

Is Education in Canada Serving the Black Community?

At the Black Opportunity Fund town hall on education, we asked parents and caregivers of Black children to reflect on how Canada's education system serves them.

Our community told us what barriers they and their children come up against, and how their educational needs can be prioritized through three paths to affecting change.

School, Community, and Home.

SCHOOL

What do parents/caregivers want members of education systems to know about the skills and challenges of Black learners?



COMMUNITY

What programs should the community offer to sustain and serve Black learners and their parents/caregivers?



STUDENT



HOME

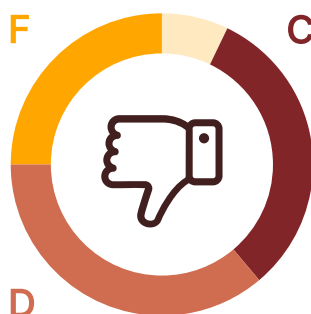
How can parents/caregivers engage and have a impact within education systems, to advance the success of their Black learners?

What We Heard From Canada's Black Community



80% SAY EDUCATION IS ESSENTIAL.

Over 80% of Black parents believe in the importance of education **beyond high school**.



MORE THAN 60% OF BLACK PARENTS SEE THE EDUCATION SYSTEM FAILING THEIR CHILDREN.

When asked to assign a letter grade to Canada's education system indicating how well they are educating Black children, a **majority of respondents chose D and F**.



OVER 65% DON'T KNOW WHERE TO TURN FOR EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES.

Most Black parents encounter a **lack of access to resources** like tutors, counsellors, therapists and other services for educational assistance.



BLACK PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT ACCESS AND SUPPORT.

According to the parents and caregivers surveyed, the greatest barriers for the success of Black youth in Canada come from a lack of access to resources and limitations in parental involvement.



A DISPROPORTIONATE DEMAND ON BLACK PARENTS' TIME.

When asked about the barriers to parents and caregivers involvement in their children's education, over half of respondents pointed to the demands on their schedule.



COMFORT AND CONNECTIONS MISSING IN EDUCATION.

Other notably high responses reflect personal discomfort and a lack of relationships keeping Black parents and caregivers from engaging with the education system.



UNDERREPRESENTED AMONGST SCHOOL STAFF.

Over half of respondents are not aware of or do not see Black staff members in their children's school.

What Black Parents and Caregivers Want From Education

Our town hall collected ideas from Black parents and caregivers themselves to understand what our community wants to see in their childrens' education.



SCHOOL SPACES

Increase representation of Black professionals working within education systems through provincial policy change.

Implement changes with the current curriculum to be more reflective of the needs of Black students.

Ensure that courses are offered in schools that reaffirm Black excellence.



CULTURAL REATTACHMENT PROGRAMS

Culturally focused programs that include character development, arts, cultural and historical perspectives.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Mentorship through peer-to-peer and adult-to-peer programming.

Create access to programs that encourage involvement in traditional and emerging career fields.



AMPLIFYING PARENT AND CAREGIVER VOICES

Create and sustain connections for Black parents through digital and physical spaces.

Develop a digital space for ideas and resource exchange and capacity building.

Encourage participation in local school councils and at all levels of school board governance.

Advocacy training for parents and caregivers.

Establish a system accountability framework that upholds and advocates for the educational rights and entitlements of Black students and families.

Where Change Needs to Start

The educational concerns of our community can be addressed by creating connections, increasing representation, and moving forward with self-determination in mind.



Invest in accessible spaces where a digital hub can be established nationwide with tools and resources that parents/caregivers can access to strengthen their capacity and involvement.



Create more opportunities for inclusive curriculum to represent the rich heritage, lived realities, and contributions of Black people across all grades and disciplines.



Invest in community organizations that support programs to help parents and caregivers connect with schools.