

# Anti-Black Racism In Education

## Compendium of Recommendations



Ontario Human Rights Commission  
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**Ontario**  
**Human Rights Commission**  
**Commission ontarienne des**  
**droits de la personne**

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**Disclaimer:** Please note the reports reviewed by the Ontario Human Rights Commission and the following list recommendations found in this report are by **no means exhaustive** on this subject matter.

## Preface

Recognizing a rise in acts of anti-Black racism in Ontario communities and public schools, in March 2023, the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) announced an initiative to tackle the crisis of systemic anti-Black racism in Ontario’s publicly-funded education system. The OHRC is committed to the development of a province-wide strategy on accountability for, and impact of, anti-Black racism and discrimination in education related to the roles and functions of the education sector, community, and the OHRC.

In anticipation of our work moving forward, the OHRC created a compendium of recommendations through a thorough canvassing of reports addressing anti-racism and anti-Black racism in education. Eighty-three reports spanning over seven decades (1948-2023) were reviewed, with over 190 recommendations identified.

The recommendations do not necessarily represent the current positions of the OHRC. Instead, they demonstrate the extent of decades of reports, studies, and grassroots efforts to prove that anti-Black racism in education exists and has a significant impact on students, families, and communities. The OHRC conducted this research to gain a deeper understanding not only for historical context to facilitate dialogue and discussion, but also to educate the public of the state of this crisis.

The OHRC builds upon the efforts of Black communities who have worked tirelessly on issues of anti-Black racism for decades. The OHRC recognizes that some of the terminology in the recommendations may not fully capture today’s understanding of the distinct impact of “anti-Black racism”. Dr. Akua Benjamin, a Social Work professor at Ryerson University (now Toronto Metropolitan University), first introduced this term in academic literature in 2003. In her work, Dr. Benjamin affirms the term was

*“coined during the 1990’s by grassroots and working class intellectuals in Toronto’s Black community, the concept of anti-Black racism emerged as an analytical weapon in the struggles against racism in policing by the Black community. Increasingly, this concept, anti-Black racism, has also been used to draw attention to other manifestations of systemic racism towards Blacks in Canadian society” (Benjamin, 2003).*

### **Anti-Black racism is:**

*“Prejudice, attitudes, beliefs, stereotyping, and discrimination that is directed at people of African descent and rooted in their unique history and experience of enslavement and its legacy. Anti-Black racism is deeply entrenched in Canadian institutions, policies, and practices, to the extent that it is either functionally normalized or rendered invisible to the larger White society. Anti-Black racism is manifest in the current social, economic, and political marginalization of African Canadians, which includes unequal opportunities, lower socio-economic status, higher unemployment, significant poverty rates, and overrepresentation in the criminal justice system” (Government of Ontario, 2022).*

The OHRC acknowledges the role those grassroots organizations, communities, educators, and academia have played in constructing the bodies of knowledge regarding anti-Black racism in education. The OHRC has chosen to centre community voices and grassroots efforts in this compendium of recommendations.

## Current Context of the Black Population in Canada and Ontario

It is important to understand that the recommendations outlined below have been released in an evolving demographic context, lending them increasing gravity over time. An understanding of the current demographic landscape provides a meaningful insight into the impact of systemic anti-Black racism in education and the significance of the neglect recommendations to address it have faced.

### Black population continues to grow with each census

Canada's Black population continues steadily to increase. According to Statistics Canada's 2021 Census, over 1.5 million<sup>1</sup> Canadians reported being Black or of African descent, representing 4.3 per cent of the country's total population and 16.1 per cent of the racialized population (Statistics Canada, 2022). The Black population in Canada increased 29.2 per cent (349,330) in the five years since the 2016 Census<sup>2</sup> (Statistics Canada, 2023). Projections by Statistics Canada estimate that the Black Canadian population could double in size from 1.5 million in 2021 to over 3.0 million in 2041 (Statistics Canada, 2023).

Statistics Canada also reported that the Black population was younger than the total population in Canada. The median age for the Black population was 30.2 years, while it was 41.2 years for the total population (Statistic Canada, 2023). Children under 15 years old represented 26 per cent of the Black population and represented 16.5 per cent of the total population (Statistic Canada, 2023). While at the end of the range, 7.4 per cent of the Black population were aged 65 years and over, compared to 18.1 per cent of the total population (Statistic Canada, 2023).

### The majority of Black Canadians live in Ontario

As shown in **Table 1** of the Appendix, Statistics Canada reported that Ontario had the largest Black Canadian population of all the provinces and territories with almost fifty per cent (49.7%) of all Black Canadians living there. The population of Black Ontarians grew 22.5 per cent (141,025) since the previous census in 2016<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2021 Census recorded 1,547,870 Canadians who reported being Black or of African descent.

<sup>2</sup> 2016 Census recorded 1,198,540 Canadians who reported being Black or of African descent, representing 3.5% of the country's total population.

<sup>3</sup> According to Statistics Canada 2016 Census, the Black population in Ontario was 627,715, representing 4.7 of the province's population.

and made up a slightly larger proportion of Ontario’s population (5.5%) than they did of any other provincial/territory population.

### The largest proportion live in the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area (CMA)

**Table 2** of the Appendix highlights the population of Black Canadians in Ontario’s by census metropolitan areas (CMA<sup>4</sup>), as well as the proportion of the population they represented. As the table shows a majority (64 per cent) of the province’s 768,740 Black population lives in the Toronto CMA, an area comprised of a myriad of cities<sup>5</sup>, towns<sup>6</sup> and townships<sup>7</sup> within the Golden Horseshoe.

The remaining 36 per cent of the Black community can be found in all regions across Ontario. What this data indicates is that Black families are found in almost every school board district in Ontario; while many may feel that anti-Black racism is strictly a greater Toronto area (GTA) issue, this data demonstrates that recommendations to address anti-Black racism must be adopted throughout the province to protect the 36 per cent who do not live within the GTA/Toronto CMA.

### Recommendations Addressing Anti-Racism and Anti-Black Racism

The OHRC discovered evidence of anti-Black racism in Ontario’s education system dating back to 1850 when Egerton Ryerson, well known for his role in the establishment of residential schools in Canada, also advanced amendments to the *Common School Act*, allowing for racially segregated schools (Robson, 2019). Historian Robin Winks provided a description of Black schools in Ontario stating that,

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<sup>4</sup> A census metropolitan area (CMA) or census agglomeration (CA) is formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centered on a population centre (known as the core). A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000 based on the data from the current Census of Population Program, of which 50,000 or more must live in the core based on adjusted data from the previous Census of Population Program. To be included in the CMA or CA, other adjacent municipalities must have a high degree of integration with the core, as measured by commuting flows derived from data on place of work from the previous Census program.

<sup>5</sup> Toronto, Mississauga, Brampton, Markham, Vaughan, and Pickering.

<sup>6</sup> Oakville, Richmond Hill, Milton, Ajax, Newmarket, Caledon, Halton Hills, Aurora, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Georgina, New Tecumseth, Bradford Gwillimbury, East Gwillimbury, Orangeville, and Mono.

<sup>7</sup> King, and Uxbridge.

*“The Negro schools lacked competent teachers, and attendance was highly irregular and unenforced. Many schools met for only three months in the year or closed entirely. Most had no library of any kind. In some districts, school taxes were collected from Negro residents to support the [white] common school from which their children were barred.... The education received...could hardly have been regarded as equal” (Winks, 1969).*

Recommendations collected by the OHRC from this compendium of recommendations will act as a foundation to build advice and guidance that is solution-focused and action-oriented. Recognizing there is no more time to wait, the OHRC will release an Action Plan to help combat anti-Black racism in education and hold duty-holders accountable and will put practical guidance in the hands of the education sector.

The OHRC acknowledges that the Ministry of Education or school boards may have introduced new initiatives or enhanced existing ones in response to some past recommendations.

The recommendations below were collected from eighty-three reports and have been organized according to seven themes. Recommendations which have been repeated across multiple sources have a footnote highlighting the additional sources. Recommendations released by school boards are noted with an asterisk (\*).



## 1. Performance Indicators and Outcomes

This theme identifies recommendations towards the collection and examination of statistics (literacy, graduation, numeracy etc.) as indicators of how:

- Schools are performing in educating Black students;
- How Black students' mental health and wellbeing is impacted by anti-Black racism; and
- How to address and eliminate statistically significant disproportionalities.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations are from the reports reviewed by the OHRC:

### For the Ministry of Education (Ministry)

1. The Ministry should establish student assessment and testing instruments and practices that recognize racial, cultural and gender diversity (Black Learners Advisory Committee, 1994).
2. The Ministry should analyze student achievement data using an intersectional approach. This will allow for an analysis of outcomes for Black male and female students and will help to identify and address the issues faced by Black students who are also [LGBTQIA+2S] and/or Muslim as well as Black students with disabilities (James & Turner, 2017).
3. The Ministry should immediately begin to develop resource materials that help [educators] learn to assess student work accurately and consistently, on the specific learner outcomes upon which standardized assessment and reporting will be based (Bégin & Caplan, 1994).
4. The Ministry should require school boards to routinely collect disaggregated race-based data that allows for the examination of the experiences and outcomes of Black students, including but not limited to suspensions (by reason and days), expulsions, program of study, graduation rates, drop-out rates, special education identification, and confirmation in postsecondary education (James & Turner, 2017).
5. The Ministry and school boards should work together to develop a consistent method for measuring student success indicators including standardized reading measures, EQAO assessment results, academic pathways (whether the student has taken academic, applied or locally developed courses; and

whether they have modified curriculum expectations), credit accumulation, graduation rates, and post-secondary application, acceptance, and attendance. They should explore ways boards can disaggregate this data by subsets of students to identify and act on equity gaps (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2022).

6. The Ministry, in consultation with community members and researchers, develop a specific procedure for collecting and reporting province-wide data on student achievement (marks, and Grade 3 and Grade 11 literacy test results) for groups identified according to gender, race, ethno-cultural background, and socio-economic status (Bégin & Caplan, 1994).

### For School Boards

7. School boards should eliminate ALL forms of streaming from K-12 to ensure that Black students can reach their full potential (Parents of Black Children, 2022).<sup>8</sup>
8. In order to proactively remedy disparities in placement and academic outcomes, School boards design and implement a substantive secondary school de-streaming pilot project for Grades 9 and 10 for the 2022-23 school year. The pilot should include those schools in which the highest proportions of Black students are currently streamed into applied and locally developed courses. Results of the pilot should be shared with the community and be used to inform the work of the Ministry of Education (Chadha et al., 2020).
9. School boards should assess all students for giftedness rather than have [educators] serve as gatekeepers to evaluation (James & Turner, 2017).
10. School boards should ensure that all tests used to identify giftedness have themselves been reviewed to eliminate possible cultural bias (James & Turner, 2017).
11. School boards should collect and publicly report the following:
  - a. % of Black students who received targeted early reading and math supports (Peel District School Board, 2022).\*
  - b. % of Black students who meet or exceed the provincial standard in reading and writing report card assessments in Grades 3 and 6 EQAO reading and writing (Peel District School Board, 2022).\*

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<sup>8</sup> This recommendation was amplified in other works such as: (James & Turner, 2017).

- c. % of Black students who meet or exceed the provincial standard on Grades 3, 6, and 9 EQAO math (Peel District School Board, 2022).\*
- d. % of Black students who meet or exceed the provincial standard in math report card assessments in Grades 3, 6, and 9 (Peel District School Board, 2022).\*
- e. % of first-time eligible fully participating Black students who are successful on the Ontario Secondary School Literary Test (OSSLT) (Peel District School Board, 2022).\*
- f. % of Black students in Grades 4–12 who report they see themselves reflected and affirmed in their learning environment (Peel District School Board, 2022).\*
- g. % of suspension and expulsion across Grades 4–12 for Black students (Peel District School Board, 2022).\*
- h. % of Black students in Grades 4–12 who feel their school is a safe and inclusive environment (Peel District School Board, 2022).\*
- i. % of Black students in Grades 4–12 who report feeling comfortable seeking supports for their mental health (Peel District School Board, 2022).\*
- j. % of Black students achieving the provincial standard in Grade 9 de-streaming math (Peel District School Board, 2022).\*
- k. % of student enrollment by program of study in Grades 9 to 11 (Peel District School Board, 2022).\*
- l. % of students in Grades 9 and 10 participating in locally developed compulsory credit courses (Peel District School Board, 2022).\*
- m. % of Black students graduating with an Ontario Secondary School Diploma within 5 years of starting Grade 9 (Peel District School Board, 2022).\*
- n. % of Black students in Grades 7–12 who annually update their Individual Pathways Plan in My Blueprint (Peel District School Board, 2022).\*
- o. % of Black students participating in job skills programs (Peel District School Board, 2022).\*
- p. % of Black students entering a university program, college program, apprenticeship training program, or other post-secondary institution after secondary school (Peel District School Board, 2022).\*
- q. % of Black students enrolled in STEM-related courses in Grades 11 and 12 (Peel District School Board, 2022).\*

## For Educators

12. [Educators] should watch the progress of Black children as early as grade primary and focus on helping every child master the basic skills in reading and mathematics (Black Learners Advisory Committee, 1994).

## 2. Student Achievement and Black Joy

The recommendations captured by the OHRC highlights what changes are required to support the educational success of Black students that may simultaneously and symbiotically focus on Black success and Black Joy.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations are from the reports reviewed by the OHRC:

### For the Ministry of Education (Ministry)

13. The Ministry should develop programs, resources and learning materials which accurately provide knowledge and understanding of Black people (i.e., history, heritage, culture, traditions, and contributions to society) as an integral part of the curriculum and make them available to schools (Black Learners Advisory Committee, 1994).
14. The Ministry should decolonize the curriculum and prioritize Black history. Black Canadian experiences must be built into all school curriculums, K-12 (Parents of Black Children, 2022).
15. The Ministry should allocate sufficient funds for additional and appropriate staff to continue the revision of the curriculum at every level of education, so that it fully reflects the cultural diversity of [Ontario]. The Ministry should Examine existing texts and learning materials and either discard or suitably amend any that distort or mis-represent the past or the present role of any group of people within the province (Black Learners Advisory Committee, 1994).
16. The Ministry should update kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum to include opportunities for students to learn concepts, topics, and rises related to anti-racism, diversity and inclusion (Government of Alberta, 2022).
17. The Ministry of Education should ensure the Ontario curriculum reflects the full diversity of the student population, in particular the Black population. This

should not only be the case in Canadian history, but also throughout the JK to Grade 12 curriculum (James & Turner, 2017).<sup>9</sup>

18. The Ministry should require that school boards eliminate the racial disproportionality in suspensions and expulsions by adopting age-appropriate alternative discipline approaches, such as restorative justice practices, which will address underlying issues, help students change behaviour, and create a safer and more positive school climate (James & Turner, 2017).<sup>10</sup>
19. The Ministry should eliminate the use of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions for children in Grade 6 and under, and require that they be replaced with more compassionate, humane, and rehabilitative approaches to school discipline (James & Turner, 2017).
20. The Ministry should make available funding for social supports to address the root causes of inappropriate school behaviours, rather than the symptoms. This includes ending the regular presence of police in schools and replacing them with social workers, child and youth workers, and other social supports that have specific training on how to deal with Black children for schools with a high proportion of Black students (James & Turner, 2017).
21. The Ministry should encourage all school boards and schools to adopt trauma-informed and culturally safe approaches including by providing guidance, resources and supports (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2022).
22. The Ministry should enhance prevention through programs that promote health, engagement, and activity for youth. It should also provide locally available mental health services that afford early identification and treatment for children and youth in the context of their families and schools, that are culturally appropriate and that are integrated with Black community organizations (McMurtry & Curling, 2008).
23. The Ministry in collaboration with [local Black communities/organizations] develop a plan to set up learning centres in the communities to provide academic (reading and math) and cultural enrichment programs for Black students after school an/or on Saturday mornings (Black Learners Advisory Committee, 1994).
24. The Ministry should commit funds to help schools institute "bridge programs" for students in the transition from elementary to high school. These programs

<sup>9</sup> This recommendation was also discussed in (Ontario Alliance of Black School Educators, 2015).

<sup>10</sup> This recommendation was also echoed in (Ontario Alliance of Black School Educators, 2015).

should involve a group of [educators] and students from feeder school to set up student mentors for the incoming elementary students. Meetings should occur throughout the Grade Eight year. Grade Eight students, accompanied by their mentors, should meet their future [educators], administration, and guidance counsellors, and be familiarized with the expectations, routines, and processes of the high school (Dei et al., 1995).

25. The Ministry should extend funding for off-school youth counselling services needs. Counselling services off-school should be made available at local community centres. There should also be an alliance between schools and certain community services so that students could be directed to such services or book their own appointments through the school and guidance counsellor, who could match students to particular counsellors to deal with needs which the school cannot meet (Dei et al., 1995).

### For School Boards

26. School boards should require all schools to celebrate Black History Month / African Heritage Month to ensure that Black students see themselves reflected in the curriculum and in Canadian history, and to ensure they understand the history of Africa and people of African descent beyond slavery. Ensure all schools have access to appropriate tools and resources to support these learning opportunities (James & Turner, 2017).
27. School boards should implement race equity programs. This would include collecting race-based student data (disaggregated by racial sub-group) to identify barriers to equitable outcomes for Black students as well as anti-racism/anti-oppression training needs for board staff (Ontario Alliance of Black School Educators, 2015).
28. School boards should employ transformative justice in their work with Black children (Newbold, 2020).<sup>11</sup>
29. School boards should immediately undertake a robust, comprehensive reform of its guidance system to address the needs and expectations of all students and their families. The reform should specifically remedy the inadequacies and gaps in supports and guidance for historically and currently underserved demographic groups, with emphasis on Black students (Chadha et al., 2020).

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<sup>11</sup> Newbold notes in the framework of transformative justice, there is an emphasis on understanding the conditions that contribute to harm being done, or to a conflict.

30. School boards should make sure that parents provide informed consent to modifying a student's curriculum expectations (including making sure they understand the effects on the student's academic progress, future course options and job opportunities) (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2022).
31. School boards should work with Black parents, service providers and youth to create culturally relevant education and support services for parents of Black queer and trans children and youth (City of Toronto, 2019).
32. School boards should create programs directed toward students who perform poorly because they are dissatisfied with the school environment (Canadian Alliance of Black Educators, 1995).
33. Study centres should be established where students could get tutorial help with their homework after school hours. Tutorial sessions of this sort could be organized by department heads, where such help is offered to students by subject and grade level or simply by topic (Dei et al., 1995).
34. School boards should increase the supply and variety of culturally appropriate before and after school programs with clear learning objectives, including STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) programs. (City of Toronto, 2019).
35. Tutoring and mentoring programs should be established in all schools to pair Black youths with mentors from the community who would assist them in setting academic and career goals. There is a need to create partnerships with existing mentoring programs such as "Each One Teach One", to create an in-school mentoring program with volunteer mentors from the community (Dei et al., 1995).
36. School boards should support student-led initiatives, projective, committees, and action groups that call out anti-Black racism groups (Global Centre for Pluralism, 2021).
37. [School boards] should support student engagement in their own learning by providing students with culturally responsive learning opportunities: ability to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways, and the opportunity to use a variety of resources (Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board, 2021).\*
38. [School boards] should maintain classroom and school environments where Black, Indigenous, and Students of Colour see themselves authentically

reflected and included throughout the school community (Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board, 2021).\*

39. School boards should:
  - a. Incorporate Black affirming curriculum;
  - b. Create spaces for Black LGBTQIA+2S students and families;
  - c. Engage Black students at the intersection of their various identities;
  - d. Challenge classism, and create spaces that are accessible and respectful to low income Black families;
  - e. Challenge ableism, centering Black students with disabilities in the learning environment;
  - f. Incorporate arts based programming to engage Black children and youth; and
  - g. Incorporate [language] based learning into the curriculum (Newbold, 2020).

#### For Ontario Faculties of Education (Faculties)

40. Faculties should include in their curriculum the history and the contributions of various racial, ethnic, and cultural groups (Solomon & Levine-Rasky, 2003).

#### For Educators and Administration

41. [Educators], administration, and staff should inquire fully about home communities:
  - a. Respect and seek to learn about students' home worlds;
  - b. Start getting to know your students' communities;
  - c. Help students to investigate and document their complex communities (Pollock, M., 2008).
42. [Educators], administration, and staff should discuss parents' experiences of racially unequal opportunity:
  - a. Actively cultivate the trust of Black parents/guardians/caregivers;
  - b. Help parents/caregivers who struggle against damaging stereotypes of their children;
  - c. Undermine racially stratified tracking through minority parent involvement (Pollock, M., 2008).
43. [Educators], administration, and staff should be encouraged to engage with students, for example, in sporting, entertainment, academic contents and



events, in an effort to break down the current rigid hierarchical power structures (Dei et al., 1995).

44. Educators should provide classroom experiences which are reflective of cultural diversity (e.g., guest speakers, tasks and assignments reflective of student interest and relevance), and provide diversity of experiential opportunities (Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board, 2021).\*

### 3. Professional Development and Education

The focus of this theme is on recommendations for the need for those within the education system (educators, administrators, trustees) to have sufficient and ongoing professional development with a particular attention on equity, human rights, anti-bias, anti-racism, and anti-Black racism to deliver high quality instruction to all students.

#### Recommendations

The following recommendations are from the reports reviewed by the OHRC:

##### For the Ministry of Education (Ministry)

45. The Ministry should require education in anti-colonial and critical race theory, with a specific focus on anti-Black racism, as part of all [educator] education programs in Ontario, including not only elementary and secondary school [educator] training programs but also early childhood education programs. (James & Turner, 2017).
46. The [Ministry] should develop human rights education materials that foster respect for, and appreciation of, diversity and ensure that [educators] receive the necessary support to teach children's rights in school. (United Nations, 2022)

##### For the Ontario Faculties of Education (Faculties) / Ontario College of Teachers

47. Faculties should offer courses in anti-racism, anti-sexism, and anti-classism education. The programs should focus on all aspects of the formal, hidden, and deep curriculum in addition to examining [educator] expectations and

how this can thwart or encourage the educational opportunities of their students (Dei et al., 1995).

48. Faculties should develop detailed guidelines for the evaluation of teaching/learning materials and resources for any forms of bias: gender, cultural or racial. (Black Learners Advisory Committee, 1994)
49. Faculties should offer mandatory professional development for all educators in the publicly funded school system, with continuing certification every five years, dependent on both satisfactory performance and participation in professional development recognized by the College of Teachers (Bégin & Caplan, 1994).
50. Faculties should make trauma-informed, anti-racism, anti-oppression, and equity-based strategies for teaching mandatory parts of their programs (Parents of Black Children, 2022).

### For School Boards

51. School boards should create trauma-informed and culturally safe school environments and provide comprehensive, sustained and job-embedded training to educators on trauma-informed and culturally safe practices (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2022).
52. School boards should implement ongoing [educator] education to help reduce anti-Black racism, ensure culturally appropriate pedagogy, and ensure a curriculum that reflects the full diversity of Ontario students (James & Turner, 2017).
53. School boards should ensure that all resources required for training not only be developed in French, but also that critical incidents of systemic anti-Black racism are based on examples collected within the francophone education systems (Villella, 2023).
54. School boards should provide anti-racism training to educators, school administrators, and staff that reflects their roles and responsibilities. School boards must ensure that anti-racism training is embedded into ongoing professional development and not provided as one-off training (Black Learners Advisory Committee, 1994).
55. School boards should provide race relations, and cross-cultural sensitivity training to all [educators], staff, administrators, and school board members; and ensure that all principal [educators] and others responsible for leading

- and advising [educators], understand the principles of anti-racism education (Black Learners Advisory Committee, 1994).
56. School boards should provide educators, staff training opportunities to understand the dynamics of anti-Black racism as well as how to facilitate dialogue in the classroom on sensitive issues such as racism, racial/ethnic discrimination, and racist language (Global Centre for Pluralism, 2021).
  57. School boards should provide all [educators] training to increase their ability to effectively educate Black students. This includes increasing staff understanding and awareness of racism, racialization, and racial profiling and how they affect the success of Black students (Ontario Alliance of Black School Educators, 2015).
  58. School boards should consult local Black organizations/community in anti-Black racism in education training of educators, administrators, and trustees (Dei et al., 1995).
  59. School boards should require more time in pre-service and continuing professional development be devoted to training [educators] to assess student learning in a way that will help students improve their performance. Supervised practice and guidance as the principal teaching/learning mechanism for doing so (Bégin & Caplan, 1994).
  60. School boards should require those involved in training educators in the principles and practices of anti-black racism and race relations must have the appropriate background, knowledge and/or certification in anti-black racism in education and race relations training to provide sufficient support in these areas (Dei et al., 1995).
  61. School board trustees should receive ongoing training on equity, anti-racism, and anti-oppression with a specific focus on anti-Black racism (James & Turner, 2017).<sup>12</sup>
  62. [School boards] should develop an Internet based knowledge portal for a single point of access for anti-racism in education knowledge, tools, professional development modules, and up-to-date and relevant resources to support ongoing learning for staff, students, and parents (Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board, 2021).\*

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<sup>12</sup> This recommendation was also discussed in (Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board, 2021).\*

63. [School boards] in addition to a dedicated annual anti-racism professional development, an anti-racism lens should be applied to all professional development (Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board, 2021).\*
64. [School boards] should establish and make known, a mentoring program for [educators] who are interested in seeking promotional opportunities, including promotions to positions of responsibility, and that such a program will include a component focussed on mentorship for racialized [educators] (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2005).

### For Educators and Administrators

65. [Educators], administrators, and staff should include anti-racist, in particular anti-black racist strategies in their Annual Learning Plans (Peel District School Board, 2022).\*

## 4. Educator Support and Opportunities

This theme addresses the importance of prioritizing equitable and inclusive work cultures and deals with bias in hiring and promotion processes at all levels of the education sector. The recommendations selected by the OHRC consider the importance of building Black and other racialized employee networks for support to navigate their own safety within the education system.

### Recommendations

The following recommendations are from the reports reviewed by the OHRC:

#### For the Ministry of Education (Ministry)

66. The Ministry should develop a strategy to diversify the teaching workforce that includes encouraging Black students to pursue a career in [education] (James & Turner, 2017).
67. The Ministry should make scholarships available immediately to assist 20 Black youth annually for the next 10 years to undertake teacher training to help redress the under-representation of Black [educators] in the public education system (Black Learners Advisory Committee, 1994).
68. The Ministry should develop a strategy to diversify the teaching workforce that includes requiring all school boards to implement an Employment Equity Program, to help create a workforce (both academic and non-academic) that reflect the diversity of the student population (James & Turner, 2017).
69. Ensure equal access to quality education for all children in the State party, and ensure that Indigenous children and children of African descent receive culturally appropriate education that respects their heritage and language (United Nations, 2022).

#### For School Boards

70. School boards should incorporate equity and anti-racism competencies into job descriptions, as well as the hiring and promotion criteria, for all educators, school administrators, and school staff (James & Turner, 2017).
71. School boards should ensure that regulated health professionals (e.g., psychologists, social workers, speech pathologists) reflect the diversity of the local community. Ensuring that all regulated health professionals are able to

- provide culturally appropriate services to Black students through an anti-racist lens (Peel District School Board, 2022). \*
72. School board trustees should ensure equity-related competencies are included in the job description and performance appraisal of the director of education (Peel District School Board, 2022).\*
  73. School board trustees should ensure that in the hiring process candidates for the director of education are asked about issues of education equity, racism, and oppression, their demonstrated commitment to education equity, and their plans to address the identified issues in their new role (James & Turner, 2017).
  74. Within one year, School boards establish a centralized applicant tracking and file management system including hiring, promotions, and pro-term appointments to ensure that fair and transparent procedures are in place and adhered to. Immediately preserve all documentation referring to hiring, promotions and pro-term appointments (Peel District School Board, 2022).\*
  75. Within six months, School boards should review their employment application processes to determine whether otherwise qualified racialized candidates are being screened out and report the results of the review at a public meeting of the Board of Trustees. If it is determined that the application processes are inappropriately screening qualified candidates, then it should take prompt action to correct the problem within one year (Peel District School Board, 2022).\*
  76. School boards should require Superintendents, Principals, and Vice Principals performance appraisal plan includes goals to eliminate disparities revealed by student and workplace demographic data collection (Peel District School Board, 2022).\*
  77. School boards should hire Black [educators], Black guidance counsellors, Black administrative and front office staff (Parents of Black Children, 2022).
  78. School boards should hire Black educators within the system, specifically in schools with a significant number of Black students (Ontario Alliance of Black School Educators, 2015).
  79. School boards should support Graduation Coaches to start in grade 6 (Parents Against Racism Simcoe County, 2022).
  80. School boards should implement Individual Graduation Coaches for all secondary schools (Parents Against Racism Simcoe County, 2022).

81. Given the importance of mentoring and networks to advancement within school boards, school boards should create opportunities for Black educators to network with White and other staff (Ontario Alliance of Black School Educators, 2015).
82. School boards should create and support Black employee networks (Ontario Alliance of Black School Educators, 2015).
83. School boards should provide a support person in the school to whom Black learners can go to share their frustrations and experiences. Schools should respond to issues of loneliness of feeling different from the majority (Black Learners Advisory Committee, 1994).
84. [Educators] who are identified as cultivating positive relationships with Black students – and more generally promote equity and inclusivity in their work with students – should be recognized by, for example by encouraging and facilitating nominations for internal and/or external awards (James, 2019).
85. [School boards] should enhance hiring, retention, promotion, and succession planning practices, for all employee groups, to ensure staff is more representative of the diversity of the school’s population (Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board, 2021).\*
86. [School boards] should promote inclusivity and belonging, where the identities of Black, Indigenous, and Persons of Colour staff are celebrated and encouraged in the work environment (Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board, 2021).\*
87. [School boards] should use an established selection, promotion, and competition process for all positions of responsibility (and when practicable, for acting positions), including assistant chairs, chairs, assistant curriculum leaders, curriculum leaders, vice principals and principals, which includes Equity performance indicator “look fors” and behaviour based questions, including an interview question regarding demonstrated commitment to equity. The process will also include de-briefing a candidate as to why he or she was not selected, and using Equity performance indicator “look fors” and demonstrated commitment to equity when placing staff in acting positions in the absence of a competition (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2005).

## 5. Data Collection

This theme highlights recommendations on what data school boards should collect, the methods and scope of data collection, and the monitoring and evaluation standards pertaining to the data collection.<sup>13</sup>

### Recommendations

The following recommendations are from the reports reviewed by the OHRC:

#### For the Ministry of Education (Ministry)

88. The Ministry should update the Ministry of Education's School Climate Survey to ask students to identify their race and gender to allow for the identification of issues for Black students and the targeting of supports and interventions (James & Turner, 2017).
89. The Ministry should update the Ministry of Education's School Climate Survey to ask students about their treatment by not just their peers, but also by [educators], school administrators, support staff, police in schools, and all adults (named by their roles) that they interact with in their schools (James & Turner, 2017).
90. The Ministry should update the Ministry of Education's Survey for School Staff About Equity and Inclusive Education, Bullying/Harassment to inquire about the experience of school staff themselves and ask staff to identify their race and gender to allow for the identification of issues for Black [educators] and staff in order to design specific supports and interventions (James & Turner, 2017).
91. The Ministry should update the Ministry of Education's School Climate Survey for Parents About Equity and Inclusive Education, Bullying/Harassment to ask about the racial background of students. Update the section that asks parents about their child's experience of bullying to include treatment not just by their peers but also by [educators], school administrators, and other school staff (James & Turner, 2017).

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<sup>13</sup> In 2021, The Ministry of Education released a Board Improvement and Equity Plan (BIEP), which directed all school boards with collecting voluntary student demographic data by September 2022. In addition, as of January 1, 2023, under the *Anti-Racism Act* (ARA) all school boards are required to collect student demographic and outcomes data listed in regulation 267/18. Part of their work in tackling anti-Black racism in education, the OHRC will monitor and identify whether school boards are collecting data and to what extent.



92. The Ministry should ensure that all future school surveys allow students, staff, and parents to identify their race in order to allow for an assessment of issues affecting Black students in the education system (James & Turner, 2017).

### For School Boards

93. All boards should collect demographic data about equity indicators including race, ethnicity, creed (religion), disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. The Ministry should work with boards to explore ways to make sure all boards collect the same data to allow for analysis across the province, including by standardizing the age groupings for censuses, census questions and response options (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2022).
94. School boards should collect race-based data on student achievement and discipline across all Ontario schools. Require boards not only to publicly publish disaggregated race-based data but to act on the data that they are collecting (Parents of Black Children, 2022).
95. School boards should conduct more focus group research with young children to gain insight into their schooling experiences and to hear the experiences and stories of families (Munroe et al., 2022).
96. School boards should supplement the disaggregated race-based data with qualitative data from focus groups and interviews with Black students, parents, educators, and advocates to identify the underlying issues resulting in the opportunity and achievement gaps identified through the data (James & Turner, 2017).
97. School boards should collect race-based data on retention of employees (Parents Against Racism Simcoe County, 2022).
98. In-depth studies of how [educators] have motivated Black/African-Canadians students to do well in other educational and recreational endeavours (e.g., sports and athletics) with view of learning from these strategies (Dei et al., 1995).
99. The Ministry and School boards should collect data on the following:
  - a. % of Board-level staff and educators receiving professional learning on anti-Black racism literacy and how to deliver services through a culturally relevant and responsive lens (Peel District School Board, 2022)\*;

- b. % of school staff who have undertaken professional development to support fair student discipline practices (Peel District School Board, 2022)\*;
  - c. % of recently hired staff who are Black (Peel District School Board, 2022)\*;
  - d. % of Black [educators] that feel welcome and included in their workplace (Peel District School Board, 2022)\*;
  - e. % of Black students who accessed school-based mental health services (Peel District School Board, 2022)\*;
  - f. % of schools that have implemented activities that promote school connections for Black students, including extracurricular activities (Peel District School Board, 2022)\*;
  - g. % of schools that have an intentional strategy to keep Black students engaged (Peel District School Board, 2022)\*;
  - h. % of Black [educators]/staff leaving the profession (Peel District School Board, 2022)\*;
  - i. Reasons for leaving as captured through exit interviews (Peel District School Board, 2022)\*;
  - j. % of [educators] who are Black compared with the % of students who are Black (Peel District School Board, 2022)\*;
  - k. % of school administrators who are Black compared with the % of [educators] who are Black (Peel District School Board, 2022)\*;
  - l. % of [educators] who have included anti-racist strategies, in particular anti-Black racism, in their Annual Learning Plans (Peel District School Board, 2022)\*;
  - m. % of Superintendents, Principals, and Vice Principals whose performance appraisal plan includes goals to eliminate disparities revealed by student and workplace demographic data collection (Peel District School Board, 2022).\*
100. Develop and conduct a self-identification survey of all employees that will provide the Board with data on the number of racialized persons (disaggregated by race) who are in permanent and acting positions of responsibility for the school year. Positions of responsibility include: curriculum leaders, assistant curriculum leaders, assistant chairs, chairs, vice-principals and principals (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2005).

## For the Ontario Faculties of Education (Faculties) / Ontario College of Teachers

101. Faculties of Education should survey programs/faculties to determine what has been successful in learning the representation of Black students and implement strategies to recruit and retain Black students and faculty (Cameron & Jefferies, 2021).

## 6. Enforcement and Accountability Mechanisms

This theme examines recommendations which promote confidence in existing or new processes and accountability; and what enforcement or accountability mechanisms should be utilized in the education system.

### Recommendations

The following recommendations are from the reports reviewed by the OHRC:

#### For the Ministry of Education (Ministry)

102. The Ministry should conduct a full investigation into the suspension expulsion, and discipline tactics in Catholic schools across Ontario (Parents of Black Children, 2022)
103. The Ministry should create an education data oversight division to rank, monitor and hold school boards accountable for their commitment to equity (Parents of Black Children, 2023).
104. The Ministry should reiterate the new policy and institute monitoring and complaints mechanisms to ensure schools follow the provincial approach to school discipline (James & Turner, 2017).
105. The Ministry should develop a formalized process and procedure to report racism and all incidents of hate; information to be shared with the on an annual basis (Parents Against Racism Simcoe County, 2022).
106. The Ministry should monitor and publicly report on in-school suspensions by race for students in Grade 6 and under (James & Turner, 2017).
107. The Ministry of Education should require that police services collect and publicly report on all in-school arrests and other interventions, disaggregated by the race of the student (James & Turner, 2017).<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> The recommendation was discussed in (Asilu Collective, 2021).

108. Disaggregated race-based data on suspensions (in and out of school), expulsions and exclusions be tracked centrally and reported on publicly through the Annual Equity Accountability Report Card. (Chadha et al., 2020)
109. The Ministry should restore the Office of the Ontario Child Advocate and its entire previous mandate. (United Nations, 2022).
110. The Ministry should conduct random equity audits of school boards (Parents of Black Children, 2022).

### For School Boards

111. School boards should create a position of anti-Black racism coordinator/equity officer. This position would be given a broad mandate to examine complaints of racism and other forms of harassment and discrimination in schools. This individual would report directly to the director (Dei et al., 1995).
112. Where anecdotal evidence of racial profiling exists, the school(s) involved should collect data for the purpose of monitoring its occurrence and to identify measures to combat it. Such school(s) should consult with affected communities and the Ontario Human Rights Commission to establish guidelines on how the data will be collected and its use. Such data should not be used in a manner to undermine the purposes of the Ontario Human Rights Code. (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2003)
113. School board trustees should establish a board-level Black Advisory Committee to hear from Black parents, Black students, and the Black community about issues of concern to them (James & Turner, 2017).
114. [School boards] should create an anti-racism Permanent Committee to ensure representation and inclusion in classroom and school resources, clubs and activities, opportunities to access available resources (e.g., mentors, scholarships) and opportunities to access programs for all pathways. (Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board, 2021).\*
115. Each school should be required to institute regular open forums to allow students the opportunity to discuss their concerns with school staff, administrators, and parent groups. These concerns should be recorded, and a plan of action should be developed to address them. The student concerns, along with the plan of action, should be distributed to the community/parents and the director (Dei et al., 1995).

116. Each school should be required to provide a complaints and suggestion box so that students can anonymously submit their complaints about school staff and practices, as well as ideas on how to improve the school. Student councils, in cooperation with a school equity officer, could be delegated that task of reviewing these suggestions and bringing them to the attention of school authorities, with an agreed-upon system of follow-up (Dei et al., 1995).
117. Boards should publicly report every year on what percentage of students have had their curriculum expectations modified and how. (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2023)
118. [School boards] should provide a web-based platform within existing school board website (parent section) where the parent/guardian/caregiver experience can be conveyed on an ongoing basis: e.g., ideas, concerns, comments, and feedback regarding systemic race related issues. The platform should be monitored by a school board staff to collate the parent/guardian/caregiver’s input into themes. A response to emerging themes should be provided on the platform, on a monthly basis (Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board, 2021).\*
119. School boards should create and implement Workplace Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Programs. Such programs would play a role in reducing the experiences of discrimination and harassment and also to ensure that any issues that do arise are appropriately investigated and addressed (Ontario Alliance of Black School Educators, 2015).
120. [School boards] should include in their strategic priorities a commitment to anti-racism education, with dedicated funds to support the work (Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board, 2021)\*
121. School boards should monitor and report on the following:
- a. # of human rights complaints related to anti-Black racism raised and % resolved (informally and formally) (Peel District School Board, 2022)\*;
  - b. # of complaints raised by Black staff, students, and parents (Peel District School Board, 2022)\*;
  - c. # of reported hate-based incidents related to anti-Black racism (Peel District School Board, 2022).\*
122. Recommend (no later than four years from the completion of the staff self-identification survey) to the Board at a public meeting that the Board undertake subsequent measurement of the number of racialized [educators]

who are in permanent and acting positions of responsibility, compared to other groups (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2005).

123. [School boards] should make the results of its staff self-identification survey publicly available, as well as all subsequent measurements within 60 days of completion, and provide the results at a public meeting (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2005).
124. [School boards] should establish and implement a mandatory annual learning plan for all current and newly-elected Trustees that adequately addresses:
  - a. Obligations and responsibilities under the Education Act and all other relevant legislation, including the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Ontario Human Rights Code;
  - b. [School board] governance and other key policies, including but not limited to policies concerning Trustee conduct; conflict of interest, equity and inclusive education, and human rights (Chadha et al., 2020).
125. Where increases in executive compensation are permitted under provincial legislation, such increases amongst other things, be tied to progress of the implementation of the annual Equity Action Plan (Chadha et al., 2020).

## 7. Relationships, Policy, and Advocacy Drivers

The final theme is structured by recommendations which identify the role and function of the various players in the education space, including parents, guardians, caregivers and families, educators, administrators, boards, and the Ministry to advance emerging priorities to tackle anti-Black racism in education.

### Recommendations

The following recommendations are from the reports reviewed by the OHRC:

#### For the Ministry of Education (Ministry)

126. The Ministry should reform the Education Act to include and identify Black people in Canada as having a right to a curriculum that represents them as much as any other student (Parents of Black Children, 2022).
127. The Ministry should publicly acknowledge that anti-Black racism in education negatively impacts the educational outcomes for Black students and exacts a social cost. To that end, the Ministry should develop a province-wide commitment to race equity in education and to addressing anti-Black racism throughout Ontario's public education system (James & Turner, 2017).
128. The Ministry should immediately mandate the removal of all and any type of police-in-school programs and policing-in-school programs across all educational levels, K-12 and post-secondary institutions (Examples: School Resource Officer Program, Youth Liaison Officer program, School Liaison Officer program, Youth Education Officer, School Engagement Team Officer Support program, Police Liaison Officer program, Student Liaison Officer program, VIP program, BRAD program, Campus Special Constables etc.) (Policing-Free Schools, 2023).<sup>15</sup>
129. The Ministry should immediately review and amend already existing legislation and create new legislation in support of co-creation of transformative, healthy, equitable, life-affirming, policing-free, properly and equitably funded and resourced public educational spaces (Policing-Free Schools, 2023).<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Parents of Black Children affirmed all recommendations issued by Policing-Free Schools, formerly known as LAEN (Latinx, Afro-Latin-America, Abya Yala Education Network)

<sup>16</sup> Parents of Black Children affirmed all recommendations issued by Policing-Free Schools, formerly known as LAEN (Latinx, Afro-Latin-America, Abya Yala Education Network)

130. The Ministry should immediately review and amend already existing legislation and create new legislation to uproot educational spaces' policing and carceral infrastructure, practices, policies and culture and creation of accountability measures (Policing-Free Schools, 2023).<sup>17</sup>
131. The Ministry should recognize the right of Black people to control, manage and deliver educational programs and services for Black students (Parents of Black Children, 2022).
132. The Ministry should engage all stakeholders to become actively involved in supporting better outcomes for Black students by validating the experiences of Black students and highlighting the social return on investing in Black students. This includes working with leaders in education, including school board trustees, directors of education, and the public, to raise awareness and understanding of systemic racism and the impact it has on Black students throughout Ontario's public school system as well as the collective benefit when these challenges are meaningfully addressed (James & Turner, 2017).
133. The Ministry should develop and apply a race equity lens to the development and implementation of all education policies, programs, curriculum, policies, guidelines, learning materials, etc. (James & Turner, 2017).
134. The Ministry should strongly communicate to all school boards that the zero-tolerance policy put in place by the Mike Harris government was repealed in 2008 and that they must communicate this information to all school administrators and [educators] (James & Turner, 2017).
135. The ministry should require that all law enforcement personnel who regularly interact with schools are adequately trained to ensure they have the skills and understanding to effectively interact with children and youth. Topics for training include:
- a. Trauma-informed practice;
  - b. Child and adolescent development and psychology;
  - c. Conflict resolution;
  - d. De-escalation techniques; and
  - e. Violence prevention and intervention (James & Turner, 2017).
136. The Ministry should hear from Black parents, Black students, and the Black community about issues of concern, and allow them to provide input and

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<sup>17</sup> Parents of Black Children affirmed all recommendations issued by Policing-Free Schools, formerly known as LAEN (Latinx, Afro-Latin-America, Abya Yala Education Network)



share insights on proposed policies and curriculum. This may be done by establishing a Black Advisory Committee to advise the Ministry on all aspects of the education system—from the conceptualization stages of policies to their final form, along with goals and timetables for monitoring and accountability (James & Turner, 2017).

137. Implement special measures for African Canadians in accordance with the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination general recommendations No. 34 (2011) on racial discrimination against people of African descent and No. 32 (2009) on the meaning and scope of special measures in the Convention with a view to fostering effective integration at the federal, provincial and territorial levels of African Canadians into Canadian society by effectively ensuring implementation of non-discrimination legislation and policies regarding access to employment, housing and public service. Strengthen special measures to increase the level of educational attainment of African Canadian children, in particular by preventing their marginalization and reducing their dropout rates (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2017).

### For School Boards

138. School board trustees should recognize that anti-Black racism in education negatively impacts Black students and develop a stated commitment to race equity and addressing anti-Black racism (James & Turner, 2017).
139. School boards should develop resources and supports for educators, school administrators, and other school staff to appropriately engage Black parents/guardians/caregivers (James & Turner, 2017).
140. School boards should support educators and school staff to build safe, caring, and supportive learning environments by building relationships with students (James & Turner, 2017).
141. School boards should immediately address and combat [educator] biases that lead to disproportionate levels of harsh discipline, lower grades, and inequitable outcomes for Black students through initiatives such as regular anti-racism training, teaching performance review, assessment, and monitoring (Parents of Black Children, 2022).

142. School boards should create a Black parent liaison position to engage with Black parents and support them to understand the education system, engage with schools, and to advocate for their children (James & Turner, 2017).<sup>18</sup>
143. School boards should educate parents and students about the process by which inappropriate student behaviours are handled. Inform them about the complaints and appeal mechanisms available to them should they feel their children have been unfairly suspended or expelled (James & Turner, 2017).
144. School boards should inform all parents and students about the complaints and appeal mechanisms available to them should there be issues with school policies and practices (James & Turner, 2017).
145. School boards should ensure documents sent home are in the appropriate language for parents and that interpreters are available when needed for parent–teacher interviews and any school–parent interactions (James & Turner, 2017).
146. School boards should train school staff to create and maintain safe and positive school climates. Ensure appropriate staff are available in schools to support safe and positive school climates, including social workers, behaviour interventionists, counselors, and other support staff to prevent and address safety concerns and conflict by addressing the root causes of conflict and disruptive behaviours (James & Turner, 2017).
147. School boards should prohibit schools from calling law enforcement for disciplinary matters and create a list of specific behaviours for which police cannot be called, such as defiance or profanity (James & Turner, 2017).
148. School boards should consult with the Black community on identifying best practices for creating curriculum that reflects and values the diverse student population (Social Planning Council of Peel, 2015).
149. [School boards] should support student input when reviewing and designing policies that impact the student educational experience through a variety of modes such as holding student focus groups, and through student representation in the anti-racism advisory committee (Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board, 2021).\*
150. School boards should develop Black history resources for schools (in consultation with African diasporic community partners) and provide schools

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<sup>18</sup> Recommendation was also raised in (Ontario Alliance of Black School Educators, 2015).

- with greater resources to celebrate and recognize Black History Month (Peel District School Board, 2016).\*
151. School boards should immediately terminate the School Resource Officer (SRO) program, and prohibit the future use of comparable programs structured under a reformist framework. (Asilu Collective, 2021).<sup>19</sup>
  152. School boards should drastically narrow down the memorandum of understanding between school boards and [local] Police Services to only allow local police officers in schools during provincially mandated occurrences (Asilu Collective, 2021).
  153. School boards should Completely remove all policing structures from schools (e.g., metal detectors and surveillance systems) (Asilu Collective, 2021).
  154. School boards should deprioritize the use of police as an instrument of last resort, and instead focus on transformative practices that are grounded in healing centred engagement/practices and are relationship centred that do not criminalize students (Asilu Collective, 2021).
  155. [School boards] should revise and harmonize all relevant contractual commitments, policies and procedures to limit police involvement at schools to necessary involvement, introduce accountability and transparency mechanisms for all police involvement and embed Indigenous rights, human rights and children’s rights and survivor-centred practices (Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, 2021).\*
  156. The psychosocial and educational roles of [SROs] should be re-assigned to civilians with experience in coaching and leading other extracurricular activities, child and youth counselling, trauma-informed practice, sexual assault prevention, substance use education and bullying prevention. The funds and resources which would otherwise go to [SRO] programs should be redirected to civilians to fulfill these roles (British Columbia’s Office of the Human Rights Commissioner, 2021).

### For Educators and Administrators

157. White and non-Black educators to recognize a state of emergency specifically when it comes to serving Black students (especially Black students experiencing intersectional marginalization) (Newbold, 2020).

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<sup>19</sup> This recommendation was also found in (Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, 2021).\*

158. White and non-Black [educators] should use their privilege as leverage in order to intervene into anti-Black racism discursively, practically and politically (Newbold, 2020).
159. [Educators] should ensure that academic expectations are communicated and reinforced regularly (to students and parents) (Black Learners Advisory Committee, 1994).
160. [Educators], administrators and staff should recognize, praise, and reward the students' efforts and achievements (Black Learners Advisory Committee, 1994).
161. Principals and vice-principals should prioritize restoring relationships through honest and open dialogue, providing supports and engaging students in necessary learning about racism and discrimination (Durham Catholic District School Board, 2022).\*
162. Principals and vice-principals should ensure ongoing communication with the concerned parents/guardians/caregivers and students throughout the investigation process and continue to check-in and monitor the situation with all students involved (Durham Catholic District School Board, 2022).\*
163. Educators with the power to curate classroom content have a responsibility to share power and space with racialized community educators and parents (particularly those who are representative of their school's student demographic) (Newbold, 2020).
164. White and non-Black [educators] who work with Black students must work to engage Black community members in the capacity of oral storytellers, workshop facilitators, guest artists, scientists in the school etc. (Newbold, 2020).
165. Educators must seek to support families by providing Black led resources and referrals rather than reporting families to CAS for crimes of poverty (Newbold, 2020).

### For Black Communities

166. Advocates and community agencies should educate Black parents/guardians/caregivers about the importance of engaging with their children's school and supporting them to advocate for their children (James & Turner, 2017).

167. The Black community should contact the Minister of Education to advocate for a public education system in which Black students thrive and achieve their full potential (James & Turner, 2017).
168. The Black community should engage with local school boards and schools to support the identification of issues facing Black students and the implementation of appropriate strategies for change (James & Turner, 2017).
169. The Black community should support Black parents/guardians/caregivers and individuals from the Black community to engage with their local schools, including joining parent councils (James & Turner, 2017).
170. The Black community should support individuals from Black communities, and with diverse identities, to run for school board trustee (James & Turner, 2017).
171. The Black community should get involved in local municipal elections to ensure the election of school board trustees who understand issues of anti-Black racism in the education system and are prepared to create an education system that ensures equitable outcomes for all students (James & Turner, 2017).
172. The Black community should develop toolkits and in-person sessions to educate Black parents/guardians/caregivers about Ontario's education system, how systemic anti-Black racism in the education system impacts Black students, how to effectively advocate for their children, and how they can support their children's academic success (James & Turner, 2017).
173. The Black community should develop and advertise tutoring programs to ensure that Black students have access to the supports needed to close the opportunity and achievement gaps (James & Turner, 2017).
174. The Black community should support Black parents/guardians/caregivers and students to challenge suspensions and expulsions (James & Turner, 2017).
175. Black organizations should provide programs for youth to build self-esteem and awareness of life choices. Enhance the work of local Black organizations creating youth initiatives (Black Learners Advisory Committee, 1994).

### For Black Parents, Guardians and Caregivers

176. Parents/guardians/caregivers of Black children should ensure their children are prepared to enter kindergarten ready to learn (James & Turner, 2017).

177. Parents/guardians/caregivers of Black children should set high expectations for their children and support that with ongoing learning at home (James & Turner, 2017).
178. Parents/guardians/caregivers of Black children should make sure their child is in school every day, on time, and ready to learn (James & Turner, 2017).
179. Parents/guardians/caregivers of Black children should debrief with their children on a daily basis by not just asking about what they've learned at school, but also ensuring that the school is a safe and caring learning environment (James & Turner, 2017).
180. Parents/guardians/caregivers of Black children should support their children to complete homework and assignments (James & Turner, 2017).
181. Parents/guardians/caregivers of Black children should ensure that each [educator] knows them from the first day of classes, and that they are engaged and involved parents (James & Turner, 2017).
182. Parents/guardians/caregivers of Black children should know who the principal and trustees are and contact them if need be (James & Turner, 2017).
183. Parents/guardians/caregivers of Black children should intervene early if issues arise, such as bullying or mistreatment, suspension, or expulsion, or if the child falls behind or needs extra help or needs additional support to learn (James & Turner, 2017).
184. Parents/guardians/caregivers of Black children should attend parent-teacher interviews to get information about their child's performance and use these interviews as an opportunity to work collaboratively with their children's [educators] and talk to them about goals and expectations for their child (James & Turner, 2017).
185. Parents/guardians/caregivers of Black children should participate in family engagement and volunteer opportunities at the school (James & Turner, 2017).
186. Parents/guardians/caregivers of Black children should find out about the different learning streams in high school to ensure that their children are taking courses appropriate to their level of ability and in line with their post-secondary education plans (James & Turner, 2017).
187. Parents/guardians/caregivers of Black children should learn about the various paths to a successful career so that they can guide their child's course selections (James & Turner, 2017).

188. Parents/guardians/caregivers of Black children should take their children to tutoring programs to support the learning they are already engaged in at school (James & Turner, 2017).
189. Parents/guardians/caregivers should share details of the incident with a trusted staff member and/or administrator conducting the investigation with respect to their child(ren) (Durham Catholic District School Board, 2022).\*
190. Parents/guardians/caregivers should support their child(ren) in participating in the school investigation, resolution and follow up action (Durham Catholic District School Board, 2022).\*
191. Parents/guardians/caregivers/students who are unsatisfied with the handling of incidents/situations at the school level should contact the Family of Schools Superintendent (Durham Catholic District School Board, 2022).\*

## Conclusion

Anti-Black racism has plagued Ontario's publicly-funded education system for over 170 years. Despite Black communities voicing concerns and offering recommendations, meaningfully addressing systemic anti-Black racism has been slow, arduous, and limited.

With over 25 per cent of Black Canadians being children under 15 years, and nearly 50 per cent of Black Canadians residing in Ontario, the OHRC recognizes the dire urgency to combat systemic anti-Black racism in education to mitigate future harms for future generations.

The recommendations in this document are intended to inform our dialogue with the public moving forward, to advance in a solution and action-oriented manner. The problems, challenges, and obstacles have been thoroughly examined and do not require further reiteration. The OHRC is looking forward to the contributions that communities and the public may have to move the public education system towards meaningful action.



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## Appendix: Demographic Data Tables

*Table 1. Black Canadian Population by Province and Territory (2021).*

Province/Territory	Provincial Population	Black Canadian Population	% of Provincial Population	% of Black Canadian Population
Newfoundland and Labrador	510,550	3,590	0.7%	0.2%
Prince Edward Island	154,331	1,815	1.2%	0.1%
Nova Scotia	969,383	28,220	3.0%	1.8%
New Brunswick	775,610	12,155	1.6%	0.8%
Québec	8,501,833	422,405	5.1%	27.3%
<b>Ontario</b>	<b>14,223,942</b>	<b>768,740</b>	<b>5.5%</b>	<b>49.7%</b>
Manitoba	1,342,153	46,485	3.6%	3.0%
Saskatchewan	1,132,505	22,570	2.0%	1.5%
Alberta	4,262,635	177,940	4.3%	11.5%
British Columbia	5,000,879	61,760	1.3%	4.0%
Yukon	40,232	560	1.4%	0.04%
Northwest Territories	41,070	1,060	2.6%	0.1%
Nunavut	36,858	565	1.5%	0.04%
<b>CANADA</b>	<b>36,991,981</b>	<b>1,547,870</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population				

*Table 2: Black Canadians in Ontario by Census Metropolitan and Census Agglomeration Areas (2021).*

Census Metropolitan or Census Agglomeration Area (CMA/CA)	CMA/CA Population	Black Canadian/Ontarian Population	% of CMA/CA Population
Toronto	6,142,880	488,155	8%
Ottawa - Gatineau (Ontario part)	1,116,795	86,675	8%
Hamilton	773,440	33,510	4%
Oshawa	411,400	33,080	8%
Kitchener - Cambridge - Waterloo	568,065	26,545	5%
London	535,780	18,780	4%
Windsor	415,505	16,325	4%
St. Catharines - Niagara	425,480	12,785	3%
Barrie	210,150	7,300	3%
Guelph	163,485	6,240	4%
Brantford	141,910	4,220	3%
Greater Sudbury	167,620	4,040	2%
Kingston	168,075	2,825	2%
Chatham-Kent	102,095	2,600	3%
Peterborough	125,990	1,530	1%
Belleville - Quinte West	109,245	1,440	1%
Sarnia	96,290	1,290	1%
Thunder Bay	120,960	1,245	1%
Woodstock	45,950	930	2%
Cornwall	59,750	850	1%
Essa	22,790	705	3%
Norfolk	66,225	655	1%
North Bay	70,170	655	1%
Sault Ste. Marie	75,425	640	1%
Kawartha Lakes	77,230	605	1%
Stratford	32,480	585	2%
Orillia	32,270	405	1%
Owen Sound	31,875	325	1%
Tillsonburg	18,300	315	2%
Centre Wellington	30,650	300	1%
Wasaga Beach	24,590	285	1%
Petawawa	17,290	270	2%
Midland	26,360	265	1%
Timmins	40,315	255	1%
Ingersoll	13,545	230	2%
Cobourg	19,780	225	1%
Collingwood	24,270	210	1%



Census Metropolitan or Census Agglomeration Area (CMA/CA)	CMA/CA Population	Black Canadian/Ontarian Population	% of CMA/CA Population
Brockville	30,885	200	1%
Port Hope	16,885	200	1%
Hawkesbury	11,645	160	2%
Pembroke	23,085	115	0%
Elliot Lake	11,220	90	1%
Kenora	14,610	60	0%

Source: Statistics Canada. Visible minority: Canada, provinces and territories, census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations with parts



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