



Parents of
Black Children

A CALL TO ACTION:

Systems abuse of Black students within Ontario's education system



**Presented to:
Ontario Human Rights Commission**

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Introduction

For generations, Black people have faced and overcome anti-Black racism and debilitating prejudices in many forms; from historical slavery and displacement to the ongoing effects of colonialism and systemic oppression. Recent events, namely the murder of George Floyd in the United States in May 2020, have brought a greater public awareness to issues of police brutality and other forms of systemic oppression and state-sanctioned violence against Black people.

The increase in awareness has created more discourse on the topic of anti-Black racism worldwide, and we are finally seeing individuals, institutions, and governments acknowledging the reality that structural barriers do, in fact, exist. While this is a step in the right direction, Black communities in Canada are calling for concrete institutional reform and policy changes to ensure the rights and freedoms of Black people, Black families, and Black children are protected.

Many Canadians often look to the U.S. when discussing issues of anti-Black racism and do not acknowledge that anti-Black racism is prevalent in their own backyard. Most would be shocked to discover just how much the issue is built into our very own school systems. In fact, anti-Black racism has occurred in the Canadian education system for over a century and includes the legacy of segregated schools for Black students.

Within the province of Ontario, years of collected research, data, and testimonials of those with lived experience have made one thing clear: there is an anti-Black racism crisis in Ontario's education system with little to no systemic policies to address it. This contributes to the emotional abuse and harm inflicted on Black children, who are subjected to daily interactions with those who are harming them.

Racism is violence. Racial violence is trauma. This fact has been documented by numerous mental health experts and healthcare authorities throughout Ontario. Yet, despite understanding the violence and trauma that anti-Black racism inflicts on Black students and their families, there are few accountability measures within the Canadian educational system to protect Black children.

This is our job. Since September 2020, Parents of Black Children (PoBC) has provided Systems Navigation services to families and Black children in Ontario. We've extended our services to support families across Canada and in the United States.

Introduction

Our Systems Navigation initiative is designed to stand beside parents as they navigate the education system.

We learned from organizations such as Cancer Care Ontario, now part of Ontario Health, and the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) community-based initiative, One Vision One Voice. We leaned on their best practices and processes to ensure that Black families and their children can access specialized, formalized education Systems Navigators, who are culturally sensitive and who understand the barriers Black children are faced with. When families contact PoBC about issues related to their child's education, our Systems Navigators provide support as they interact with their child's school and school board administrators. The navigators attend meetings, provide advice, and make connections with school boards or community groups to help eliminate barriers and act as a neutral third-party to help express the unique needs and challenges faced by African-Canadian families in the education system.

We are not the first to support Black families navigating the education system. Black community members and groups have provided these supports for decades. However the PoBC's Systems Navigation program was the first formalized program of its kind in Ontario. In early 2021, the provincial government announced the launch of 17 [Student and Family Advocate programs](#) (SFAs) modelled after Parents of Black Children's System Navigation program, with PoBC leading the SFA Community of Practice.

In this unique position, we have been privy to many instances of anti-Black racism within the education and adjacent systems. To date, we have supported over 216 families fighting for equity and justice for their children within Ontario's education system.

Through this work we are witnessing, with dismay and increasing concern and alarm, the ongoing emotional harm that is visited upon Black children within the education system and interconnected systems such as child welfare. We are also seeing a lack of accountability within schools and school boards, a lack of urgency to address the issues and an unwillingness by systems such as child welfare to prioritize the protection of Black students by holding those harming Black children accountable.

We call this **systems abuse**.

This report will outline the negative consequences of systems abuse focusing on providing case study examples of incidents we have worked to resolve, as well as providing a report of all cases and instances of emotional harm against Black children we have seen across this province. Moreover, this report will also provide a summary of instances of anti-Black racism witnessed by teachers, and those working within the education system, compiled via the Parents of Black Children anonymous online racism reporting tool for education workers (<https://parentsofblackchildren.org/school-racism-reporting-tool/>), launched in March 2021.

This report will also examine the accountability aspects of mandating reports, arguing the importance of data collection in substantiating the existence of anti-Blackness within the education system. The current lack of data reflects negligence, biases, and the refusal to hold individuals, groups, and institutions accountable. The report ends with a call-to-action to invoke immediate and constructive policy and accountability changes to address anti-Black racism within Ontario's education system.

The need for PoBC

We know that regardless of where Black children live they are facing anti-Black racism in the education system. Currently, PoBC operates in Ontario and is federally incorporated. An Ontario Trillium Foundation grant for the United Parents Project used the Greater Toronto Area's York Region as a pilot to test the idea of using Systems Navigation in education, parent mentorship, and knowledge-building workshops. PoBC also has U.S. chapters in Maryland and Pennsylvania.

Independent studies have found that Black students face barriers in education. This is not simply our lived experience, but data-driven proof that requires that school boards and the Ontario government make concrete changes to ensure that Black students receive the education and support they deserve.

Teachers and parents in the Black community who participated in the ground-breaking 2017 York University report [Towards Race Equity in Education](#), said that parents of Black children needed to be more engaged and observant to ensure their children had the same learning opportunities as others.

For these reasons, a Black-led, Black-focused organization like Parents of Black Children was created to support Black families province-wide.

The goals of PoBC are to:

- Be the voice of all parents of Black children, so no parent has to fight alone for a just, safe, and equitable education for their child.
- Work to eliminate anti-Black racism and the oppression of Black students at school and interconnected systems.
- Advocate to ensure school boards collect rigorous disaggregated race-based data.
- Open a continued dialogue with school boards, independent, and private schools about anti-oppressive practices, culturally responsive pedagogy, and anti-Black racism within their schools and connected systems.
- Increase the knowledge of parents of Black children, and Black students, to advocate for change within the education and connected systems to help facilitate their success.

As PoBC works toward the common goals of creating sustainable, systemic, and transformational change in Ontario's education systems, we are grounded in principles based on anti-Black racism analysis, including:

- **Analyzing power.** Our job is to identify and unpack systems of oppression that have shaped school boards and education policies and practices including white supremacy, colonialism, and anti-Blackness.
- **Transparency and accountability.** Our job is to operate in a fully transparent manner and be accountable to Black parents, by providing community members with detailed information about PoBC, our processes, leadership, and outcomes.
- **Listening.** Our job is to prioritize the voices of Black parents and children, elders, LGBTQ2SQ+, and members of religious minority groups, through their own words. We support non-Black parents of Black children, but first they must recognize their own privilege.
- **Appreciation & gratitude.** Our job is to appreciate and respect all intersections of Blackness. Through appreciating all facets of the Black experience, we will reach our goal of dismantling white supremacy and creating equitable environments for all Black children.

Experiences of anti-Black racism

Black educators' experiences of anti-Black racism

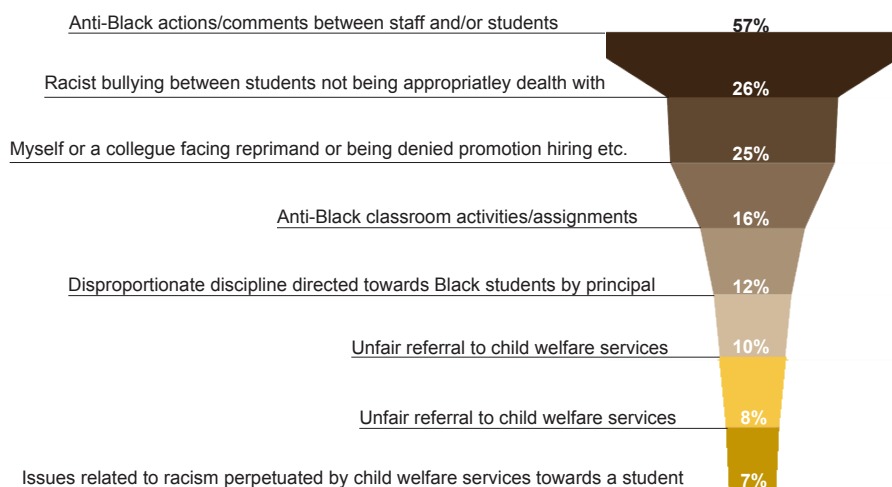
In March 2021, Parents of Black Children launched the first anti-Black racism reporting tool for education workers. The School Racism Reporting Tool is an anonymous tool accessible through the PoBC website. To date over 150 respondents have completed the racism reporting tool.

The experiences of Black educators in the workplace differ significantly from non-Black educators. Black education workers are consistently faced with targeted racial violence at work by students, parents, and colleagues. They are facing incidents of anti-Black racism while also bearing witness to the anti-Black racism suffered by students in their care.

Black educators and administrators who are doing the work of eradicating and dismantling anti-Black racism often become targets for abuse and harassment. The voice of the Black teacher working to create an anti-racist environment for Black children is seen as the problem, instead of the problem being anti-Blackness and racism.

There are no systems of accountability and reporting for educators, nor are there mechanisms in place to support those who are victimized. Although teacher federations, unions, and representative organizations are some of the most wealthy and well-resourced organizations in the country, they lack the will, expertise, or capacity to proactively protect educators from racial abuse and structural violence. The School Racism Reporting tool allows any educator, custodian, administrator, or anyone working within the education system – regardless of their race – to report instances of anti-Black racism that they have experienced or witnessed.

Nature of Incidents



Top reporting school boards

1. Toronto District School Board - 13%
2. York Region District School Board - 11%
3. Simcoe County District School Board - 7%



Only 18% of education system staff respondents raised their concerns with both the union and the school board.

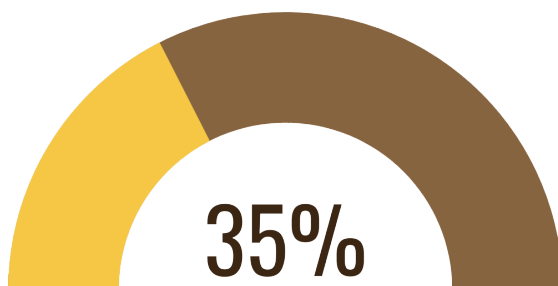


Black families' experiences of anti-Black racism

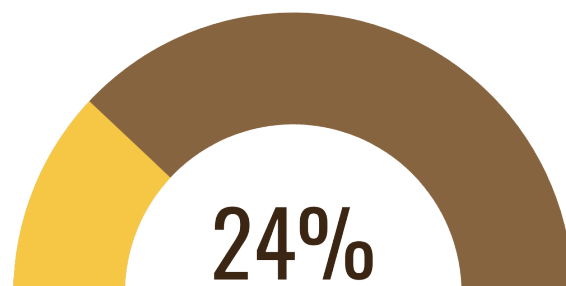
The experiences of Black families within the education system is complex and prevalent. Children are forced to deal with painful and egregious harm at schools which do not have the appropriate mechanisms in place to protect them. These students are racially targeted by peers and teachers at school. In addition to the interpersonal violence, they also have to contend with racially biased curriculum, evaluation practices, and policies at school that put them at risk daily. Black educators experience and/or witness anti-Black racism firsthand, but Black families' experiences with anti-Black racism in the education system is through their children's interactions with the system.

Some of the most alarming and egregious cases of anti-Black racism towards students have occurred in Catholic school boards in Ontario.

Black families within the education system often contact PoBC for support as their last resource to gain meaningful results. This usually occurs after most families have approached the education system for a resolution themselves, only to be left feeling more vulnerable and alienated.



Only 35% of education system staff respondents felt comfortable to raise their concerns with their school board



Only 24% of education system staff respondents felt comfortable to raise their concerns with their union

What is anti-Black racism?

Within schools and adjacent systems, Black students face overt racism, such as being called the n-word to being beaten and bullied simply because they are Black. The physical and emotional scars of these occurrences are evident and lifelong. However there are elements of racism that are far more insidious and covert which go unnoticed by everyone except the victim. Racism comes in the form of neglect and omission, such as ignoring a child's raised hand in the classroom, not acknowledging their abilities and not recognizing the contributions of Black people and their realities, all of which can make Black children feel invisible and devalued in their educational environments.

Types of neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Isolating a student due to normal child-like behaviours
- Refusing to teach a student or providing a below standard education
- Refusing to follow or revisit students' Independent Education Plans (IEP)
- Not expressing to parents the educational needs of the child until the last minute
- Ignoring a child's concerns in or outside of the classroom
- Disregarding instances of bullying or emotional harm to Black students

Acts of anti-Black racism include, but are not limited, to:

- Using texts and teaching materials that degrade Black people
- Refusing to reprimand white and non-Black students for using the n-word against Black students
- Applying harsher discipline for Black children
- Low academic expectations
- Adultification of Black children
- Surveilling Black children at school
- Disrespecting parents and family members of Black students
- Targeting students or families due to race
- Gaslighting parents, family members and students who come forward with complaints and concerns

Systems abuse

PoBC defines systems abuse as a system or institution that neglects or abuses a child in their care through program, policy, procedure, or individual interaction. Systems abuse occurs when the child's basic rights are in any way exploited or violated, and is detrimental to the child's health, safety, or emotional and physical well-being.

Systems abuse happens when preventable harm is done to children in the context of policies or programs which are designed to provide care or protection. The child's welfare, development or security are undermined by the actions of individuals or by the lack of suitable policies, practices or procedures within systems or institutions. This includes, but is not limited, to:

- Trite reporting (unnecessary complaints) to Children's Aid Societies (CAS) and using the excuse of duty to report
- Unwarranted calls to the police on Black students or families
- Use of IEPs and assessments to portray a negative narrative of Black students and families
- Colluding with daycare providers to manufacture negative stories

This unified collusion of systems works against Black families and children, denying them opportunities to be successful, safe, and to have their humanity valued.

Institutions protect each other through individual lack of action and insufficient policies, practices, or procedures. When the education system fails to provide the necessary services, this leads to a breakdown of the child's social support and Black children are disproportionately affected. Systems abuse occurs when a system or institution neglects or abuses a child in their care through programs, policies, procedure, or individual interactions. Systems abuse is the collusion of systems to protect each other amidst the harm of Black children.

It is unequivocal that school boards across Ontario are participating in sustained systems abuse that is harmful to the mental, emotional, and physical health and well-being of the Black children entrusted to them.

Anti-Blackness and trauma in the classroom

Anti-Black racism, which Black children face from birth, can be seen as a social determinant of health. Statistics and data from a number of organizations shows that racism is an important cause of unequal health outcomes for racialized Canadians. What does that mean? According to the Canadian government, “discrimination against Black people is deeply entrenched and normalized in Canadian institutions, policies, and practices and is often invisible to those who do not feel its effects.” Black children also feel the effects of anti-Blackness in the systems they interact with. These institutions do not always recognize this discrimination and how it affects the Black students in their care.

Black families battling anti-Blackness and its effects is not new.

History shows that Black parents have had to fight for their children to go to school in peace and receive an equitable education, but education is a fundamental freedom for all Canadian children. All families are worthy of preservation and success, which is why PoBC established the community support of Systems Navigation to ensure anti-Black racism is reduced and ultimately eliminated.

Schools are supposed to be safe spaces for all students. Spaces where they are taught and supported by caring adults. Unfortunately, for many Black children, this isn't the case. Black families and students are subject to community policing and are held to unrealistic standards and expected behaviours. Outcomes for Black children are disproportionately poorer due to anti-Black racism and barriers in the educational system. Black children and their families who are facing these barriers develop feelings of isolation, lack of support, and often feel misunderstood.

Black parents are asked to trust institutions that have created barriers to limit the success of their children. It is hurtful for Black parents to send their children to school knowing many of the challenges they will face are based solely on their skin colour.

While there are Black children who successfully navigate the Ontario education system, that success, despite the overwhelming odds, is a testament to the perseverance and resilience of people of African descent. When a community is consistently subjected to trauma, trauma becomes their culture.

The collection of PoBC anti-Black racism data

PoBC is doing what the province and the education system is not doing: collecting disaggregated anti-Black racism data. PoBC has two main methods of collecting information about anti-Black racism within the Ontario education system.

1. School Racism Reporting Tool

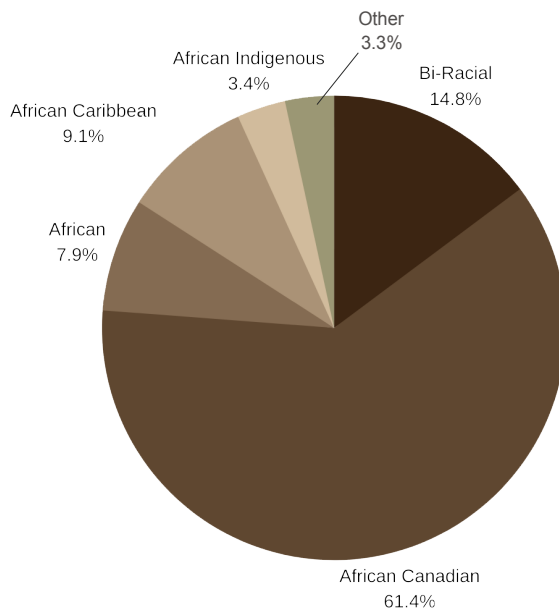
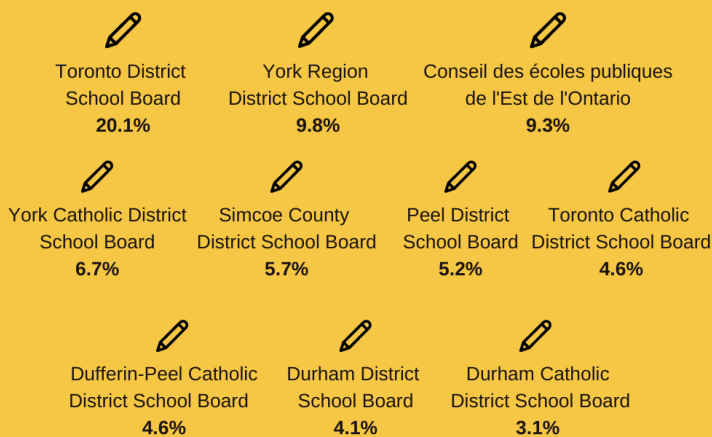
- The PoBC school racism reporting tool is designed to collect instances of anti-Black racism, while empowering students, parents, families, teachers, school board members, and others to report acts of anti-Black racism in their local school systems. This anonymous tool is intended for anyone within the public, Catholic, and private school boards to report incidents of racism perpetrated by students, colleagues, school staff, board trustees, and other executive-level board employees.
- A breakdown of the data collected through the School Racism Reporting Tool can be found in Appendix II: School Racism Reporting Tool Data Analysis.

2. Systems Navigation intake form

- The PoBC Systems Navigation service is a wraparound support service for families. When contacted, PoBC acts as an emergency first responder to advocate on behalf of Black children and families. In these cases, Parents of Black Children receives consent to keep a detailed record of each incident of anti-Black racism experienced by the victim(s). In the Appendix I: Summary of PoBC Provincial Cases is the detailed breakdown of incidents of anti-Black racism from PoBC's Racism Reporting Tool as well as from our Education System Navigation report. There are a number of ways that parents of Black children can connect to us for assistance:
 - Parents can refer themselves by visiting the website and completing the intake form.
 - Educators can refer parents, who will benefit from culturally responsive supports, relevant advice, and step-by-step guidance to manage issues in the education system.
 - Parents can be referred by community partners, including Black-focused, Black-led, and Black-serving (B3) organizations, Children's Aid Societies, police, and community health centres.
- Data collected through our intake form is used by the PoBC leadership team to advocate for all school board systems to formally report incidents of anti-Black racism. Our Systems Navigation team focuses on the resolution of the problem through a lens of accountability and sustainability. PoBC's goal is to effectively manage each situation so that no other child has to go through a similar experience and to ensure that the people within the system know how to respond when anti-Black racism happens again. Our overarching goal is always dismantling anti-Black racism and creating a path for transformational change.

The collection of PoBC anti-Black racism data

School boards we see the most cases from



How does your child identify?



50% of families report experiencing anti-Black racism



23% of families report experiencing issues in specialized programs



14% of families report their children are experiencing racist bullying



3% of families report that Individual Education Plans are not being followed/considered

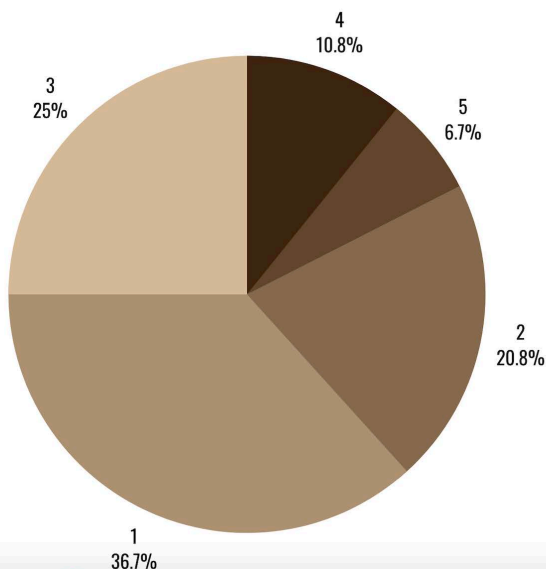


The collection of PoBC anti-Black racism data

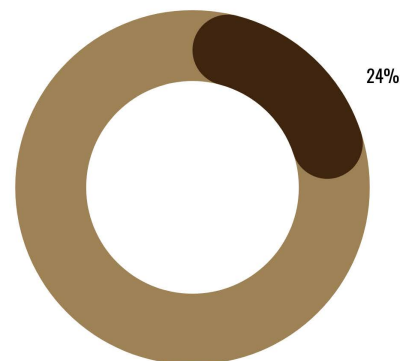
How confident do you feel navigating the education system?

1 = not confident at all

5= very confident



% of cases from Catholic school boards



We are seeing many of the more egregious instances of harm to Black students coming from Catholic Schools in Ontario.

Region to watch....



Halton Region

Combined PoBC cases from both Halton school boards total 3%.

Although the number of reported cases in Halton is low, PoBC has been called to support multiple families who have requested support from other agencies. PoBC has also been contacted by parents with children at both boards as well as a staff concerned about anti-Black racism.

Black parents within Halton Catholic District School Board have formed an affinity group to try and support each other due to the number of racist incidents they are facing.



Fighting for our children: The current issues

Racial abuse

- Black students are isolated and ostracized by teachers and students in their classrooms. Teachers separate Black students from their non-Black peers during class lessons, recess, and other times of the school day. We also see that non-Black students mimic the learned behaviours of white supremacy and oppression in their interactions with Black students. We have seen an alarming rate of non-Black students bullying and cyber-bullying their Black peers and Black children subjected to an overwhelming amount of emotional harm.

Lack of accountability

- There is a lack of accountability due to reporting not being mandated by the Ontario College of Teachers and other reporting bodies. Schools, school boards, and similar education systems are not required to record or keep track of acts of racism. This lack of accountability makes it challenging to enforce policies and procedures to counteract and protect Black students and teachers against anti-Black racism in the education system.

Shifting goal posts

- Black students are held to a higher standard of classroom conduct compared to their non-Black peers. We have seen cases where teachers and school staff blatantly choose not to extend the same amount of patience and understanding to Black students that they do to non-Black students. The minimization and dismissal of victimization of Black students have led to repeated harm and emotional violence towards Black students.

Weaponizing of Children's Aid Societies (CAS) and police against Black families

- Black families are reported to CAS at much higher rates than non-Black families. These families are reported with little to no evidence based on the most trivial allegations. The impact of the forceful involvement of child welfare services and police departments is traumatic and results in long-lasting feelings of vulnerability and insecurity amongst Black families.

Fighting for our children: The current issues (cont'd)

Use of racial slurs

- Repeated use of racial slurs meant to cause harm by educators, administrators, school board staff, and non-Black students, occur with little to no consequences and excuses offered. We have recognized repeated themes of vulnerability and insecurity amongst Black students and teachers due to the use of these slurs and the impacts they have on students' abilities to learn as well as educators' abilities to work.

Streaming of Black students from Kindergarten

- From the time that four- and five-year-olds walk into their local schools, the education system begins the process of streaming Black children into behavioural, remedial, and locally developed (below basic or general) programs. This streaming, or funneling, of Black children destroys their self-esteem and confidence and puts them on a trajectory of poorer educational outcomes. The system ensures that Black students are held to lower academic standards and they are not encouraged to realize their full potential. The teachers and school administrators then blame the children, not the system, for their low academic performance. The PoBC team has seen instances where Black students were streamed into courses well below their learning capabilities, imposing learning barriers and reinforcing power dynamics within the school environment that is comparable to white supremacy.



Supporting students through PoBC systems navigation

Systems navigation is building the capacity and knowledge of the education and adjacent systems by providing support and mentorship for Black parents dealing with the education system. The objective is to focus on developing community and connection while decreasing the stress on families navigating and coordinating their way through the system on their own. Systems navigation demands immediate restorative change, while other supports develop change over time through acquiring knowledge, skill levels, and attitudes on Black communities. With all of our supports working together, we will see an overall improvement of the behaviours, relationships, and leadership shown to Black children.

PoBC System Navigators are mediators between the community and the education system. The navigators use culturally tailored supports and language that help all parties work to resolve issues and support Black children.

Getting the help parents need: How systems navigation works

The work of System Navigators is to analyze power dynamics by identifying and unpacking oppressive policies and procedures that are found in school boards due to white supremacy, colonialism, and anti-Blackness. Systems Navigators are fully transparent, with parents knowing and understanding each step that's made to support their children. They create a safer space by prioritizing the voices of Black families, children, elders, LGBTQ2SQ+, and members of religious minority groups.

Systems Navigators work one-on-one with affected families and, on occasion, they work with other Student and Family Advocates across Ontario. While we work with Black communities, we recognize that Black children can be supported by parents from other communities. These non-Black family members are welcome and are required to first recognize their privilege and not discount the past and present experiences of the Black community.

Systems Navigation appreciates and respects all intersections of Blackness and by accepting, appreciating, and celebrating all facets of the Black experience, we will reach our goals of dismantling white supremacy, eradicating anti-Black racism, and creating equitable outcomes and environments for all Black children.

This service is available to Black families through numerous referral systems. Parents can refer themselves by visiting www.parentsofblackchildren.org and completing the intake form.

When does PoBC get involved?

Think SAFE

- **S**upport and consultation is needed when parents are experiencing challenges within the education system.
- **A**dvocacy and Africentric wraparound supports for parents of Black children experiencing concerns in the education system (this includes children who have one Black parent).
- **F**ree – Education is a human right, and equitable education is guaranteed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 28.
- **E**nable finding the right support, unpacking of anti-Black racism and help to deal with school administration, teachers, and board staff.

Identifying the need for System Navigation

Parents need the support of System Navigators because it is difficult to navigate the education system for many reasons, including anti-Black racism. As their parents may face anti-Blackness and microaggressions in the workplace, Black children face anti-Black racism in their classrooms. Anti-Black racism in the class may be seen in a number of ways, from blatant mistreatment of children to microaggressions that are hard to prove. Some examples include:

- Isolating a student due to common childlike behaviours
- Providing substandard education or no education at all
- Ignoring or not revisiting/reviewing IEPs
- Delaying the discussion of a child's educational needs until the last minute
- Ignoring a child's concerns in or outside of the classroom
- Refusing to address bullying or emotional harm to a student
- Using or allowing others to use the n-word or other slurs without punishment
- Ignoring when students say they are treated differently because of their race
- Singling students out for perceived cultural negatives. For example, asking 'why are Black people so violent?'
- Targeting students or families due to race
- Using gaslighting techniques, such as talking about parents' demeanour, to move attention away from the issues

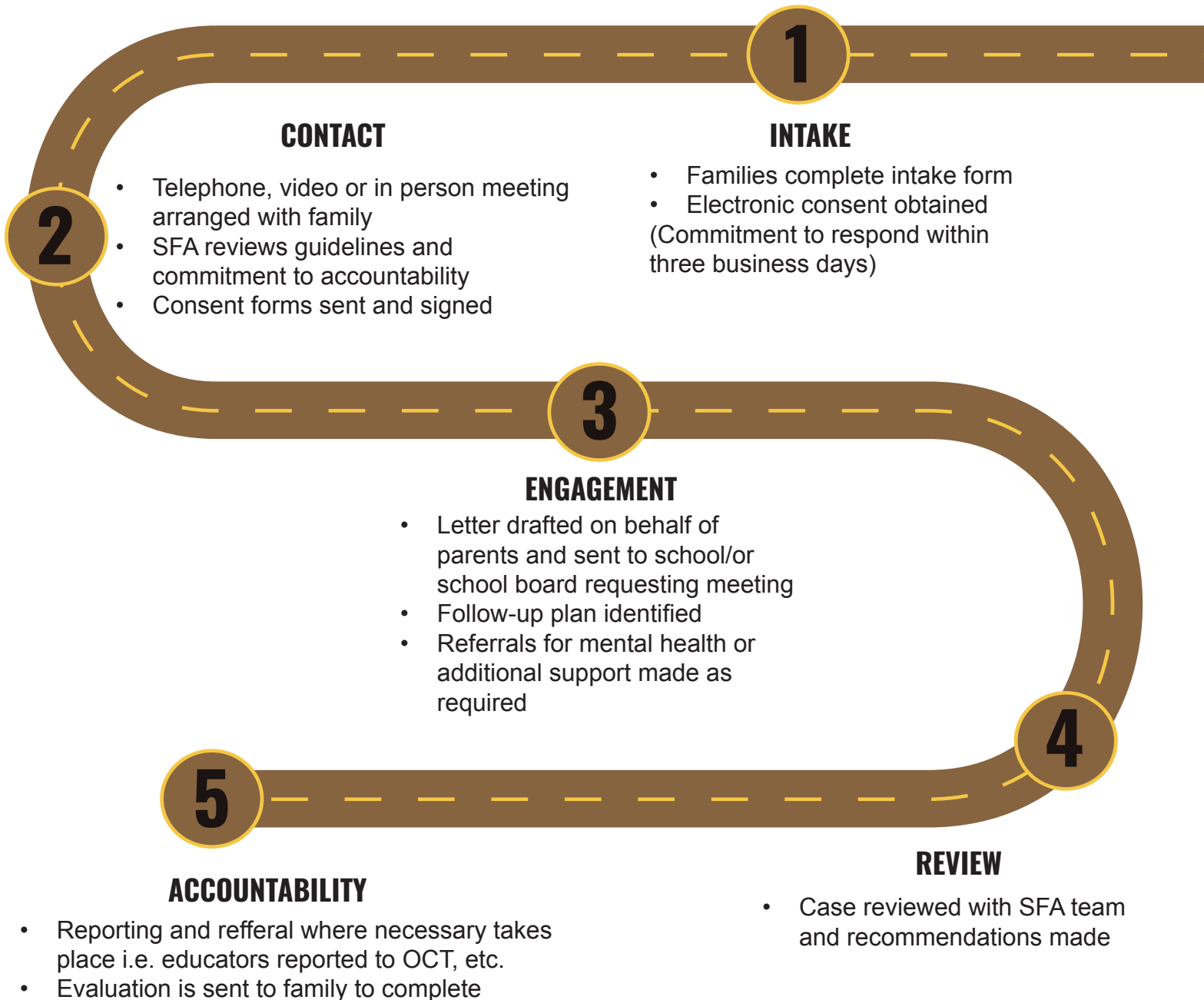
How the PoBC Roadmap to Education System Navigation works

Our System Navigation prioritizes identifying areas and experiences of racism, neglect, gaslighting, and systems abuse of Black students and families during interaction with the education system.

Step 1	After identifying the areas of anti-Black racism, we contact the caregivers and service providers responsible such as schools, school boards, Children's Aid Societies (CAS), Ontario College of Teachers (OCT), Early Childhood Education (ECE), Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario, Educational Ombudsman of Ontario, Office of the Independent Police Review Directors, and any other required organization.
Step 2	<p>We draft a letter on behalf of the student, parent or family and send it to the school/ school board requesting a meeting as soon as possible. Due to the levels of vulnerability, harm and trauma involved within the education system, we treat each case as an emergency.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is important that all service providers and education stakeholders treat all cases of anti-Black racism as an emergency.
Step 3	<p>We identify follow-up plans and establish what is necessary to provide sustainable resolutions for Black students and families. Whenever we make a demand, we focus on ensuring a client-focused approach while emphasizing the need to have procedures and tools to combat anti-Black racism. This includes inquiring about the existence of racism reporting tools for schools, school boards, and adjacent systems.</p> <p>We ask if any team leads or staff has reported this or any other specific incidences of racism and if the tool is only for internal reporting or if it can be used by members of the community outside of the school.</p>

Worrying about making people within the system uncomfortable as we pursue racial equity isn't our priority. The priority is to obtain successful outcomes for our clients and communities, as well as seeing systemic improvements for Black students and their families.

PoBC Roadmap to Education System Navigation



Case Study #1

Background

- School Board: Halton District School Board and Halton Catholic School Board
- Systems Implicated: Education, Child Welfare, Police
- Child(ren)'s Age(s): Primary age Black boy and Black girl
- Family Ethnicity: West African

A young Black boy with immigrant parents was subjected to anti-Black racist policies and procedures and was treated in a racially biased manner.

From his arrival, the family experienced what they now know as sustained targeting of their Black children in the education system.

When still in Kindergarten, the boy was diagnosed with a speech delay. His speech therapy sessions were approved at the first school he attended but, when the student changed schools, there were no follow-ups. The second school did not move forward with the approval and the child's family was forced to pay out of pocket to ensure that their child received the necessary interventions.

At the start of school, the family was also inundated with calls and messages of concern from teachers about their son. The school called the child's mother at work several times to tell her she needed to pick up her son from school immediately, with a specific time given. For example, the child's mother was informed that she would have to drop her son off at 8 am and pick him up by 11 am. The parents were also told, multiple times, to not bring their child to school. These demands resulted in unprecedented pressure, stress, and trauma for the parents.

In these instances, the Children's Aid Society (CAS) was wielded as a weapon, with threats to call them if the mother did not pick her child up or if she brought him to school. As a result, his mother was forced to stop working.

For the mildest or slightest altercation, this young Black child would often be sent out of class by his teacher, being left to roam the halls for hours. While still under the age of 10, this child was labelled as a "threat to the school" and was mistreated by school administrators and teachers. The child's father noted that on a school trip, other students bullied his son and the bullying went unaddressed by school staff. Not only was this child experiencing harsh treatment from school staff, but he was also being bullied by his peers. The acceptance of harassment of a Black child highlights the anti-Blackness that exists in schools and within school systems, showing how little is done to address and dismantle racism in schools.

Non-racialized children are learning to imitate the same blatant and subliminal behaviours of anti-Black racism from the lack of accountability.

By the time the student was in second grade, he had begun to feel “invisible” in his class by his teacher and classmates. He often shared with his parents how his teacher would see his hand raised in class and purposely ignore him. Even when he would try to engage in class, he was intentionally left out of the group. He was not allowed to attend music class or go into the library with his classmates most of the time.

In 2019, the school advised the child's parents to medicate him for what they diagnosed as Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) or Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD). The parents agreed to take their child to the doctor to confirm the diagnosis and meet the school's request. The school did not believe the student was on medication and wanted proof he was seeing a pediatric doctor. The parents were then told to book an appointment with their family doctor. On the day of the doctor's appointment, a school staff member followed the family to ensure that they went.

The Children's Aid Society was weaponized against this family: CAS received a call regarding the family's daughter and a referral was made to the agency, which was alarming enough for a social worker to attend the girl's school. After the social worker spoke with the young girl, she consulted Halton Region Police Service, who informed her that there were no grounds for an investigation.

Not satisfied, the social worker decided to interview the girl's brother—a child with speech issues and challenges—at school. He was interrogated until he started to make questionable statements. Due to this, the child went home troubled and traumatized from the experience. After coercing a response from the family's son, the social worker consulted with the police and, at that point, the Halton Regional Police Service agreed to be involved.

PoBC's Reponse

1. Family Connection

On March 17, 2021, the family of this Black child contacted PoBC to schedule an over-the-phone consultation. After being called to the police station, the child's mother contacted PoBC again as the family prepared to go for the interrogation and successfully spoke to one of our System Navigators. The case was escalated due to the extremity of the family having to provide statements and meet with law enforcement.

2. Connection with Community

PoBC immediately planned a conference call with the family involving multiple team members and community partners. PoBC recruited the ANCHOR Coalition to send a clear message to the school board, CAS, and police that the community was united on behalf of the family.

3. Transparent Communication Across Sectors

A letter outlining the targeting of the family and clear instances of systems abuse was sent to the Minister of Education, school board director, and superintendents, Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) - One Vision One Voice, Halton Children's Aid Society, and Equity Team, and Halton Regional Police Service where interviews were set to take place. PoBC and ANCHOR worked in unison to provide all-around support and meet parents at the police station during interrogations.

4. Resources

During this case, PoBC, ANCHOR and One Vision One Voice (Halton representative) provided physical and emotional support to the family at the police station as the mother and her children participated in a police forensic interview. Black-centred mental health supports were provided to the family after being targeted by the school and, subsequently, Halton CAS and Halton Regional Police Service.



Case Study #2

Background

- School Board: Simcoe District School Board
- Systems Implicated: Education, Child Welfare, Police
- Child(ren)'s Age(s): 13-year-old
- Family Ethnicity: Mixed-Race Black

In September 2021, a 13-year-old Black girl found a picture of a noose in her backpack. The students responsible at Forest Hill Primary School also changed “B” in the acronym Black Lives Matter (BLM) to an insignificant phrase “bologna.” Students around the school also constantly commented negatively about Black Lives Matter, inquired about her race, questioned her race, and mocked her due to her skin colour. On numerous occasions, this young girl would constantly hear other students using the n-word around her, type the n-word as a derogatory term towards her, and repeatedly use the phrase “All Lives Matter” to her. Students would go as far as to purposely call this Black girl “Shaniqua,” which is one of many stereotypical names used to negatively characterize Black girls and women.

Still in September, the Black student told her mother that a boy spent the day in the office for sending her the n-word in a text message. After becoming aware of the incident, the Black child's mother decided to meet with Forest Hill Primary School's principal and vice-principal. The student responsible for the n-word text was given an “in-school suspension.” The student spent the day in the office and had to read a Harvard essay on the n-word. He was forced to write an apology to the victim.

After being exposed and subjected to experiencing such a blatant act of anti-Black racism, the Black student was forced to sit in a space with the student responsible for the hate crime to show her “acceptance” of the apology. The principal spent an hour with the victimized Black student, tasking her with teaching the student responsible for the hate crime about the meaning of the n-word and changing his behaviour.

There was no consideration for the impact of this situation on the Black child. The mother of the Black student was not informed by the school and was told about the incident by her daughter. After hearing this story from her daughter, the mother requested another meeting and kept detailed notes. At one point in the meeting, the principal admitted she was not knowledgeable and asked the harassed child's mother to educate her. The meeting clearly showed the privilege, ignorance, and lack of understanding of the matter as there was still no concern for the victim.

A month later, the Black child's mother received a voice message from the school's principal stating there was another incident, this one involving cyberbullying in which her daughter was targeted. A peer of the Black girl reported what some of the messages were in the cyberbullying incident:

"I am going to rape that n-word."

*"I'd rather f*** a deformed Jew."*

The daughter also showed her mom a note that was left on her desk stating:

"Shut up I'll rape you in the bathroom."

The Black girl later reported multiple notes, but she threw them out in "fear and embarrassment," however, the note of someone raping her in the bathroom is the first note she showed her mother.

In October, the superintendent called the Black girl's mother and informed her that two of the boys who were suspended showed up at school and were permitted in class. It was not until lunchtime that the school noticed the two boys violated their suspension, after which their parents were called, and the boys were sent home. The school has provided no explanation as to how these two boys' presence on school grounds and attendance in class was missed; once again demonstrating their incompetence and lack of ability to keep this Black child safe at school.

PoBC's Reponse

1. Family Connection

The family reached out to PoBC by email. Upon receiving the email, PoBC contacted the family to schedule a phone call to discuss the case in detail. This case was able to be triaged; however, based on the school's inaction, school board and local authorities, as time progressed, this case became an emergency.

2. Connection with Community

After reviewing the case, PoBC instructed the mother to contact the police over the hate notes. The notes of intention to rape and kill the 13-year-old Black child were then shared with the public. As the case was brought to the public's attention, more reports of anti-Black racism came forth from community members living in Simcoe County.

3. Transparent Communication Across Sectors

A letter was sent with a clear message to the school board's Director of Education and the Children's Aid Society of Simcoe County highlighting the release of evidence concerning the hate crimes that have impacted this mother and her daughter. The letter also mentioned the influx and outpouring of complaints of anti-Black racism events within multiple schools within the region. Simcoe CAS started an investigation into the school and principal. PoBC requested a meeting with the leadership teams of the Minister and Deputy Minister of Education.

4. Presence

PoBC was able to support this family virtually throughout this case. The Minister of Education hosted a Zoom session with Black students to learn about their exposure to anti-Black racism in their educational experience. Many Simcoe County students were in attendance. A rally was held at the Simcoe County District School Board office, bringing more awareness to the issue of anti-Black racism within the region.

5. Status

The police are still "investigating" the notes threatening rape and murder of this young Black student. This investigation had been going on for more than a month. The principal, as well as the students' teacher, were removed from the school. The 13-year-old Black girl has been attending therapy sessions to cope with the anxiety that has developed since experiencing these acts of anti-Black racism at school.

6. Outcomes

A community group modelled after PoBC was established in Simcoe County to help other Black families and Black students combat anti-Black racism within the area. The child's mother did interviews with CBC's The National and The Toronto Star about their family's experience.

Case Study #3

Background

- School Board: Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario (CEPEO)
- Systems Implicated: Education, Child Welfare, Police
- Child(ren)'s Age(s): Primary School to Secondary School-Aged Children
- Family Ethnicity: Various Newcomer and Minority Groups

A family first contacted the PoBC System Navigation team about experiencing systemic problems in their Ottawa area school. Our team members and partnering organizations counselled and attended municipal meetings with the family. Shortly after, several other families came forth. With the increase of cases within the same community, it became clear that these families were victims of anti-Black racism. PoBC team members recognized that there was a level of anxiety and a deep sense of distress as these families were subjected to witnessing their children being academically streamed. Their children were not being challenged academically or receiving the quality education that is their right.

Specialized programs are being used as tools to create barriers between racialized families and other students in the community. This school was giving French homework and assignments that did not challenge students whose first language is French. Students were being streamed into programs that were below their abilities and provided with individual education plans (IEPs) without any evidence that the IEPs were required for these particular students. In some cases, students had not been in the school system long enough for information to accumulate to warrant an IEP.

The common factor with all these families involved was their ethnicity and race. These families and parents were not informed when their children were being moved to less challenging courses, or of the impact on their children due to taking less challenging courses.

For example, various students are advised to switch over to applied courses versus remaining in academic classes. The families of these students were asked to encourage students to switch over to applied courses. The school staff neglected to tell these students and their families that switching to applied courses makes them unable to attend university when pursuing post-secondary education. In this example, it is clear that the level of omission and neglect existing between school staff and racialized families and students reinforces systemic barriers in the Black community.

In another example, most families in the area were not informed when their children were switched to lower-level courses. Schools and school staff can switch Black students to lower-level classes without parental consent because the curriculum remained the same, although it was less challenging. Children were removed from the classroom for particular lessons, causing them to fall behind the rest of their peers. This type of streaming has taken place for years and significantly impacts the Black community. The continuation of such practices, done under the notion that it is in the child's best interest, harms the future of the Black community.

These families are judged based on their appearance and not their academics, which attests to the systemic abuse and systemic racism in the Ottawa region. Black students have the right to education, and Black families have the right to be involved in every decision made in their children's interest. Creating barriers to hinder and stop Black children from reaching their fullest potential is a harmful and unacceptable offence towards the Black community. The trauma amongst the Black community is a direct result of neglect and injustice against the Black community.

PoBC's Reponse

1. Family Connection

A family first contacted the PoBC System Navigation team about experiencing academic streaming in the Ottawa region.

2. Connection with Community

PoBC immediately planned a conference call with the family involving multiple PoBC team members, Student and Family Advocates (SFA), and community partners.

3. Transparent Communication Across Sectors

A letter outlining the targeting of the family and clear instances of systems abuse was sent to the PoBC, Student and Family Advocates and community partners worked together to provide comprehensive support for all families and students involve

4. Presence

POBC organized and met with the Directors of Education within the Ottawa Region. POBC also enaged with other Student and Family Advocates within the Ottawa region to provide as much physical support for the families impacted.

5. Status

POBC has contacted the media and the Black Legal Action Centre (BLAC) to document the stories and statements of the families impacted. POBC has collected and documented Victim Impact Statements of all of the families. There has been three meetings with the school board, all of which have made little progress to provide support and adequate reparations to the families. BLAC will meet with the families to determine if an individual or a joint Human Rights complaint is needed. POBC continues to garner support to get justice for all students and families impacted.

6. Outcomes

This case study is ongoing. There are no confirmed outcomes.



Appendix I: Summary of PoBC Provincial Cases

*The timespan for the cases collected range from September 2020 - January 2022

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Algoma District School Board

Number of cases: 2

FE A white boy was seen bullying a Black student throughout the school year. The teacher dismissed the white student's behaviour as typical and to be expected from them and told the Black student to ignore it.

GE AA[æãÁ{] [^^^ reported being denied promotion or career advancement due to their advocacy of anti-Black racism and has been discriminated against based on race/ethnicity.

Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic DSB

Number of cases: 5

1. The school was not participating in Black History Month due to a lack of lesson plans and resources from the school board. Parents offered materials and resources to supplement the school but they were not acknowledged by the principal.
2. The debate over the use of the book *To Kill a Mockingbird* ensued at a high school. One teacher sent articles celebrating systematic racism deniers, unsolicited surveys, and videos to other staff members that were in line with his views that the text should be used. Teachers have not raised this issue with their union or the school board due to a lack of faith that they will respond appropriately.
3. A white student had reportedly bullied another Black student for years. The white student claims to have been bitten by the Black student, resulting in the suspension of the Black student. The suspension was extended at the request of the white student's mother. The mother of the Black student inevitably made the choice to remove her child from the school.
4. There is ongoing racial tension between the white students of a school and the Black and Asian students. The staff request the creation of anti-white racism and anti-Asian racism tools.
5. Elementary school teachers state that because of a young Black boy's behavioural issues he would not make it far, and might not even get to high school. They then suggest that he may be able to "do something" with his basketball skills. The teachers' comments were reported but the Supervisor made excuses for their behaviour and they received no consequences.

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Bluewater District School Board

Number of cases: 3

1. Parents sent an email stating that they were upset that their children were being taught too much about anti-Black racism during Black History Month and remarked that “these people”, in reference to Black Canadians, need to make a better life for themselves.
2. Black boys were treated badly and physically assaulted by a school employee. When the abuse was brought to the school's attention the principal told the parents that their children were lying about the abuse. No action was taken by the board and parents escalated the issue to the Ontario Human Rights Commission.
3. A school board employee saw racist interactions in a school. They believe the unions are racist, so they feel no need to report the incident.

Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board

Number of cases: 2

1. A white student demonstrates a lack of knowledge surrounding racism and anti-Black racism, reporting that the Black students were being racist for refusing to play with the white student. The white student did not report to the school for fear of “cancel culture”.
2. Racist bullying between students is not being appropriately dealt with. Incidents are rarely reported as staff do not have faith anything productive will come of it.

Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board

Number of cases: 6

1. When discussing an incident that transpired between two students, the principal used the “n-word” to describe a student.
2. Teachers witnessed a Black student being surrounded by white students after school on school property and neglected to intervene. The parents of the Black child were notified after the fact and asked to find out details of the incident from their child.
3. Racial slurs are repeatedly hurled at a board employee. When the board employee talked to supervisors they were berated.

Appendix I: Summary of PoBC Provincial Cases

4. A board employee witnessed a Black child being reprimanded for asking their teacher a question about the lesson. The student was then pulled out of class and further reprimanded by administration. The student returned to class looking defeated and put his head down on his desk for the remainder of the class.
5. In a conversation, a board employee and the administrator began talking about their families. The board employee was asked if their family member was a drug dealer.
6. The board employee witnessed an angry parent yell, "Go back to Jamaica," at a teacher.

CDSB of Eastern Ontario

Number of cases: 2

1. The principal stated that the student's "better half" must have stayed home that day.
2. School board staff reported racist bullying incidents between students that are not being appropriately dealt with. Anti-Black actions/comments were perpetrated by a teacher towards a colleague, as well as anti-Black actions/comments perpetrated by a board employee towards a staff member.

CHEO SA

Number of cases: 1

1. A teacher was discussing American History and a student raised concerns that history written by white people is anti-Black. A white student stated that they had built this nation, yet they are treated differently while Black people get all the credit. The student was not reprimanded and the issue was never escalated. They have refused to escalate this incident for fear of reprisal and lack of faith that the board will respond appropriately.

CSD du Nord-Est de l'Ontario

Number of cases: 1

1. The teacher reported racist bullying between students that were not being appropriately dealt with. They believe that there is a need for anti-discrimination laws that prevent unnecessary discomfort in their school environment.

Appendix I: Summary of PoBC Provincial Cases

CSDC Franco-Nord

Number of cases: 1

1. A physical fight occurred between a white student and a student of colour. In an attempt to break up the fight, the board employee was thrown to the floor by the white student. Police were called and the board employee told that they needed to behave more like the white teachers at the school.

Dufferin-Peel Catholic DSB

Number of cases: 2

1. A Black teenage student with exceptionalities is alleged to have a weapon in his backpack. Police are called and the student is chased and tasered. Had proper lockdown protocols been initiated, it is believed that the situation would not have escalated and the student's dignity and safety could have been maintained.
2. A white student repeatedly asks a Black student for the "n-word" pass and is refused, so the white student uses a French equivalent. The Black student then reports the incident to a caring adult who notifies the school. The white student is asked to apologize, however, the parents of the Black students feel that there should be more consequences.

Durham District School Board

Number of cases: 7

1. A board employee was called the "n-word" by a parent. It was not reported because the employee does not believe the union has sufficient knowledge of anti-Black racism to respond appropriately.
2. A board employee spotted and approached a colleague outside of work. The colleague informed the employee that they don't want to waste their time talking to a "fat abo" (slur for Aboriginal). The interaction was not reported due to a lack of faith that the union has sufficient knowledge of anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism to respond appropriately.
3. A parent insists that a teacher made a false claim to the Children's Aid Society. The teacher claimed that the parent was notified and spoken to about their daughter's mental health on multiple occasions but the parent had taken no action. The teacher had not previously contacted or notified the parent regarding any concerns.
4. A student is always being streamed out of academic-level courses by the guidance counselor even though she is an Ontario Scholar.

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5. A young student is being academically held back by the school. The student is capable of working several grade levels ahead and the gifted test was requested by the parents before she arrived at her new school. Parents were told that testing was on hold indefinitely despite all other boards offering the service.
6. A student is having a difficult time in school. The parents requested an educational assessment while his teacher requested an ADHD test. The student is tested at an external source however the school will not accept the assessment results. The parents requested an IEP for their child but it has not been instilled by teachers yet.
7. A student has been unduly yelled at during online class for wanting to share something with their teacher. The parents want the teacher to develop more of a nurturing relationship with the student but are met with the retort that the student has exceptionalities.

Durham Catholic District School Board

Number of cases: 6

1. A Black student wrote a tribute to his late grandmother as a yearbook quote. The student was bullied in his yearbook with racist comments towards his grandmother.
2. A student completed a psychological assessment and was told that the assessment results would not be shared with the school without the consent of the parents. Parents received a call from the school stating they have the test results and wanted to meet with them to discuss it. The family had never consented to give the school access to the results and were appalled that the school received information before the parents.
3. Community members have taken it upon themselves to bring together parents to develop and support another community organization to develop a strategy/action plan to hold the Durham Catholic District School board accountable for the needs of their children.
4. A Black student was bullied and physically abused three times by a white student who initiated the confrontation and told the Black student that he does not like Black people. The parents ask the principal to suspend the bully, which did not occur until the third incident. The principal does not believe these incidents are racially motivated which makes the parents feel that the principal does not want to take their child's reports seriously.
5. Parents state that their child has been racially profiled by the school for years and continues to be bullied, intimidated, and assaulted by teachers. The school has forged documents to obtain the child's medical information. Parents have sought help through their MPP and Children's Aid.

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6. The “n-word” was used in class on multiple occasions. The teacher also used the slur in an attempt to explain the offensiveness of the word. When a Black student pointed out that the use of the word to explain the history is not appropriate, they were scolded by the teacher.

Grand Erie DSB

Number of cases: 1

1. A teacher reported that they experience racism on many levels. No exact example was provided.

Greater Essex County DSB

Number of cases: 1

1. Racism towards an individual is being experienced on many levels. No exact example was provided.

Halton District School Board

Number of cases: 4

1. An ongoing issue of systemic racism and anti-Black racism from guidance staff at a high school is known to the board but nothing has been done to address the issue. Many racialized students have come forward with similar experiences about streaming, racist language, etc. The board is refusing to acknowledge that they are investigating specific staff members and the broader problem. Students have been accused by staff of “playing the race card”.
2. A student is being accused of many infractions that the parents find impossible to logically explain. The student is questioned alone without parents present and has been constantly sent out of school and out of the classroom.
3. Two students were moved to the gifted program and had behaviour plans created for minor issues that could be easily addressed by updating their IEP. The students are not aggressive or violent and parents want the school to update their IEPs and remove behaviour plans from their Ontario Student Record.
4. A Black student placed in an all-white class has experienced exclusion, bullying and has been called the “n-word” repeatedly. The parents wish to move the student out of the classroom but were told by the principal and vice-principal that this was an opportunity for their child to learn resiliency and refused their request.

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Halton Catholic DSB

Number of cases: 2

1. A teacher said the "n-word" in class and is still working at the school. Staff doesn't have any faith that the administration or the board will do anything about it and is concerned that by raising the issue it will impact their career. Several other staff members have reported the issue as well.
2. The student guidance counsellor has made a student feel very uncomfortable and insecure about herself. No specifics were given.

Hamilton-Wentworth DCB

Number of cases: 1

1. It was reported that the individual has experienced racism on many levels. No exact example was provided.

Limestone District School Board

Number of cases: 1

1. A student in a specialized program believes that they are having their academic career sabotaged by a teacher. The teacher is believed to have interfered with the evaluation process of the student, removed her from multiple required classes. The issue has been taken to the school board however they seem to be siding with the teacher.

London District Catholic School Board

Number of cases: 1

1. It was reported that racism is experienced on several levels. They didn't report because they don't believe the union has sufficient knowledge of anti-Black racism to respond appropriately.

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Moose Factory Island DSAB

Number of cases: 2

1. The board employee reported racist slurs directed towards them by a senior school board leader.
2. Black students at a school have been disproportionately harassed. Upon enforcement of a new anti-racism policy, a teacher raised an issue, citing that the Black students were now getting unequal and unfair treatment and that they (the teacher) didn't understand the need for the new anti-racism solutions.

Near North District School Board

Number of cases: 1

1. There is a history of severe racism faced by a student and there are no racialized members on the school Equity Committee except for two Indigenous members. There was also an appropriation of Black Lives Matter for the staff newsletter, "Near North Matters," despite repeated requests for the title to change by multiple staff members. A parent has successfully lobbied for suspensions and expulsion for anti-Black racism but has been unsuccessful in getting restorative practices and anti-racism professional development and curriculum to be prioritized by the board.

Niagara Catholic District School Board

Number of cases: 1

1. A Black student in Kindergarten was bullied and subjected to anti-Black racist remarks from other students. When the parents reported this to the school, very little was done to make the student feel safe and included.

Niagara District School Board

Number of cases: 1

1. A child was called a racist term by other students on the bus home from school and it was ignored by the bus driver. After reporting to the principal, the parent was assured the bus driver would be reprimanded but wasn't given specifics on how or when.

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Peel District School Board

Number of cases: 5

1. A teacher asked their supervisor why there were so many Black-related stories, events and activities during the time of Black History Month, and asked why there aren't events surrounding other cultures or groups. The supervisor replied that the Black community is "yelling" the loudest.
2. A mother with four children requested a device after one of the family's personal devices broke. The mother's request was denied.
3. An intruder to the online classroom said the "n-word" in the chat and then left. The teacher did not address the use of the word but reminded the students not to share the meeting codes with others. The incident was not reported to the principal or school by the teacher and no action has been taken since the parent reported it.
4. A group of students found a TikTok Challenge involving the "n-word" and the slur was used by an Asian student. One Black student of the group told them they cannot say that word and an Asian student said the word and asked what it meant. The teacher did not know how to handle the situation and instead asked the Black child how he would like her to handle it. The student's parent sent an email to the principal requesting a meeting and received a phone call instead.
5. At recess, a white classmate said to a Black student that the other Black girl in the class is the "n-word in the class." The Black student reported it to the supervisor. The family is not confident that the school will deal with it appropriately.

Rainbow District School Board

Number of cases: 3

1. The school employee stated how painful the racism is for them, and they thought that it happened too long ago for them to report. They also state that they didn't report it because they don't have faith that anything will happen.
2. Senior board staff have been refusing to deal with complaints properly. Efforts to improve the board are viewed as a facade, such as conducting a student census but not sharing the results. There is a lot of pressure on Black principals and staff to make up for the lack of equitable policies, and staff wonder why the latest equity consultant was let go.
3. White students used social media to a social media post images of themselves wearing Afro wigs for Crazy Hair Day at school. School administration did nothing.

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Renfrew County Catholic DSB

Number of cases: 1

1. There are reports of racist bullying between students that were not being appropriately dealt with, as well as anti-Black classroom activities and assignments. The board employee feels that they are being denied promotions, hiring, movement, or career advancement due to their advocacy against anti-Black racism.

Renfrew County District School Board

Number of cases: 1

1. A principal welcomed a new Black student to the school by putting on a 'gangsta' accent, and telling the student he can't act like a gangsta in this school. The principal was moved to another school as a reprimand.

Simcoe County District School Board

Number of cases: 14

1. There have been a string of traumatic incidents for racialized teachers, including an incident where a principal called a teacher out into the hallway and proceeded to yell at them for 15 minutes.
2. An anti-racist and anti-oppressive focused educator was told to send all lessons plans related to social justice issues to the administrative team before implementing them in the classroom, so they could be examined and approved by the white administrator.
3. Students in a class called another student the "n-word" and were suspended for one day, but returned to class with no restorative actions put in place. The administrative team said they would talk to the class about respect, responsibility and how to behave, but refused to address racism.
4. Two Black boys were overheard by a teacher saying the "n-word" and were suspended for five days in accordance with the school's "zero-tolerance" policy. An all-white administrative team made the decision despite limited knowledge of why, how, or in what context the boys were using the word. The white principal also has a history of using his position to make many students feel like their voice (literally) is unwelcome, unwanted, disrespected, and inferior in the school they attend.
5. A senior level board employee regularly makes racist micro-aggressive and anti-Indigenous comments, however, they hold a lot of power within the board making it difficult for other employees to call them out or make a complaint against them.

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6. A young Afro-Latinx child was told by the administrator that their opinion did not matter in regards to implementing a gender-neutral bathroom specifically for students of colour. The administrator was inappropriate towards the child, asking them questions about their genitalia. An apology was made by the administrator to the child.
7. Indigenous students were being dropped off at the school an hour early with no supervision and after school were being driven to their drop-off location at the ferry docks an hour early and left again unsupervised. Concern has been raised that at the drop off location, students are at risk of being harmed, abducted, or becoming victims of sex trafficking.
8. Tensions between an older white staff member and a Caribbean staff member were rising. A colleague suggested that the Caribbean staff member was "Too [Caribbean]" and they should tone it down if they wanted to fit in better. Shortly after the Caribbean staff member was let go and their part-time contract was not renewed.
9. There is an ongoing issue of racist language and slurs being used by white students. There have been many instances of racism, use of the "n-word", micro-aggressions and racial bias within the school but no actions have been made to address the present environment at the school. No tangible actions have been implemented after meetings with the school board.
10. At a special education centre, during an oral presentation about women's rights by one of the students, a school employee turned to one of the Black girls in the room and asked her if she would've liked to be a slave back then. There has been no response to address this incident from the school or the board.
11. A Black student has been left traumatized due to mistreatment from his time at a school from junior kindergarten to the first grade. In grade one he was isolated from his peers and denied his right to education, spending the months at a time confined to a 4x4 cubicle space. He has since moved schools but is still traumatized from the experience.
12. Parents find the school to be understaffed and disorganized. The administration is attempting to push valuable staff out due to their anti-racist and Black equality focus.
13. A Black student has faced ongoing issues since senior kindergarten. Most recently the student was reprimanded for a comment he made by being asked to sit outside of the classroom for the day. The teacher does not offer constructive conversations about behaviour and no alternative options were offered.
14. A group of high school students are known bullies at their school, known for picking fights, recording them and posting them online. They were recorded in a physical altercation with a new Caribbean student who they have been regularly bullying at school. The police and administrator are aware of these incidents but have done little to nothing to stop them.

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St-Clair Catholic District School Board

Number of cases: 1

1. A student repeatedly wrote the “n-word” in the bathrooms of the school. Staff members are asking for a police investigation to take place at the school but are being ignored. They have reached out to their union but have received no response.

Toronto Catholic District School Board

Number of cases: 14

1. A white student has been bullying a Black student. Teachers are not taking action and have told the Black student to just ignore it. When the bullying continues and turns physical the staff at the school do not seem to care.
2. A teacher bullied, belittled, embarrassed, and reprimanded a Black student and his mother in the hall in front of other students.
3. Administration arbitrarily punishes Black students for indiscretions other students do not get reprimanded for. Many racialized parents have removed their children from the school due to poor treatment, as a result, the school is much less diverse than its surrounding community.
4. A visiting teacher spoke at the general meeting stating that the school is of poor quality and not a good working environment due to the lack of white students. No reaction was given by the administration to condone these comments and the meeting continued as if nothing happened.
5. Several racist incidents have been experienced at the board. The union head has been contacted but has not prioritized the incidents.
6. The principal called a teacher (who isn't Black) an “n-word”, and then went on a rant to the kids about “n-words in cotton fields.”
7. The teacher reported there was a rape, but they did not report it to the school board, or the union.
8. An intruder entered an online classroom and repeatedly used racial slurs in the chat and then left. Parents and administration were notified of the incident and the administration was able to identify the IP address to identify the intruder. The teacher received a written apology from the intruder who was a high school student in the same school district. This is not the first time the teacher or students of this class have been racially discriminated against, and so the teacher feels that the school board is too slow in rolling out changes and consequences.
9. A school trustee used a negative, stereotypical nickname to refer to a school. Board staff was informed however the witness present when the statement was made is unwilling to move forward with a complaint.

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10. A Black History Month performance was unexpectedly cancelled by the school administrative team stating it was inappropriate due to song choice, costume choice, etc. The students were left shocked as the teacher who was supervising the performance had flagged none of these concerns during the planning process. Parents' concerns and suggestions to have more Black staff members and to have staff training to mitigate further issues are being dismissed.
11. A student was removed from their class to create a grade 7/8 split class. The parents inquired about the selection process for this transition and asked if their child could be returned to her original teacher due to the child's issues with change, anxiety and overall mental health. The request was refused by the principal and it was later revealed that other racialized students were also moved. Multiple efforts to rectify the issue with the school administrators and the board have been ineffective.
12. A student with behavioural and emotional anxieties has had law enforcement called multiple times and has been placed in a socially isolated classroom. The parents do not fully understand their child's IEP and they require a review of the support plan and IEP.
13. The community members would like to learn how to support Black families in their schools. They have had families voice their concerns, but they do not know how to support them.
14. During a verbal dispute, a white student with autism called a Black student the "n-word". Both students were interviewed by the principal separately to get their side of the story but very little disciplinary action will come of it since the white student is on the autism spectrum. The parents were not notified of the dispute.

Toronto District School Board

Number of cases: 24

1. A group of Black students were calling an Asian student racial slurs.
2. An autistic and gifted student is having a difficult time with the current classroom environment. Parents are looking to change schools to a smaller setting for in-person learning.
3. A fifth-grade student appears to be depressed in virtual learning. Concern was raised about the teacher not using the video feature however administration has not responded with any urgency. Administrators are unable to provide solutions to enhance virtual learning and only offered a return to in-person school as an alternative option.
4. A student with an ADHD diagnosis is experiencing anti-Black racism and bias from a teacher. The teacher disregards the ADHD diagnosis along with recommendations given by colleagues or the student's psychotherapist on how best to manage their behaviour. The student's desk is isolated from the rest of the class. Other teachers in the school recognize the student's positive abilities in other classrooms but the teacher has nothing good to say about the student. The family has also endured ongoing anti-Black racism from the administration. An official investigation of the family's complaints is ongoing.

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5. Two male students have had to endure different negative racist attitudes from teachers and peers.
6. Struggling with the pandemic and juggling online school.
7. A male student has been called racist names by classmates and has been bullied.
8. A parent reported that they required assistance. No details were given.
9. A teacher attempted to whitewash a history lesson regarding Ancient Egyptians. Parents want the school to address the misinformation, and for the lesson to be retaught so that both the teacher and the children can be made aware of the errors and statements made.
10. It was reported that a white affluent school council member racially targeted both a parent and a child. The superintendent and the principal were informed and they have met with the school council member, however, nothing has been done to address the safety needs of the parent and child.
11. A student was diagnosed with ASD, parents are looking for more information and help to advocate for their child to be placed in an autism classroom, however, they have been met by resistance and have been given the run-around.
12. The parent is requesting professional counsel, with expertise in racism/bias/discrimination in the education system and in society, in regards to peacefully sorting out the conflict between themselves and the other parent in choosing the correct daycare for their child.
13. A parent is accused of abuse due to their inability to secure adequate childcare for their child to be able to attend school. The parent requested the child be transferred to online learning and was told that changes cannot be made until the following semester.
14. A Black student was called racial slurs by a white student. On two separate occasions, the school did not inform the parents of the Black child but called the parents of the white child. A written apology was sent home with the Black student and the school has not advised the parent on what other course of action would be taken to rectify this situation.
15. A four-year-old girl was left to wander the hallways on her second day of school. The school personnel that was responsible for getting her to class was nowhere to be found. It was reported that they asked for the girl's name and she did not answer.
16. A racist micro-aggressive comment about a Black student's hair was made by a school staff member in front of the students' peers. The student is adamantly refusing to raise the issue with the school for fear that he will be further targeted.
17. Racial bullying at a school has been reported. The school board has not responded.
18. A boy was touching a Black student's hair as well as hitting her. The teacher said she would do something but nothing has been done. The situation has now escalated to the boy throwing items into the Black student's hair.

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19. Parents reported disorganization and a delay in setting up their child for an online school. The child did not begin school until two weeks after school reopened.
20. A white student called a Black student an "n-word" on multiple occasions. Parents were told that due to confidentiality they can not know the punishment given to the white student, or be present to support their son when the white student is made to apologize.
21. A group of students physically attacked a seven-year-old Black student. All concerns raised with the school have reportedly accomplished nothing.
22. Three white boys were bullying a Black girl in the classroom. Later a photo of the girl was discovered online with a racist caption. The parents are not happy with how the school is handling the situation and want to know what the school board was going to do to ensure Black children are protected.
23. A nine-year-old was attacked and assaulted in the schoolyard. The parent of the child was not told until they picked up their child. The school and superintendent are investigating however have said that they do not have the full story.
24. Some Black students in the virtual class do not have access to the required equipment (ex: printers) and have been offered no assistance or accommodations by the school. A parent has offered to arrange a solution but has received no response from the school.

Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board

Number of cases: 1

1. A concerned parent had been helping a mom with her daughter. The mother texted the parent for advice on how to deal with her son's teacher.

Upper Grand District School Board

Number of cases: 4

1. Parents report that their daughter, the only Black child in the class, is being bullied by other non-Black, racialized students. When brought to the teacher's attention, the parents' concerns were dismissed. The parent did not report it to the school board because they don't have faith in the system to protect their child.
2. It was reported that there is racism happening at all levels, and they do not think that anything is ever going to be done about it.
3. A Black student and her family have been singled out at the school program. Parents believe that it is not an equitable and inclusive space due to the negative bias that staff has shown to the child and the bullying that has been allowed by staff to continue. Parents have been met with hyper surveillance from the staff and policies not usually enforced on the other white families are solely enforced with the Black parents.

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4. There is a serious problem with anti-Black racism in rural schools. Racialized students are subject to racist language and slurs, including the “n-word”. One student was told to “go back” to his country because Canada is for white people only.

Viamonde School Board

Number of cases: 1

1. Parents have had several issues with their child's teacher including: a tone-deaf approach to classroom assignments, a lack of care or imperative to accurately include Black History Month lessons in the classroom, rude and evasive responses to questions about their child's progress in class, and refusal to outline assessment criteria. Concerns raised with the principal and superintendent have been met with silence or dismissive responses.

Waterloo Catholic District School Board

Number of cases: 3

1. A bi-racial student found the “n-word” written across her locker and the situation was handled poorly by school administration. Parents were told that police were contacted but received no proof of a report, and the parents are requesting that administration address the entire school since the identity of the culprit is not known.
2. Racist remarks were made by students towards a bi-racial child and another racialized child. The teacher was made aware of the situation by a parent and addressed the issue with the children involved as well as the whole class. This addressed the issue at the time but more incidents have occurred since, rendering those actions inadequate in providing a safe learning environment for the racialized students.
3. Staff called police on a four-year-old Black boy. The boy had previously experienced ongoing harm as a result of multiple occasions of isolation, containment, and emotional distress.

Wellington Catholic District School Board

Number of cases: 1

1. The teacher reports that there is racist bullying between students that is not being appropriately dealt with.

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Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board

Number of cases: 2

1. A teacher who had witnessed students using the “n-word” towards Black students took appropriate actions to create a safe space and report the incident, but was reprimanded by the administration for involving the superintendent. Following the incident, the principal proceeded to utilize the n-word multiple times to summarize what happened in a meeting with the teacher. The principal has a history of racist behaviour and has been known to turn a blind eye to any racism in the school. The teacher who reported the incident later lost their position at the school.
2. Teachers mocked a five-year-old student off-camera for her soft-spoken voice. The parents have been having ongoing issues with boosting their child's confidence which the teachers are aware of. The student is often reprimanded for completing work too soon or looking ahead of the slides, instead of being encouraged to be an excited learner.

York Catholic District School Board

Number of cases: 26

1. A white student wrote a monologue for his class on racism which was then heavily edited by the school and described as “too contentious” for the classroom.
2. A teacher in the school is blatantly racist and biased towards the only Black student in their class and has called on other teachers to join in policing the child. This teacher also places a heavy focus on slavery during Black History Month. Many other incidents with this teacher have not been reported.
3. A well-respected Black gym teacher with a strong accent is being reprimanded for raising his voice at a student. The teacher conducts classes primarily outdoors and colleagues have heard him raise his voice in the past but have not perceived it as threatening or scary. The new white administration team, the white student and parents have pushed disciplinary action against the teacher through the union before addressing the issue within the school first. Colleagues believe the situation has been blown out of proportion because he is a Black man.
4. A new Black student was transferred into the school. The grade eight white male teacher told students not to befriend him and that the new student was a bad influence who would lead the other students down the wrong path. The incident has been reported to the union.
5. A racialized board employee feels that they are constantly looked over for career advancements and leadership positions in favour of white candidates. They have been subject to micro and macroaggressions, blocked from training and leadership opportunities repeatedly and stripped of advancement opportunities. The employee feels that they are being intentionally targeted and reprimanded in an attempt to push them out of the board.

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6. A Black kindergarten teacher had the “n-word” written across her door in view of the students and other staff members. The incident was reported to the principal but no action was taken.
7. A school principal is often seen discriminating against racialized students, reprimanding them more severely and more often than their white counterparts and making “jokes” about calling Children’s Aid Society on them. School community members encounter reprisal from the principal for voicing their concerns.
8. An autistic student is bullied by their teacher.
9. A child is being excluded at school; children do not want to play with her.
10. An incident occurred between students, but only one of the students was suspended while the other was not. The principal did not use progressive discipline.
11. A young Black boy felt left out of his white kindergarten class. The parent brought this up with the teacher and asked for support. The parents gave recommendations for inclusive books but the child still feels alienated and has started to act out in class as reported by the teacher.
12. A student has encountered academic streaming at school. The parent believes that the school is pushing applied courses and trying to limit and label the potential their child holds.
13. A group of students created a social justice council at their school and wanted to raise awareness about the Black Lives Matter movement and other marginalized groups. School administration shut down the initiative after telling the students they were not to speak about police brutality and the students were directed to focus on ‘peace’.
14. A parent reports routinely experiencing problematic behaviours from school staff. They have requested that the principal attend the IPRC instead of the vice-principals, and their request was granted.
15. There is reported student mistreatment and unfair practices. An IEP for a student was put in place, however parents have received no empathy and have gotten the run-around by administration.
16. A young boy with autism was repeatedly verbally abused by the special education teacher and teacher’s aid. He was typically verbal, confident, happy and functioning, but he had stopped eating, sleeping and was having increased tantrums as a result of the mistreatment. The issue was raised with the teacher, the principal and with Children’s Aid.
17. It was reported that teachers are teaching false narratives when it comes to Black history. A parent reported that the correct resources were not being provided to children, especially when it came to their IEP learning, however the school pacified the actions of the teachers.

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19. A student entering the seventh grade had attended summer school for Math and English prior to September. The parents feel that he was not properly taught grade 6 level math in preparation for grade seven.
20. Parents suspected their child was being targeted by his virtual learning teacher by way of emails implicitly diagnosing him with a learning disability. The student was not underperforming or misbehaving and was doing well in class, however he is the only Black student in his virtual learning class. Parents have raised the issue with the virtual teacher and have received assurances from the teacher that they will practice more patience with the student.
21. A parent has raised concerns with their school regarding support for their young autistic son. The parent is not confident the school has enough personnel and wants to know about support options available to them for their son to be successful in school. They are still waiting to find out about specific actions from the administration.
22. School had a meeting with the school-based research team regarding a student without the parent's knowledge. The teacher stated that they forgot to include the parents. Additionally, the parents believe that their child is performing at a higher grade level but they have been denied an opportunity to test their child and have been told that the school doesn't allow for that.
23. A teacher has yelled at a student and has flipped the student's desk. The superintendent was contacted but they appear to be siding with the teacher.
24. A student fell during gym class and reported having a headache. He was given an ice pack and sent to his homeroom teacher. Parents are unhappy that they were not called or notified and they are criticizing the school for not administering proper concussion protocols.
25. A family moved to Canada last year and does not have many Black friends. They wanted to find resources to help their kindergarten child who has autism.
26. It was reported that there are Black students who are feeling targeted at all times. Parents who raise concerns are being gaslighted.

York Region District School Board

Number of cases: 25

1. An older student at a local park adjacent to an elementary school began calling Black children the "n-word" and later repeated the word to the parent who went to investigate the situation. The incident was reported to the police however police say their hands are tied due to the student being a minor.
2. Students created a Black Lives Matter piece in celebration of Black History Month, which was later vandalized.

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3. During the height of the pandemic, a school principal denied access to educational art materials for Black grade nine students, despite willingness from parents and staff to help make the materials available. Parents state that the white majority schools in the area have no issue making supplies available. The issue has been raised with the superintendent.
4. A racialized teacher has been subjected to microaggressions, racism and intimidation by white school board employees, students and parents. Despite the overwhelming evidence and documentation of racist incidents perpetrated by a student, the all-white administrators continued to reprimand the teacher and support the baseless claims and defamation towards the teacher. The teacher is being subjected to harsh discipline for standing up against the harassment they faced.
5. Anti-racism training is not adequate in the school board. The school board put together a PowerPoint slide presentation instead of organizing a training session led by Black facilitators. The administration is not equipped to properly teach this subject to their employees and the other educators are severely in need of proper training to combat their own biases, racist comments and behaviours.
6. A Black girl in grade three has been referred to as the “n-word of the class” by a white classmate.
7. In an email communication between teachers, a white teacher ended the email with a casually thrown out anti-Black racist comment to a Black teacher. The Black teacher has reported the incident to the administration.
8. A white teacher has received disparaging emails from white parents for having open and honest discussions about race, social injustice, police brutality and anti-Black racism. White parents have stated that the content was inappropriate and controversial, and the administration is aligning with the parents and asking the teacher to discuss lighter topics.
9. A white student used the “n-word” and no immediate action was taken. Action was only taken when the same student swore at the teacher and used a Nazi salute. Ongoing and explicit anti-racism training needs to be prioritized at the school in order to ensure the safety of racialized students.
10. A Black staff member, who witnessed a contentious altercation between a racialized parent and office staff, feels embarrassed by the parents’ sentiments and behaviour in the school and via email. They feel that there needs to be more awareness of the stress induced by Black staff as a result of actions such as these by Black community members.
11. A racialized teacher has experienced ongoing racially motivated bullying by other colleagues, who have also encouraged students to disrespect the teacher. Her reports have been laughed at and ignored. She is afraid to report incidents to the principal or the board because she doesn’t feel supported.
12. A family with two Black sons is appalled by the difference they see in their children’s school. One son attends a school with racially diverse staff and has had no issues. The other son attends a less diverse school and has had negative experiences that have shocked the parents. Apologies have been issued by the less diverse school and staff changes have taken place, however an OCT investigation has uncovered that little else has been done to resolve the issues.

Appendix I: Summary of PoBC Provincial Cases

13. A mother has requested support for herself and her child and asked the school social worker to reach out on their behalf.
14. Parents report that their children are being picked on because they look different than the rest of their class. The children have changed classes however they still reside in the same neighbourhood as the other students. The parents are seeing negative effects of continued bullying.
15. A grade one student who has been bullied in the past was called the "n-word" by another student. It was treated very lightly due to the young age of the children.
16. The parent reported that the school principal kept calling their children down to the office. One of her children had been experiencing racism, and she did not think the principal handled this properly.
17. A young student was being labelled as violent, defiant and aggressive. Parents were concerned and watched the video feed from the centre to confirm the validity, and they were met with video evidence that their child was being mistreated at the centre. Threats to remove the child from the program were made however the centre's tactics changed once the parent started to engage them in conversations regarding proper documentation, video evidence, enhanced funding and the intervention and de-escalation strategies used.
18. The student received a "prank" call from individuals she believed were from her school. They called her the "n-word," and made other racially insensitive comments to her. The school and police were notified of the incident however there has been no resolution.
19. The teacher is suggesting an IEP for a student. There seems to be an issue with the implementation of the program.
20. A student is repeatedly bullying a racialized child verbally and physically, including comments that the student should "kill herself". Procedures were put in place in an attempt to support the racialized student however the parent was not told about any consequences for the bully.
21. A student IEP was created for a grade four student who is reading at a grade one level. The student is frustrated and beginning to suffer with self-esteem while they wait for learning disability testing. The parent does not feel that the student is receiving enough support.
22. A parent reported that their child faced racism at their school and that the school did not have adequate culturally responsive support.
23. Parents believe that the school has been discriminating against Black students for decades by hindering Black student enrollment based on postal code discrimination. Parents believe that the white parents who fund the school have too much influence over the school.
24. The parent wants to discuss an IEP for their child.
25. The parent wants their son to be transferred to a different specialized program for him to obtain a high school diploma. They were told that the student would require a higher reading level, but were not provided with a clear pathway.

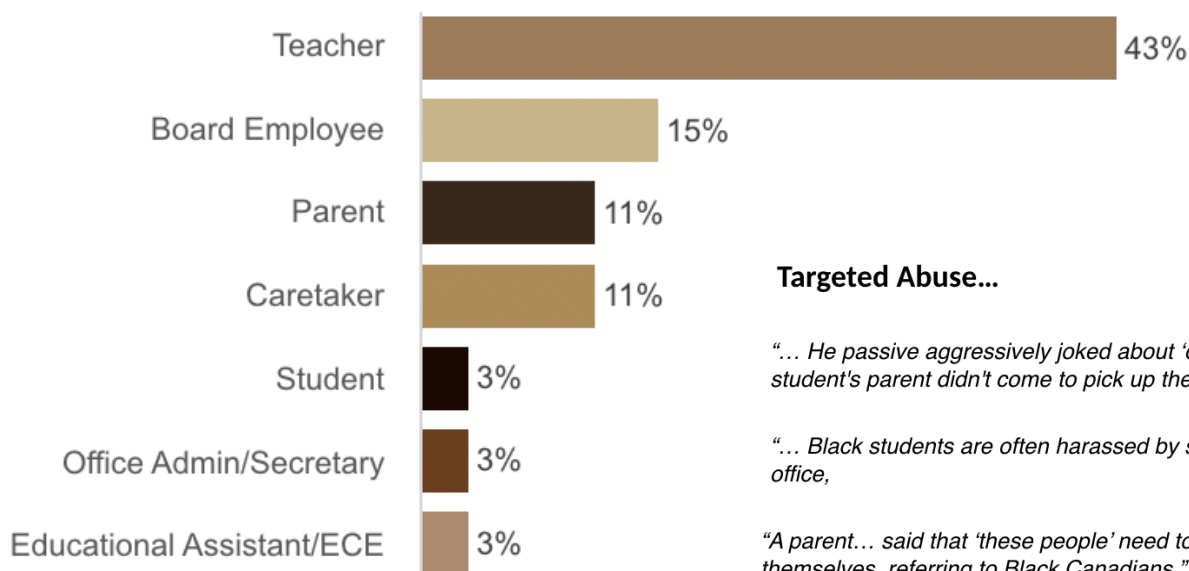
Appendix I: Summary of PoBC Provincial Cases

Other- School Board Unknown

1. The caretaker was called a witch and was ostracized for promoting equality.
2. The caretaker reported that his colleague called him an “n-word”. He did not think that it was serious enough to report to the school board.
3. An office administrator was told that rap music and its culture are sexist and vulgar. They then told them that they should listen to wholesome Christian music like Amy Grant, instead. They also suggested that they be punctual.
4. A board leader made a comment to a teacher suggesting that the police should “do something” to the teacher for denouncing them. It was reported to the union who have continuously made excuses as to why the board leader hasn't faced any discipline.
5. A board employee's Blackness was questioned due to lineage and skin colour.
6. A student is constantly being sent home for behaviour issues. The student is only four years old.
7. On the first day of school, the parent received a phone call about their son's behaviour. The school said that he refused to do his work, and the calls have not stopped. The only form of help they can provide is counseling and an IEP. The parent feels unheard and is being asked to just follow the plan that the school has.
8. A newcomer high school student has struggled with academic performance and cultural differences. He is considering dropping out of high school.
9. A student does not want to attend school, despite the efforts of the caregiver encouraging him to go to school, and following up with the school about him not wanting to attend.

Appendix II: School Racism Reporting Tool Data Analysis

Role in School System



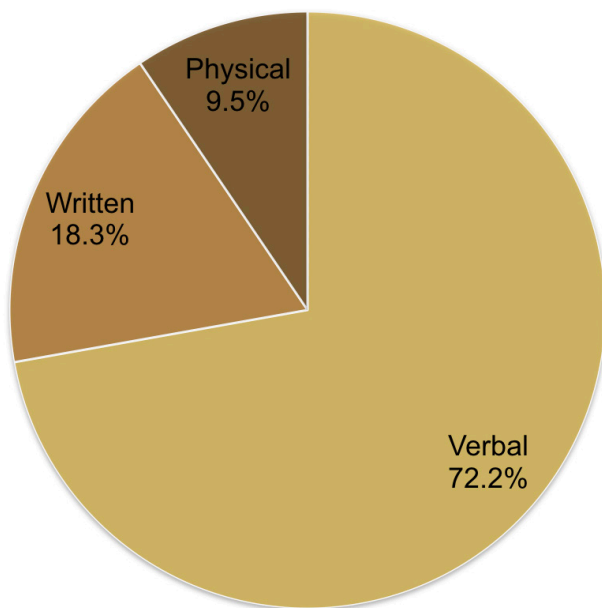
Targeted Abuse...

"... He passive aggressively joked about 'calling the CAS' if a Black student's parent didn't come to pick up their daughter on time."

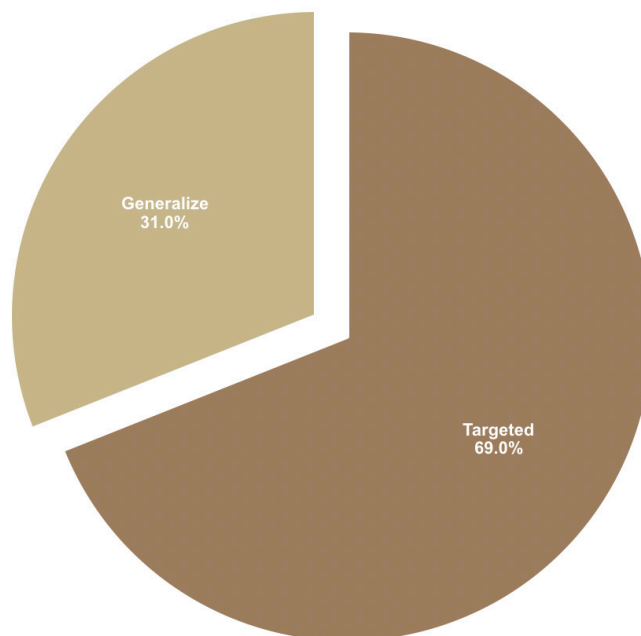
"... Black students are often harassed by sending them to the principal's office,

"A parent... said that 'these people' need to make a better life for themselves, referring to Black Canadians."

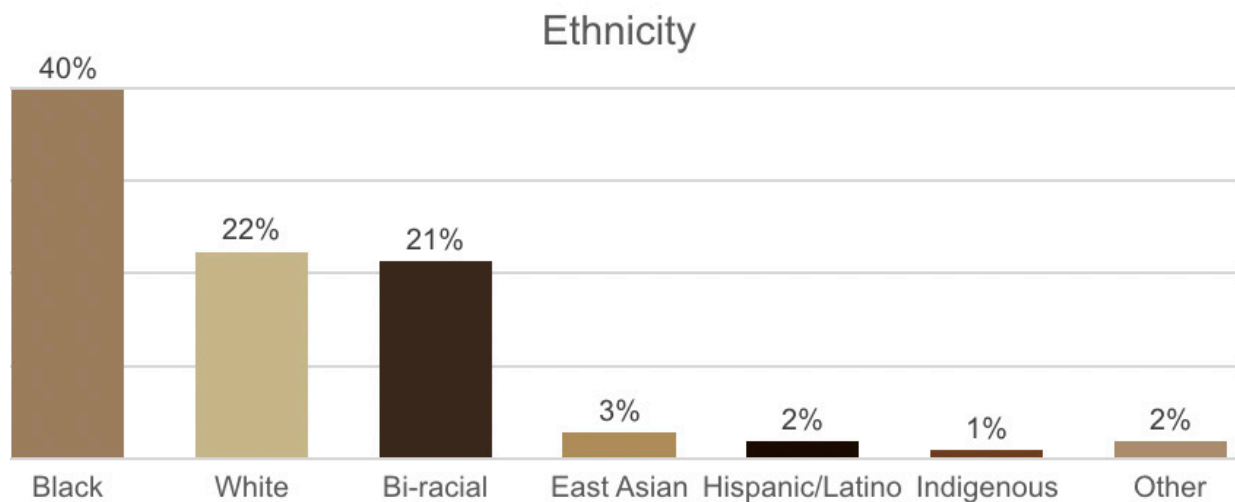
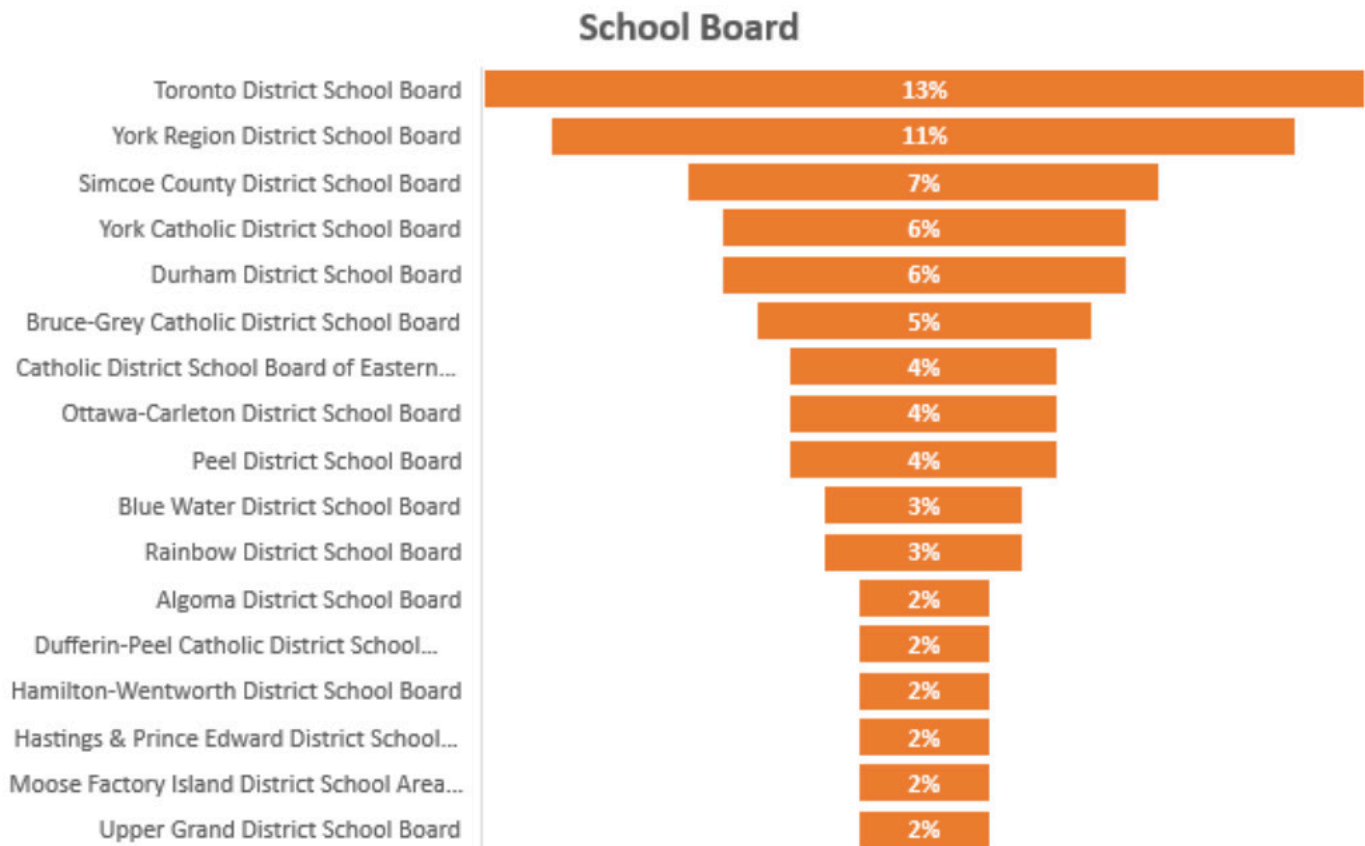
Delivery of Discrimination



Targeted vs. General Discrimination

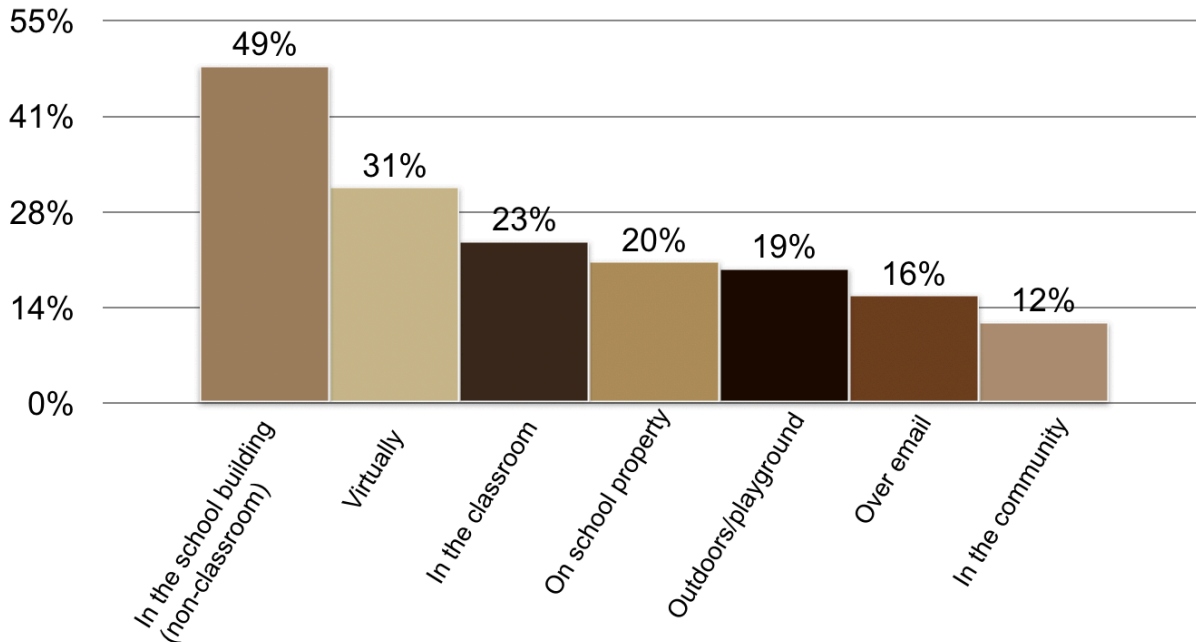


Appendix II: School Racism Reporting Tool Data Analysis

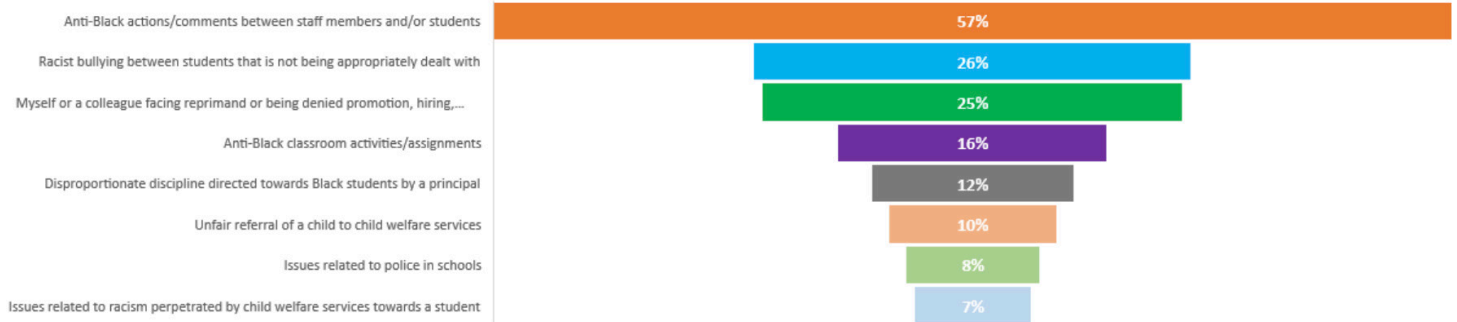


Appendix II: School Racism Reporting Tool Data Analysis

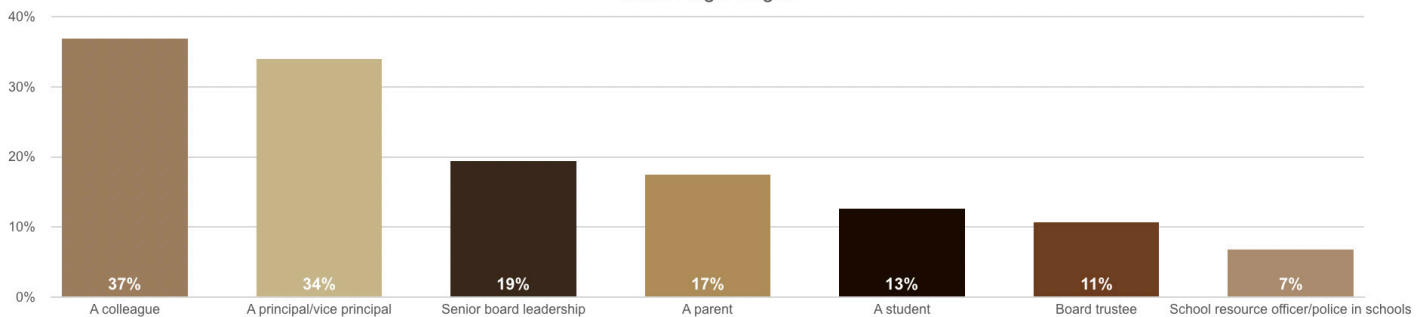
Location of incident



Nature of Incident

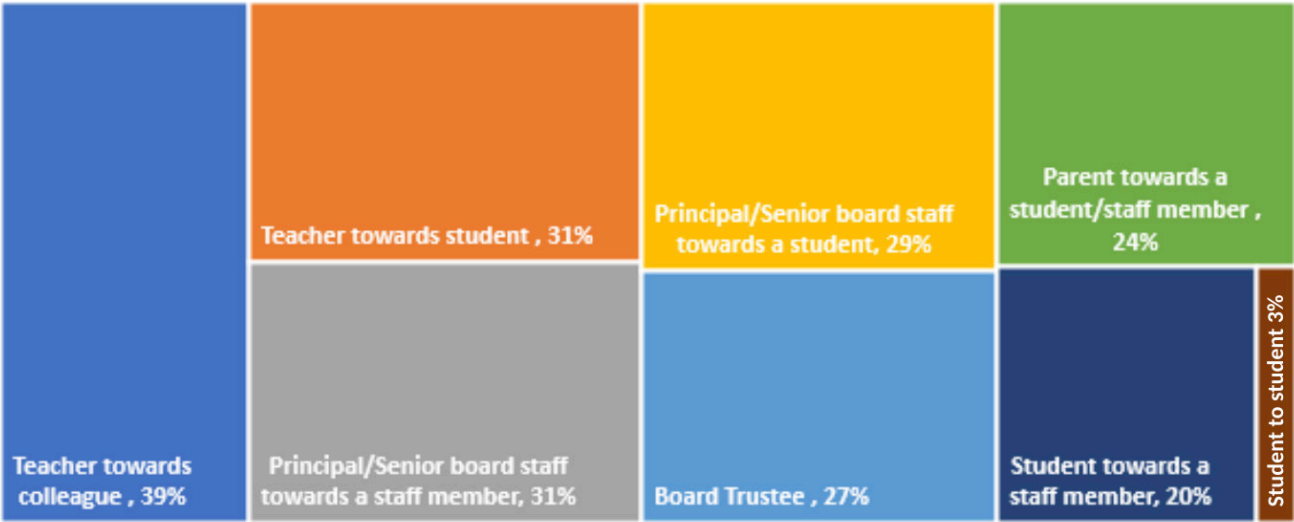


Issue Regarding...

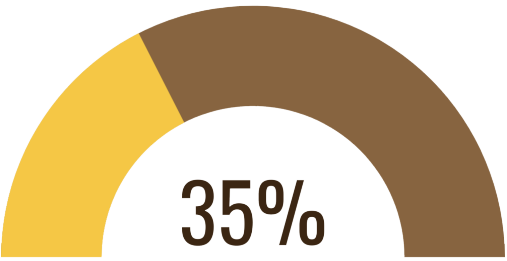
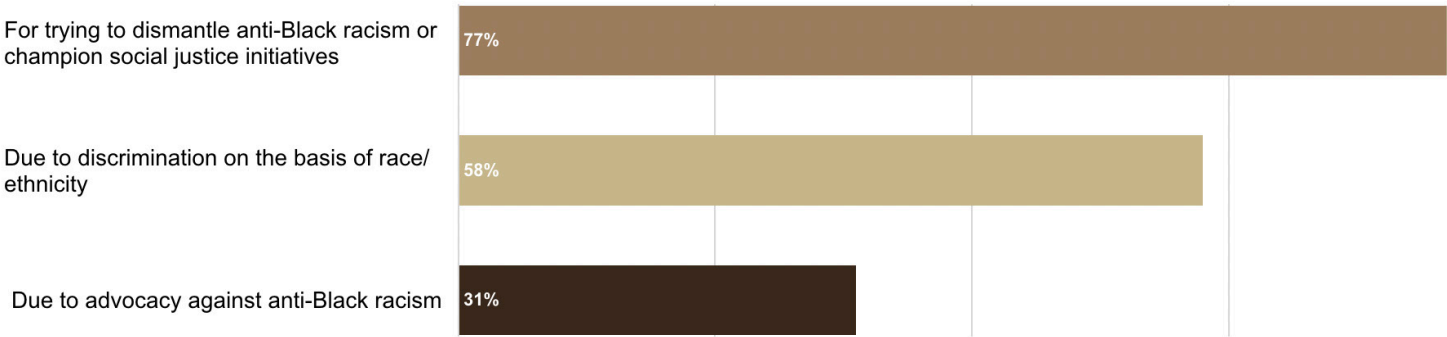


Appendix II: School Racism Reporting Tool Data Analysis

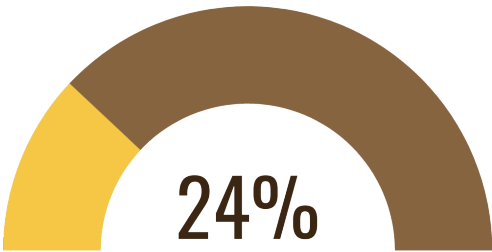
Nature of Perpetrator



Nature of Reprimand



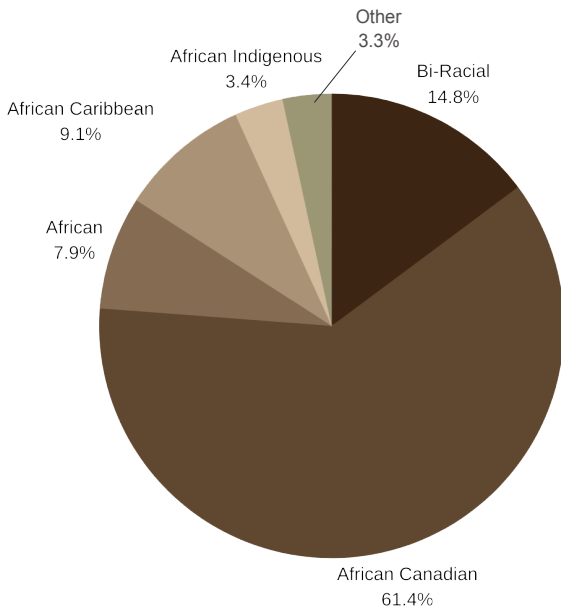
Only 35% of education system staff respondents felt comfortable to raise their concerns with their school board



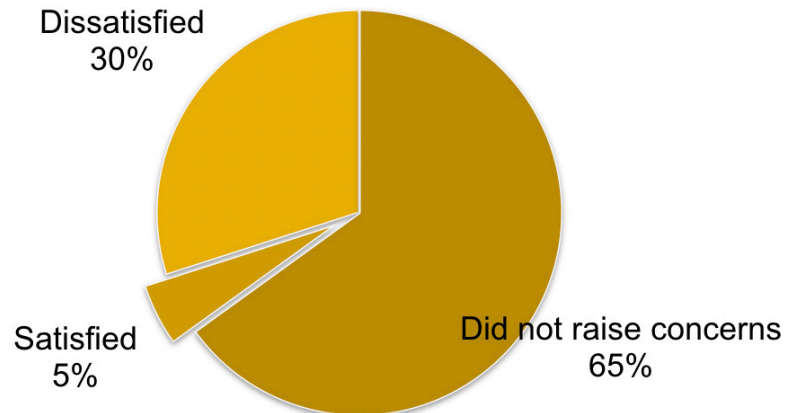
Only 24% of education system staff respondents felt comfortable to raise their concerns with their union



Appendix II: School Racism Reporting Tool Data Analysis

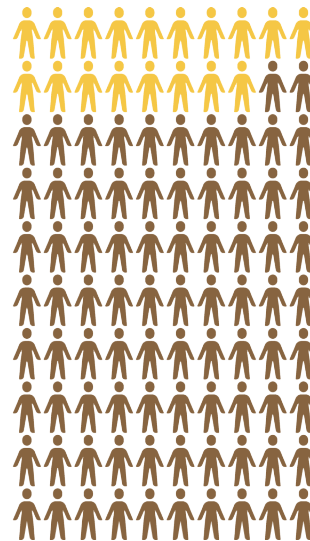


Were you satisfied with the response from the school board?



Based on the verbatim...

- 72% of the discrimination was delivered verbally.
- 69% was targeted due to the victim's ethnicity.
- 56% of the perpetrators are White Male.



Only 18% of education system staff respondents raised their concerns with both the union and the school board.



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