social justice and equality and have a commitment to actively practising diversity and inclusion across our campus.

As events unfold and rallies continue both locally and across the globe, specifically related to anti-Black racism and racial inequality, many of us have felt emotions of sadness, anger, fear and helplessness. I understand that members of our community,



especially our Black students, may be struggling and need support at this time. Please know that our staff have already connected individually and continue assisting our

students who have needed or asked for support. Our students are always encouraged to reach out and connect with staff in times of need. We also support those members of our community who choose to attend the rally today, here in London.

I want to reinforce our message—there is no tolerance at Brescia for racism. Our community welcomes and celebrates diversity and strives to ensure that all of our students' voices are heard. Now is the time for us to listen, encourage dialogue and amplify our students' diverse stories. We cannot give up.

Sincerely,

Susan Mumm, DPhil, FRHistS
Principal
Brescia University College