As rioters and insurrectionists stormed the United States Capitol this week, egged on by elected officials, teachers were immediately faced with the question of how best to address these events with their students. At PDK International, we have always believed that educators must not shy away from tough questions and difficult conversations. We have a responsibility not just to impart facts and information but to teach young people to engage in the kinds of reasonable discussions and debates that allow them to articulate their views, hear each other out, and bridge their divides — or, at the very least, to agree to disagree.

Since Wednesday, we have surveyed a small group of students and teachers — all of them affiliated with Educators Rising and/or the PDK Association — to get their perspectives on how schools should handle the events of January 6th. We've also pulled together resources to help educators think through the challenges of teaching in a highly polarized political climate. Additionally, on January 19th, we"ll host a webinar on the theme of "Bridging the Divide" (following up on a similar event we held in 2017).

In the spot survey we conducted on January 7, 2021, we found that **two-thirds of students felt it was very important to discuss the events of January 6th in class**, but 35% of teachers felt unprepared to do so. Further, almost two-thirds of students said they were concerned that teachers' political biases would influence those classroom discussions.*

PDK International strives to provide our members with tools and resources, drawing upon

the best available research, that can inform their practice in powerful ways. To that end, and in light of the events of January 6th, we want to call your attention to the following resources from the Educators Rising Academy Curriculum and *Kappan* magazine:

- "How educators can help kids process the attack on the U.S. Capitol" by Phyllis L. Fagell
- "Understanding propaganda: A conversation with Renee Hobbs"
- "Taking a reasoned stance against misinformation" by Wayne Journell
- Understanding Bias: a one-day lesson plan on examining how bias manifests in the classroom
- "The silence of the ellipses: Why history can't be about telling our children lies" by Sam Wineburg

Kappan magazine's upcoming issue — focusing on the theme *Whose truth do we teach*? — includes a number of articles on the challenges involved in leading classroom debates, teaching students about propaganda, and negotiating conflicts over curricular content. In the coming weeks, we'll provide members with discussion questions to facilitate ongoing dialogue about these topics.

In addition, partners and friends of PDK International have produced the following content for understanding and emotionally processing the events of January 6, 2021.

- "Responding to the Insurrection at the U.S. Capitol" - Facing History
- "When Bad Things are Happening" - Teaching Tolerance

We hope that you will attend our webinar, *Continuing to Bridge the Divide: Education in a Politicized Nation,* on January 19, 2021 at 2:00 p.m., to learn about effective ways to teach and learn in a polarized environment. Register today.

We also hope these resources make this difficult time a little easier for you, and we will continue working toward better times ahead.

Dr. Angela L.E. Walmsley
Board Chair
PDK International

Joshua P. Starr, Ed.D.
Chief Executive Officer
PDK International

* Survey sample size: Students, n = 81, Teachers n= 20, conducted via email of our Educator Rising audience.

About PDK International

Established in 1906, PDK International has worked to strengthen the teaching profession by providing evidence-based resources, services, and supports to the current generation of educators and encouraging young people to consider and plan for a career in education.

Today, through our Educators Rising program, PDK is changing the narrative about public education by helping communities develop the next generation of their own teachers. We encourage educators and stakeholders to elevate the discourse around teaching and learning to ensure that every student has a high-quality equitable education.

Copyright © 2021 PDK International, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list.