

Prologue

When we began collecting articles for the issue you're reading, the very first cases of COVID-19 were being reported in our country. Now, as we publish our latest issue of *Kaleidoscope* and American students go back to school "mask-to-mask," on a hybrid schedule, and/or online only, our nation is powerfully reminded of the crucial and undervalued role that teachers are playing in making things safe for students in so many ways.

We at *Kaleidoscope* are deeply grateful to our community for writing and sharing your stories, as well as for reading and listening to the stories of others. Through our work, we have learned, without question, that stories are how we show up for each other. They're how we celebrate, interrogate and honor the strengths, identities and experiences of our world's beautiful plurality. They're how we hold each other accountable. And they're how we learn, together, to build opportunities that dismantle systems of oppression.

Our nation's systems of schooling have a unique opportunity in this moment to listen to teachers and to value our knowledge. We're thankful to the authors whose stories are featured in this issue and our readers, because we know that telling and hearing stories connects us to each other and allows us to continue—and even to innovate—in the face of enormous challenges.

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