

RACISM



FROM REFLECTION TO ACTION

Addressing Anti-Black Racism
in Canadian Schools



GLOBAL
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PLURALISM

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United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
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Canadian
Commission
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The Global Centre for Pluralism is an independent, charitable organization founded by His Highness the Aga Khan and the Government of Canada. We work with policy leaders, educators and community builders around the world to amplify and implement the transformative power of pluralism. Our programming supports societies looking to address injustice, inequality and exclusion, while remaining grounded in the contexts and lived experiences of each place.

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SUMMARY

As the topic of systemic anti-Black racism took hold of the national discourse in the summer of 2020, the [Global Centre for Pluralism](#) (GCP) partnered with the [Canadian Commission for UNESCO](#) (CCUNESCO) to offer professional development on anti-Black racism online to 500+ teachers and administrators from across Canada. This policy brief presents recommendations based on the feedback of participants during and following this training.

Audience

This policy brief is intended for Canadian policy-makers and school leaders seeking to address anti-Black racism in education systems.

Key Recommendations

Based on feedback from 500+ teachers and non-teaching staff from schools across Canada in the summer of 2020, this policy brief makes recommendations in the following areas:

- **Professional Development:** Confronting anti-Black racism needs to be a core component of teacher education. Teachers report needing 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.
- **Curriculum Development:** Building an inclusive curriculum that encompasses all subjects—from history to math, science and the arts—should include representation of racialized groups. Courses should both highlight contributions as well as provide necessary context to understand systemic racism.
- **Strategic Planning:** Teachers report feeling unsupported in their efforts to discuss and address anti-Black racism. Any effective strategy will require administrative buy-in and involvement and concerted efforts to engage parents/carers.

BACKGROUND

Cell-phone footage of George Floyd’s murder by a police officer in Minneapolis on 25 May 2020 led to a surge in conversations about anti-Black racism across North America. In Canada, it was a reminder of the urgent need to acknowledge and address racism in policing and justice systems, particularly as the Black Lives Matter social movement renewed a call to rethink and demilitarize approaches to safety and security.¹ Concerns about anti-Black systemic racism were further heightened by evidence that the COVID-19 pandemic was exacerbating underlying economic and social inequalities that have always affected Black communities disproportionately.²

Examples from across Canada point to the pressing need to address anti-Black racism in education.³ In October 2020, for example, a Black student in Ontario opened his high school yearbook to find that the message he had written paying tribute to his late grandmother was replaced with a racist slur.⁴ In 2019, the mother of an elementary school student filed a complaint with Quebec’s Human Rights and Youth Rights Commission after her son was beaten and called the N-word by classmates who faced no disciplinary action.⁵ In September 2016, a six-year-old Black girl was handcuffed at her wrists and ankles for 28 minutes at her school in Ontario by police officers who said she was acting violently.⁶ In Manitoba, a student left their high school after the school administration failed repeatedly to discipline racist bullies.⁷ Although school boards in Canada rarely collect statistics on the race of students and their experiences of racism across the education system—at least not in any systematic way—anecdotal evidence and news stories such as these suggest that research on the situation in Canada would likely reflect similar findings in other countries (see Appendix 1).

1 Black Lives Matter – Canada (2020), “Defund the Police – Demands,” accessed 22 November 2020, <https://blacklivesmatter.ca/defund-the-police/>.

2 Association for Canadian Studies (2020), *Understanding Systemic Racism in Canada: Concept and Data*, online conference, 23 June, accessed 22 November 2020, <https://acs-aec.ca/en/events/systemic-racism-in-canada-concept-and-data/>.

3 Carl James (2019), “The Crisis of Anti-Black Racism in Schools Persists Across Generations,” *Voices of the RSC* (Royal Society of Canada), 26 August, accessed 22 November 2020, <https://rsc-src.ca/en/voices/crisis-anti-black-racism-in-schools-persists-across-generations>.

4 Joshua Freeman and Chris Fox (2020), “Ontario Student ‘Heartbroken’ After Yearbook Message Honouring Grandma Replaced With Racist Slur,” *CTV News* (Toronto), 13 October, accessed 22 November 2020, <https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/ontario-student-heartbroken-after-yearbook-message-honouring-grandma-replaced-with-racist-slur-1.5143559>.

5 Morgan Lowrie (2020), “Mother of Teen Boy Targeted in Racist Video Files Quebec Human Rights Complaint,” *CTV News* (Montreal), 25 June, accessed 22 November 2020, <https://montreal.ctvnews.ca/mother-of-teen-boy-targeted-in-racist-video-files-quebec-human-rights-complaint-1.4999766?cache=wpwecmoua%3Fot%3DAjaxLayout%3FautoPlay%3Dtrue%3Fot%3DAjaxLayout%3FcontactForm%3Dtrue%3Fot%3DAjaxLayout%3FcontactForm%3Dtrue>.

6 CBC News (2020), “Race Was a Factor in Handcuffing of 6-Year-Old Black Girl in Mississauga School, Tribunal Says,” 3 March, accessed 22 November, [https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/human-rights-tribunal-peel-police-girl-handcuffed-1.5483456#:~:text=Girl%20was%20cuffed%20at%20her%20wrists%20and%20ankles%20for%2028%20minutes&text=Peel%20Regional%20Police\)-,Peel%20police%20officers%20discriminated%20against%20a%20six%2Dyear%20old%20black,Ontario's%20Human%20Rights%20Tribunal%20says](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/human-rights-tribunal-peel-police-girl-handcuffed-1.5483456#:~:text=Girl%20was%20cuffed%20at%20her%20wrists%20and%20ankles%20for%2028%20minutes&text=Peel%20Regional%20Police)-,Peel%20police%20officers%20discriminated%20against%20a%20six%2Dyear%20old%20black,Ontario's%20Human%20Rights%20Tribunal%20says).

7 Nicholas Frew (2020), “17-Year-Old Speaks Out About Racism Faced at Winnipeg Catholic School,” *CBC News* (Manitoba), 13 June, accessed 22 November 2020, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/winnipeg-st-boniface-diocesan-high-school-racism-1.5610956>.

The Status Quo Is Failing Canadian Teachers and Students

In response to the momentum around acknowledging and seeking to address systemic racism in Canada, the [Global Centre for Pluralism](#) (GCP)—whose [education program](#) is grounded in the belief that schools can be incubators for truly pluralistic societies—partnered with the [Canadian Commission for UNESCO](#) (CCUNESCO) to offer anti-Black racism professional development online to high school teachers during the summer of 2020. Entitled “[Talking About Racism in the Classroom](#),” these two-hour professional development sessions (PD) were designed and facilitated by inclusion consultants, Destine Lord and Elsa Mondésir Villefort, in English and French, respectively.

Despite the challenges posed by COVID-19, and the fact that the PD was offered during the summer months, 881 high school teachers and administrators from across Canada registered for the sessions. In addition, over 200 elementary school teachers requested the PD. Although not part of the original target group, CCUNESCO hired an inclusion consultant with expertise in primary education, Rima Dib, to facilitate sessions for these educators. The extremely positive response to this initiative served as a clear indication that **teachers recognize the importance of addressing anti-Black racism in the classroom while also feeling ill-equipped to do so**. This was also confirmed on their registration forms, where teachers explicitly stated believing they lacked the skills to confront anti-Black racism.

Each of the 46 online small-group dialogue sessions, as well as a webinar for those who could not attend the sessions (available [here](#))⁸, had a note-taker from the GCP or CCUNESCO tasked with documenting the questions and concerns raised by the participating 500+ educators and administrators. There was significant **consistency between the challenges elementary and high school teachers described** and the questions they asked, whether in English or in French. Notes from these sessions frame the recommendations outlined in the following section. These recommendations target governments, school boards and the school community, including administrators and parents/carers.

The following recommendations align closely with Canada’s Council of Ministers of Education’s pan-Canadian global competencies that speak to the need for students to be “active and responsive to their communities.” The reflective, critical-thinking, communication and collaborative skills determined to be essential competencies⁹ can be furthered through anti-Black racism PD.

⁸ As of December 2020, the webinar has been viewed over 1,200 times

⁹ Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (n.d.), *Global Competencies*, accessed 22 November 2020, https://www.cmec.ca/682/Global_Competerencies.html.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Effectively addressing exclusion and disparities requires, first and foremost, that institutions, including ministries of education, school boards and schools, acknowledge the existence of anti-Black racism.

The following recommendations synthesize the issues that emerged during the “Talking About Racism in the Classroom” online dialogue sessions as well as the feedback provided after the sessions. They also reference the Black Lives Matter Canada demands around education. These recommendations target governments, school boards and the school community, including administrators and parents/carers.

- #1. Make Anti-Black Racism a Core Component of Teacher Education
- #2. Ensure Representation and Inclusion in All Courses Across the Curriculum
- #3. Have School Boards Participate in and Provide Anti-Black Racism Professional Development
- #4. Address Anti-Black Racism in Schools Through Strategic Planning and Professional Development with Community and Family Involvement
- #5. Include and Involve Students

RECOMMENDATION #1

Make Anti-Black Racism a Core Component of Teacher Education

Participants came from multiple disciplines, including English, history, math, science, French, art, music and physical education. **Teachers remarked that the approach presented in the PD would require a fundamental shift in how they view their role in the classroom.** While many participants hoped to become more knowledgeable about anti-Black racism,¹⁰ the PD pointed to the fact that the appropriate role for teachers is to create space for “brave conversations”¹¹; thus, teachers would themselves become learners alongside their students as well as serving as facilitators and allies. In response to the challenges that were raised repeatedly throughout the sessions, the facilitators spoke to the importance of:

- **Creating a space for dialogue:** In order to set the right tone, teachers were encouraged to lay out appropriate language and provide a framework to call out and address microaggressions¹² at the outset of their courses. For example, they were told to be clear that the term “racism” will never be taken lightly or jokingly. Any accusations of racism will be defined and discussed. Additionally, regardless of what the “norm” is outside of the classroom, a teacher should be clear on what terminology will be tolerated (or not) in the classroom and why.
- **Teacher as learner:** Teachers reported feeling as though they have to be the “experts” in the classroom. When it comes to addressing exclusion, however, teachers will not have expertise in all forms of exclusion and need to reconceive their roles and focus on supporting their Black students. Any discussions around microaggressions, language and exclusion can be viewed as an opportunity for both teachers and students to learn by doing research. White teachers can model self-reflection and talk openly about their own journeys, the mistakes they have made, their white fragility and how it comes up—whether they are dealing with students, parents/carers or colleagues.
- **Teacher as facilitator:** Canadians tend to value comfort and politeness. Anti-racism educators, however, need to lean into discomfort, hold a space for anger in their students, model calm and be willing to make mistakes and learn from them. Teachers were very clear that they need support in facilitating difficult and controversial conversations in the classroom. Teachers need to feel supported to lean into discomfort and have the difficult discussions that “cancel culture”¹³ and zero-tolerance policies discourage. This speaks to the need for more of a *call-in* vs. *call-out* school culture, where listening and learning through dialogue is prioritized.

¹⁰ Racism, which is based in discrimination and unequal power relations, is targeted at people of African descent and is rooted in their unique history and experience of enslavement and colonization.

¹¹ Break Away (2017), “Do We Need Safe or Brave Spaces?”, *Break Away Blog*, 1 December, accessed 22 November, <https://alternativebreaks.org/safe-or-brave-spaces/#:~:text=A%20safe%20space%20is%20ideally,without%20the%20pressure%20to%20educate.&text=A%20brave%20space%20encourages%20dialogue>.

¹² The everyday casual racism that Black people (and others) experience.

¹³ *Cancel culture* refers to the practice of withdrawing support for (*canceling*) public figures and companies after they have done or said something considered objectionable or offensive. *Cancel culture* is generally discussed as being performed on social media in the form of group shaming.

- **Teacher as ally:** Teachers should support their students. If a student says they have experienced racism, believe them. Teachers should avoid getting defensive or focusing on a person's intentions. They should focus on the experience and impact of the victim. Teachers consistently had concerns about unconscious bias and microaggressions. Microaggressions accumulate and have the power to traumatize. It should not be left to Black students to have to explain what microaggressions look and feel like. By learning and teaching about everyday acts of racism, teachers can help their class recognize them and take them seriously. Teachers can also use their privilege to broaden inclusivity by directly requesting books from different authors and perspectives.

Participants remarked that this type of approach would help alleviate anxiety around race issues and equip them in their classrooms, hallways and when dealing with colleagues. Given the persistence of teacher concerns around creating a classroom and school culture that could openly and effectively address anti-Black racism, it seems clear that this way of conceptualizing the role of the teacher should be a core component of teacher education. **To implement this recommendation professional development should be provided to post-secondary staff, especially instructors in Bachelor and Master level education programs.**

"I'm afraid I will say something wrong. I'm also afraid the students will say something racist or offensive, and I won't know what to say or how to handle it."

— HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

"I think the main challenge is that I have been navigating my world through the lens of white privilege. I also think that students bring a lot of learned biases from home and that can make it a sensitive topic for those with an already ingrained sense of white fragility (especially in predominantly white schools)."

— HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER, NOVA SCOTIA

A main challenge to discussing racism in the classroom is *"addressing the initial discomfort and ensuring that all students feel safe in the space; creating an environment where all voices are heard and are respected."*

— SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHER, ONTARIO

RECOMMENDATION #2

Ensure Representation and Inclusion in All Courses Across the Curriculum

Teachers participating in the PD came from a broad range of subject matters and spoke of the need for resources that integrate diverse perspectives and experiences in *all* courses, from language arts to carpentry, history and science, and music and physical education. Teachers spoke of the need to ensure diverse representation in teaching tools and activities, as well as sharing diverse stories and perspectives within the curriculum (and not just the predominant white culture).

History education, in particular, needs to provide the necessary context to explain the presence and persistence of systemic racism, from a young age. Ultimately, every curriculum needs to explain the different levels and forms of racism and the different challenges of racialized groups, grounded in their specific historical contexts. This would go a long way in providing the necessary context and understanding of today's most pressing social issues. French resources, in particular, were said to be sorely lacking on these issues.

Another recurring issue that emerged in the sessions was the importance of breaking out of the traditional Canadian narrative of multiculturalism. As the UN's Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' 2016 Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent concluded, "Despite the reputation for promoting multiculturalism and diversity ... the structural racism that lies at the core of many Canadian institutions and the systemic anti-Black racism [...] continues to have an impact on the human rights situation of African Canadians."¹⁴ Attachment to this narrative of multiculturalism and diversity promotion can serve to silence discussions that challenge this core idea.

To make significant progress in this area it is important that these resources be integrated directly into curriculum as opposed to items that teachers are expected to seek and include on their own accord. This implies that **all curriculum development teams should include individuals with an expertise in anti-racism teaching and learning.**

¹⁴ As quoted in Mireille Apollon, Sébastien Goupil and David Schimpky (2020), "A Roadmap Already Exists to Advance the Rights of Black Communities," *The Hill Times*, 5 August, accessed 22 November, <https://www.hilltimes.com/2020/08/05/a-roadmap-already-exists-to-advance-the-rights-of-black-communities/258671>.

"More resources [are needed] connected to history. How do we deal with past actions that by today's standards are deemed racist but often were acceptable. We don't want to erase history, but also we don't want to be insensitive to the feelings of our students."

— HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER, PROVINCE UNKNOWN

"My classes are often comprised of students of varying races, with varying understanding of other races, cultures and religions. Our school wants to be very multicultural, but that sometimes means that people don't want to say anything that could be misconstrued, so there is the pretense that there is no racism, but it does lurk below the surface."

— HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

"We need resources to utilize all year, not in stand-alone/tokenized lessons."

— MIDDLE SCHOOL SUPPLY TEACHER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

RECOMMENDATION #3

Have School Boards Participate in and Provide Anti-Black Racism Professional Development

While it is the responsibility of ministries of education to develop school curriculum, school boards ensure proper curriculum implementation, and they provide additional resources and learning materials to meet the needs of the school community. School boards can support administrators, teachers, parents/carers and students in addressing racism in their school community by having dedicated staff working on this issue. Trustees should participate in as well as provide ongoing PD in this area, ensuring that workshops are not “one-offs” but are part of a continuous and ongoing effort, and are mandatory for all school staff, including those in the administration.

School boards can also build partnerships with community groups, associations or members that have an expertise in anti-Black racism, so that they can share their knowledge with schools in their region. Many teachers felt this type of support would help them address anti-Black racism in the classroom.

While system-wide approaches do have value, school boards should consider how to build and develop the flexibility and mechanisms that would allow individual schools to engage the supports needed to respond to their student body. Approaches such as targeted or pilot programming could have value in addressing a specific need at a single school in the short term, which could then be rolled out to more/all schools in the long term.

School boards can also play a critical role in gathering race-based data on an ongoing basis in order to identify trends and the needs of Black students within the school system.

"I think there should be anti-racism training required for everyone involved in the education system. Admin, teachers, EAs [educational assistants], ministers, everyone. There needs to be a cultural shift if we are going to really address and get rid of systemic racism. It is not enough for this training to be voluntary and offered to just a handful of educators who choose to take it during their off-time."

— HUMANITIES TEACHER, NOVA SCOTIA

"The school I work at is in a small town with limited diversity. My challenge is how to explain to my students, who have little to no experience with other cultures, races or walks of life, how racism affects [sic] others."

— HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER, QUEBEC

RECOMMENDATION #4

Address Anti-Black Racism in Schools Through Strategic Planning and Professional Development with Community and Family Involvement

One of the significant challenges reported by teachers is that they often do not feel supported by their institutions. They report a lack of mandate and resources to address anti-Black racism, while having colleagues and administrators who deny its existence. **It should not be the teacher’s responsibility to convince administrators and parents/carers that systemic racism exists in the school.**

As expressed throughout the sessions, teachers need to feel supported by the administration if and when parents/carers express concerns about anti-Black racism being addressed in the classroom. **Public policies and commitments, as well as representation at the school board and management levels, are essential, as is PD for all school staff, including non-teaching staff.** Teachers, administrators and parents/carers need a space and shared language to learn about and discuss how to address and overcome anti-Black racism, including how to have conversations at home, not just at school.

As outlined by Black Lives Matter Canada, institutional changes should include the creation of local advisory boards made up of Black parents/carers, students and community members that contribute to policy development. Additionally, support for community-based educational programs that address the achievement gap and emotional well-being of Black students are needed. Additional efforts should “take an intersectional lens to addressing anti-Black racism in conjunction with colonialism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, xenophobia, and other systemic oppressions that contribute to the violence inflicted on Black communities.”¹⁵

For systemic change to take hold, a strong commitment to change must be made by leadership. **Everyone’s commitments and roles should be clearly outlined, including ministries, unions, training institutions, trustees, administrations, teaching and non-teaching staff, parents/carers and students.**

¹⁵ Although these demands are directed at the Toronto District School Board, they would be applicable across Canada. Black Lives Matter – Canada (2020).

"I think that one of the main challenges is actually parents—the concerns they have about the discussions the students and I have in the classroom."

— HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER, NOVA SCOTIA

"One of my biggest challenges is teaching kids who are privileged, discussing racism in a school where admin doesn't support you, being pressured to 'teach the curriculum' and not address it."

— FRENCH TEACHER, ONTARIO

"Teachers seem more involved than school leaders. People at the top of the education system need more education on this topic."

— HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER, PROVINCE UNKNOWN

RECOMMENDATION #5

Include and Involve Students

Teachers shared the importance of creating a safe space in their classroom for students to talk about racism. It was also noted, however, that students need to take responsibility in addressing racism within their peer relationships and in how they express themselves with others at school. **Racism is learned; therefore, it can be unlearned.** Allyship and peer support between students can play an important role in creating an inclusive and equitable learning space. Students should be encouraged to connect with the community at large and practice active citizenship. **This means supporting student-led initiatives, projects, committees and action groups that call out anti-Black racism.**

"Anti-racist/anti-oppression education for teachers, administration and students needs to be mandatory."

— DEPARTMENT HEAD, BRITISH COLUMBIA

CONCLUSION

Addressing anti-Black racism in our education system requires a whole school approach, involving all actors. A whole-school approach is not something teachers can implement alone. Policy-makers, school staff, community leaders, parents/carers and students need to all work together to develop this sort of inclusive and equitable learning environment. A whole-school approach requires:

- **RETHINKING CURRICULA TO ENSURE THE INCLUSION OF DIVERSE VOICES AND REPRESENTATION.** Highlight the historical wrongs that Canada has committed in the past, particularly those involving Black Canadians.
- **REDESIGNING SCHOOLS' GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS TO CREATE SAFE AND BRAVE SPACES FOR SCHOOL STAFF AND STUDENTS TO TALK ABOUT RACISM AND INCIDENTS OF RACISM IN A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT.** Can the school employ a restorative justice approach¹⁶ in order to undo the harm that has been caused? Does the school have an anti-racism committee that can promote awareness and educational tools for the school community?
- **RECONSIDERING PEDAGOGY AND LEARNING.** Are teaching, learning, assessment, evaluation and participation in decision-making inclusive, adequate and appropriate?
- **STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS.** Does the school connect with and contribute to community issues and resources? Are community leaders and other adults invited to school activities?¹⁷ Are efforts made by school leaders and trustees to reach out to marginalized groups and individuals so they can learn about their experiences? Are the experiences of marginalized groups and individuals used to build a culture of inclusion in schools?

More concretely, teachers and administrators from across Canada recommend that additional professional development be provided on anti-Black racism. They want diverse voices to be included and represented in all subject matters in the curriculum and to have additional educational resources on anti-Black racism provided to schools. Teachers and administrators would like schools themselves to take action on addressing racism in their community through strategic planning, professional development, and community and family involvement.

¹⁶ Amy Hunt (2019), "A Case for the Restorative Approach in Schools," *Canadian Teacher*, accessed 22 November 2020, <https://canadianteacher.com/2019/04/22/a-case-for-the-restorative-approach-in-schools/>.

¹⁷ Inspired by UNESCO's whole-school approach on climate action. See UNESCO Associated Schools Network (n.d.), *Climate Change Education*, 22 November 2020, <https://aspnet.unesco.org/en-us/whole-school-approach-to-climate-change>.

"We need to 1. acknowledge current systemic racism that exists in our education systems, 2. draw attention to the fact that there is a difference between racism towards different groups of people, [and] 3. focus learning/teaching on the impact on a victim over the intention of the racist individual."

— HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

APPENDIX 1

Research on Racism in Education

School boards and schools in Canada rarely, if ever, collect statistics on students' races and their experiences of racism across the education system—at least not in any systematic way. Anecdotal evidence and news stories, however, suggest that research on Canada would likely reach the following conclusion:

- **SCHOOL DISCIPLINARY POLICIES DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACT BLACK STUDENTS.** In some settings, starting as early as preschool, Black children are 3.6 times more likely to receive out-of-school suspensions than white children, increasing to four times as likely in grades K–12. Black students are also more than twice as likely to face school-related arrests and be referred to law enforcement.¹⁸
- **TEACHERS' EXPECTATIONS DIFFER BY STUDENTS' RACE.** Many studies have found a correlation between teachers' expectations and students' educational outcomes, including academic achievement and completion of higher education.¹⁹
- **STUDENTS FROM ETHNIC AND RACIAL MINORITY GROUPS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE LABELLED "AT RISK."** For example, in Quebec, students with Caribbean backgrounds are three times more likely to be identified as SHSMLD (students with handicaps, social maladjustments or learning difficulties) and placed in separate classes for "at-risk" students.²⁰
- **RACIAL DISCRIMINATION TAKES PLACE AMONG STUDENTS.** An Australian study found that one-in-three primary and secondary students reported being the victim of racial discrimination by their peers.²¹

18 US Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (2016), *2013-2014 Civil Rights Data Collection: A First Look*, accessed 22 November 2020, <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/2013-14-first-look.pdf>; Tony Fabelo et al. (2011), *Breaking Schools' Rules: A Statewide Study of How School Discipline Relates to Students' Success and Juvenile Justice Involvement*, Council of States Governments Justice Center and the Public Policy Research Institute, 1 July, accessed 22 November 2020, <https://edpolicy.stanford.edu/library/publications/425>.

19 Ulrich Boser, Megan Wilhelm and Robert Hanna (2014), *The Power of the Pygmalion Effect: Teachers Expectations Strongly Predict College Completion*, Center for American Progress, 6 October, accessed 22 November 2020, <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED564606.pdf>.

20 Robyn Maynard (2017), "Canadian Education Is Steeped in Anti-Black Racism," *The Walrus*, 29 November, accessed 22 November 2020, <https://thewalrus.ca/canadian-education-is-steeped-in-anti-black-racism/>.

21 Naomi Priest et al. (2016), "Bullying Victimization and Racial Discrimination Among Australian Children," *American Journal of Public Health* 106 (10): 1882–84.

APPENDIX 2

Data From the Sessions

In July and August 2020, we hosted 38 two-hour small-group dialogue sessions (32 in English and six in French) for high school teachers. Each session had an average of 10–15 participants. In addition, seven two-hour sessions were held for elementary school teachers. The registration form asked participants where they were located, the subject(s) they taught as well as their motivation for registering. Following the sessions, participants filled out evaluation forms that included a question on recommendations for ministries and faculties of education. Questions from the sessions were documented by an assigned note-taker. Overall, we received over 1,400 email inquiries about the training, and 881 people registered for sessions.²² As noted above, in order to accommodate our long waitlist, we also hosted a two-hour live webinar in English at the end of August with a total of 96 registered participants.

1. How many participants attended the sessions?

High school teacher sessions:	
English small-group sessions	313
French small-group sessions	70
Elementary teacher sessions (English)	67
Live invitation-only webinar (English)	71
TOTAL	521

²² High school small-group sessions:
English – 247 (no shows) + 313 (attended) = 560 registered; French – 40 (no shows) + 70 (attended) = 110 registered;
Webinar – 25 (no shows) + 71 (attended) = 96 registered;
elementary small-group sessions – 48 (no shows) + 67 (attended) = 115 registered.

2. How did participants learn about the sessions?

The majority of participants learned about the sessions through their (ranked from greatest to least):

Unions
School Boards
Ministry of Education
Colleagues
School Administration
Facebook and/or Twitter accounts

3. Where were participants located (by province)?

Out of 521 participants, combining high school (English and French) and elementary small-group sessions and the webinar, ranked from largest percentage to smallest percentage (and greatest to least number of participants).

PROVINCE	% OF TOTAL	TOTAL #
1. British Columbia	40.5	211
2. Ontario	21	118
3. Nova Scotia	10.2	53
4. Québec	9	47
5. Manitoba	6.3	33
6. Alberta	6.1	32
7. International*	2	10
8. New Brunswick	1.3	7
9. Saskatchewan	0.7	4
10. Yukon	0.6	3
11. Northwest Territories	0.4	2
12. Newfoundland and Labrador	0.2	1

There were no participants from Prince Edward Island or Nunavut.

* International participants attended from England, Malaysia, Colombia, Kenya and the US.

4. What discipline did they teach?

The majority of participants were high school teachers, teaching a range of subjects and disciplines. Other participants included administrators along with individuals working at higher education institutions and educational institutions. The breakdown by subject and job is as follows:

FOR SESSIONS WITH HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS	
Social studies, English, humanities (history, philosophy, etc.) teachers	36%
Math & science teachers	7%
French language teachers	6%
All subject teachers/other subjects (including classroom teachers, supply, special education, business, technology, etc.)	17%
Non-classroom teachers (librarians, guidance counsellors, coordinators/resource teachers, etc.)	10%
Art, music, drama	4%
Administration (including principals and vice-principals, superintendents, etc.)	6%
Elementary teachers	3%
Other/working outside school (non-profit organizations, university professors, learning strategists/specialists, consultants, trainers, community educators)	9%

FOR SESSIONS WITH ELEMENTARY TEACHERS

Most participants were K–6 classroom teachers (i.e., they teach all subjects).

5. What motivated teachers to register for the sessions?

TEACHERS WERE MOTIVATED TO JOIN IN ORDER TO

Learn more about anti-Black racism, especially in the Canadian context.

Learn how to approach the topic in a sensitive and honest way.

Gain confidence on how to facilitate these discussions in the classroom, more openly and more often.

Learn how to help students process uncomfortable feelings.

Learn how racism has manifested itself in specific fields/sectors (e.g., in science).

Learn how to “turn talk into action” (i.e., not being anti-racist into anti-racism).

Get concrete strategies to confront their own unintentional yet racist actions, privilege and bias.

Get concrete strategies on how to react when they see racism happening.

Learn how to be a better ally (i.e., not speak for people of colour, but instead use their authority appropriately).

Encourage allyship among their students who don't encounter BIPOC students.

6. What were the major themes that emerged during the sessions?

The most prominent questions asked during the sessions are listed below and fall into the following, albeit overlapping, categories: institutions, policies and parents/carers, teaching practices and classroom climate.

A) INSTITUTIONS, POLICIES & PARENTS/CARERS

How do I approach/address the fact that a colleague or administrator is being racist, resistant or dismissive of racism? How can I prevent them from getting defensive?

My management is all white and male. What is the most effective way to help them understand anti-Black racism?

How do I deal with parents/carers who don't want their children to “feel badly” about their history and/or reject the possibility that their child could be racist?

How do we address anti-Black racism on an institutional level?

B) TEACHING PRACTICES

How can I distinguish between being inclusive and tokenistic?

How do I ensure I do this in an authentic way and that I'm not just checking off a box?

How can students understand systemic racism, unconscious bias and microaggressions when they don't have any historical context?

What do I do if I witness a microaggression? Should I address it directly? Should I speak to the student first?

How do I teach about novels or films that use the N-word?

How do I talk about anti-Black racism effectively as a white person in a non-diverse and conservative environment?

How do I talk about anti-Black racism effectively as a white person in a diverse classroom?

How can I help students understand that anti-Black racism is not just an issue in the US?

How do I facilitate discussions and deal with tension and emotions in the classroom?

How do I use my own privilege to make a difference? How do I become an ally?

How do I teach about and address microaggressions and unconscious bias in and outside the classroom?

How do I talk about racial inequality and history in a way that is hopeful and inspires action (as opposed to demoralizing or paralyzing/guilt-inducing)?

As a BIPOC teacher, how do I support and empower my peers to take this issue seriously? At the same time, how do I avoid being identified as the lead on anti-racism at my school because I am a BIPOC?

C) CLASSROOM CLIMATE

How do I respond when Black students or other students of colour make fun of their own racial background?

Students sometimes use the N-word in a casual, fun way. How do I address that? My students may follow up and say, "Why can't I say that?"

Students sometimes accuse others of being racist in a "joking" way. How do I distinguish between jokes and actual acts of racism?

How do I address stereotypes and generalization of cultural and ethnic groups that students make about others?

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