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**For Immediate Release**

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**Joint Statement of Massachusetts Association of Minority Law Enforcement Officers (MAMLEO) and NAACP Boston Branch in response to the Boston Patrolman's Union Letter to the Boston Teachers Union Regarding "Black Lives Matter in Schools Week" in celebration of Black History Month**

We are deeply concerned about the letter sent by Michael Leary, President of the Boston Police Patrolmen's Association to the Boston Teacher's Union opposing the National Black Lives Matter Week in school. This nationwide initiative is led by a coalition has organized for racial justice in education, and is celebrated during the first week of Black History Month.

The week is meant to call attention to the following four points, which are based in data and research and are shown to have a positive impact on performance outcomes for students.

- End "zero tolerance discipline", and implement restorative justice in schools
- Hire more Black teachers in schools
- Mandate Black history and ethnic studies in K-12 curriculum
- Fund counselors not cops

It is important to note that some of the members of MAMLEO also oppose #4; however, we refuse to focus solely on that point when the other three are so critically important to the success of all students in school, especially Black students.

During the week teachers are asked to focus on the following:

- Monday: Restorative Justice, Empathy and Loving Engagement
- Tuesday: Diversity and Globalism
- Wednesday: Trans-Affirming, Queer Affirming and Collective Value
- Thursday: Intergenerational, Black Families and Black Villages
- Friday: Black Women and Unapologetically Black

These principles are part of the BLM beliefs, and many of our brothers in blue support these beliefs as affirming to community and understand how they build trust which is a public safety tool. It is in the interest of public safety, and police community relations that we are clear on this point.

Police officers are not a monolithic group. There are many police officers who understand the ideals and values behind BLM and align themselves with BLM and other social justice organizations. We do not believe BLM is synonymous with “anti-police”. In fact, we believe that BLM is a reflection of the historical mistreatment of Black and brown people in this country, not only by law enforcement but also by a culture that has quietly undermined the value of the lives of Black and brown people.

We support the Boston Teachers Union and thank them for participating in the national Black Lives Matter in Schools week.