



TRUSTEE James Li MBA CPA CMA

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June 17, 2021

Dear Friends

Thank you for attending a special presentation on *Conversation About Anti-Black Racism and Raising Anti-Racist Children* presented by Michelle Munroe, Central Coordinator, Parent and Community Engagement Office with the Toronto District School Board. This session provided an overview of the importance of having conversations about race and anti-black racism with our children, tools on how to have the conversations, and tips and strategies for raising anti-racist children. On behalf of Ward 13, I would like to thank Michelle for facilitating a constructive conversation on the meaning of being an ally, and challenging our own biases.

Please see a below for the minutes from our meeting.

Meeting Date/Time: June 1, 7:00 PM

Meeting Location: Zoom Online Meeting hosted by Trustee James Li

Number of Attendees: Approx. 40 participants

Non-School Councils Members In Attendance: Aretha Philips (PIAC Rep), Michelle Munroe (Central Coordinator, Parent and Community Engagement Office), James Li (Trustee), Kiki Zhang (Trustee's Office Shared Services Liaison), Tania Jabbar (Trustee's Office Shared Services Liaison),

Items Discussed:

- Welcome/Introduction
- Guidelines for our conversation
- Emotional Weather Forecast
- Common Understanding
- Exploring Anti-Black Racism
- Anti-racism, Anti-Black Racism & Raising Anti-racist children

Common Understanding

Race:

"A socially constructed way of judging, categorizing and creating difference among people based on physical characteristics such as skin colour, eye, lips, and nose shape, hair texture and body shape" (TDSB Equity Policy, 2018)



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Racism:

“Racism is any individual action, or institutional practice which treats people differently because of their colour or ethnicity stemming from the belief that one race is inherently superior to another. this distinction is often used to justify discrimination” (Adapted from CRRF)

Anti-Black Racism

Rooted in white-supremacy, attitudes, beliefs, stereotyping and discrimination that is directed at people of African descent and is rooted in their unique history and experience of enslavement (African Canadian Legal Clinic).

Colorblindness

Colourblindness is the racial ideology that posits the way to end discrimination is by treating individuals as equally as possible, without regard to race, culture, or ethnicity” Psychology Today, Dec 27, 2011

Whiteness

Refers to the ideology that White identity has become the ideal and is viewed as the norm, whereby other identities such as Black, Indigenous Asian etc. are viewed as multicultural subcultures within society.

Privilege

Unearned freedoms, rights, benefits, access, and/or opportunities that provide unfair advantages for members of the Dominant Group(s) in society. Because privileges are granted by mere affiliation with the Dominant Group(s), some people are not always aware of the privileges they have. Examples include: cisgender privilege, straight privilege, male privilege, settler privilege, white privilege

Anti-Racist

Believes all racial groups are equals in all their apparent differences- that there is nothing right or wrong with any racial group. Antiracist ideas argue that racist policies are the cause of racial inequalities

Not-Racist

Believes they are good because they are not a racist. However, they do not take any action in addressing racism. It is the belief that no action is required as they are not racist.

Exploring Anti-Black Racism: Anti-Black racism is perpetuated by systemic racism.

Anti-black racism acutely felt in areas such as:



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- educational outcomes
- employment opportunities and career progression
- inferior access to healthcare (physical and mental)
- racial profiling of black communities
- A 2019 survey indicates that nearly half of Canadians believe discrimination against Black people is no longer a problem
- 2020 Report by Civic Action indicates that Black students are four times more likely to be expelled from a Toronto high school than White students.

It is important to go past our discomfort in such conversations and examine our own biases

Anti-racism, Anti-Black Racism & Raising Anti-racist children

- Important for self-reflection and inquiry
- Think about how race was introduced to them
- Get comfortable talking and learning about race, racism, and racial equity
- It is your responsibility to do the work to learn more
- Silence reinforces to children and youth that discussion on race is taboo
- Children might recognize the discussion as off-limits with adults
- Children will infer that whiteness is normative and while harbor stereotypical interpretations of the cultural differences
- Disrupt racist thoughts by recognizing it in their childhood peer settings and possibly home
- Depending on your racial reality, you have been socialized differently
- Children are not too young to talk about race
- Race is not the problem, racism is
- Acknowledge that white privilege is real. It should be viewed as an inherent advantage that the person has without doing anything other than having white skin.
- Avoid neutral language (ex. all equal, we are all people, etc.)
- Construct a positive sense of racial identity through dialogue, books, videos, etc.
- Discuss physical differences using positive and affirmative language
- Think critically about the media which your child is exposed to, and the ideologies being shared
- Seek environments where your child can experience diversity
- Inspire hope and activism

Additional Resources:

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/News/Article-Details/ArtMID/474/ArticleID/1473/Talking-about-Race-and-Racism-With-Children>

<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/blog/black-history-movies-that-tackle-racism>



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Please let me know if you have any questions to the meeting minutes as recorded above. I look forward to meeting you in our next Ward Council Meeting.

Sincerely,

James Li

Trustee, Ward 13 Don Valley North