



# QuakerEd News

from Friends Council on Education

## **Insurgency, Inauguration, Our Children**

### ***A sign-on letter from Friends Council and Heads of Friends Schools***

On January 6, 2021, citizens of our country, including school children, witnessed an armed insurrection against our nation's Capitol building; an insurrection led by individuals who chose to fly the flag of white supremacy and anti-Semitism in order to disrupt the peaceful transfer of power from the current President to the duly-elected President Elect. The insurrection was characterized by violence, disregard for norms of good citizenship, and the use of language and symbols intended to do harm.

Friends Council on Education and our member schools are compelled to advocate for justice, decency, and civility when groups or individuals threaten these practices and other widely held democratic and constitutional principles. The events of January 6th in our Nation's Capital (Washington, DC) exceed our threshold for public response.

Quaker schools are committed to teaching students habits of heart and mind that insist upon a disposition of openness and respect for every member of our community regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, sex, sexual orientation, place of national origin, gender identity, or gender expression. We believe that such a disposition towards our fellow citizens should be the core building block of our citizenship in the United States.

To draw on the words of Sidwell Friends School Head, Bryan Garman, "In the wake of political rancor, racist violence, and a devastating pandemic, we are called to remind our children and ourselves that words matter, respect matters, civility matters, democracy matters." We are also called to affirm that every child in our country is beloved to us and that we are committed to creating environments for them not only of inclusiveness but of belonging.

Friends Council and our member school communities remain committed, now more than ever, to the qualities of citizenship and civil society that are driven by the Quaker practices of peace, integrity, equity and justice, community, and the nonviolent resolution of conflict. There is much work still to be done to turn hearts and minds toward becoming a society that is truly equitable and just. We seek a better world and cannot return to society as it is. We embrace the opportunity a new Presidential administration provides to work towards a more ideal society for all.

We must all move forward in courage and perseverance.

Respectfully,

Friends Council on Education and Heads of Friends Schools

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