

October 9, 2023

We are a group of faculty and staff of color in the School of Education who came together to support each other and make sense of events during a complicated time for our school. We do not speak for, nor represent, all faculty or staff of color in the School of Education, and we hold in love the complexity of identities, experiences, viewpoints and scholarship of ourselves and our colleagues of color.

We, first and foremost, support the passion and courage of our students who rightfully acknowledge and seek to confront the historic and present harms of colonization, white supremacy, heterosexism and patriarchy, transphobia and ableism in higher education. These issues are endemic and enduring in the practices that shape our university. They interact in ways that are much more complex than reflected in recent, public conversations around the difficult experiences of multiple women of color, including tenure and research stream faculty, who left the School of Education this year. While we cannot and will not speak for our colleagues, we view their departures as *systemic* and *organizational* failures that require intersectional responses centering racism, heteropatriarchy and misogynoir. We must also address these departures at multiple scales (within our school and at the level of the campus) and through immediate as well as long-term action.

Secondly, as we confront the challenges ahead, we think it is important to note that we view the recent resignation of our Dean, Kathy Schultz, as an act of solidarity in confronting the issues named above. We honor her conclusion that “the School of Education needs to move into the future with a new leader.” As she shifts her role in our school, however, we think it’s important to acknowledge Dean Schultz’ contributions that we value as researchers, directors, staff, instructors and mentors of color in the School of Education:

- She strongly advocated for recruitment and retention of faculty of color whose high quality, cutting-edge scholarship is rooted in commitments to justice, equity, democracy, and community.
- She worked to diminish hierarchies between staff and faculty through implementing an ethic of care alongside the creation of new structures including a staff-led Management Team and systems to recognize the contributions and scholarship of non-tenured instructors.
- She challenged the academy’s normative structures and definitions of faculty to expand beyond tenure lines, by intentionally including research and teaching faculty whenever possible with the hope of expanding these norms into SOE policies.
- She engaged thoughtfully and promptly with student critiques and demands for revision to doctoral core classes, organizational processes, and workloads.
- She supported publicly engaged research rooted in social justice even in the face of political backlash and contention by powerful groups in Colorado, including support for student research to examine anti-CRT campaigns and to facilitate critical approaches to quantitative research methodologies.
- She led efforts to revise tenure and promotion processes in the School of Education to honor community-based research and public scholarship.
- She supported the creation of the innovative Doctoral Pathways Program for prospective doctoral students who are predominantly first-generation students and students of color.
- She genuinely and enthusiastically celebrated and promoted our work, at national, state, and campus levels, including regular “Ed Talks” featuring student and faculty research, bi-weekly updates that spotlighted and celebrated faculty, staff and students, and supported the nomination

and selection of our esteemed historian of education, Dr. Rubén Donato, who gave The Distinguished Research Lecture on CU Boulder's campus (one of the most well attended lectures in years for the campus event).

As individuals with different roles in the School, each of us has at times disagreed, sometimes vehemently, with specific decisions that Dr. Schultz has made as Dean. We are united, however, in our appreciation for her compassion and openness alongside her vision for the school and the concrete steps she made towards realizing that vision on behalf of the students, staff, and faculty in the School of Education.

Like other leaders committed to advancing social justice within historically white institutions, Dean Schultz often had to rely on administrative discretion to make change when the material resources and institutional support for more formal changes were not accessible. As a result, the full scope and impact of her work to make the School of Education a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment has not always been readily visible to all members of the School of Education community.

Collectively, we bear witness to the strength and dedication that Dean Schultz has brought to her leadership of the School of Education. It is our honor and responsibility to continue this work as a community, recognizing that we have much work to do as a School and as a campus. In the coming weeks and months, we plan to continue our collective sensemaking, to organize and strategize together, in community, for immediate and long-term change in the School of Education and the university.

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Over the past week, we have engaged in conversations with many of our colleagues who have diverse, complex, and important reasons for deciding to sign, or not to sign. We honor their choices and look forward to working in ongoing partnership with them.

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