Pushed Out, Held Back

How Schools and Universities Fail Racialized Students

Authors: Ana Laura Pauchulo, Amaani Patel, Renée Vaugeois and Parveen Parmar

JOHN HUMPHREY CENTRE
for PEACE and HUMAN RIGHTS

Table of Contents

Background

In the Fall of 2024, the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants, the lead agency for the Canadian Network for Equity and Racial Justice, commissioned the John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights (JHC) to compile a literature review on barriers that racialized students face to their academic achievements in the K-12 education sector and in the post-secondary education sector. The John Humphrey Centre, a non-profit organization based out of Treaty Six Territory in amiskwacîwâskahikan (Edmonton, Alberta), began its work in 1999 with a mandate to advance dignity, freedom, justice and security through collaborative relationships and transformative education on peace and human rights. Our work is achieved through community-based research, adult education methodologies, educational programs, community collaboration and relationship building guided by the principles of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). In alignment with our work, the specific goals of this literature review are:

- To provide an overview of the literature on the topic of barriers to academic success experienced by racialized students in K-12 schooling and post-secondary institutions, including recommendations for change;
- To connect the recommendations and the way we listen to those who have shared their experiences of these barriers to commitments under international human rights law; and,
- To provide insight on pathways for accountability and change on the issues of racism in K-12 and post-secondary education.

We approached the task of this literature review with humility and a recognition that, in fact, the experiences of racialized and marginalized students in K-12 and in post-secondary education have been documented by the students themselves, their families and their communities, for decades. We know what the barriers to academic success are as experienced by racialized students in these two educational sectors, because they have told us. They have told us repeatedly, and they continue to tell us. We have also heard from these same students, families and communities the often quoted phrase "we have been researched to death" (e.g., Castellano 2004; Tuhiwai-Smith 2021), and as Tuck (2009a) and Walcott (2020) have noted, rarely does this research translate into policy changes that have meaningful impact on the experiences of those for whom racism is a lived reality. In Wallcott's words "All data can do is inform policy-making, if anything at all. Policy-making, after all, is ultimately about political decisions."

Subsequently, Walcott calls for a set of actions, the first two of which in particular provide a framing for how we chose to structure this literature review:

> "1. Trust communities and their experiences. Know that communities can and do diagnose their problems/issues and have evidence for their conclusions. Additionally, actively refuse the idea that communities require professional researchers to validate their evidence.
> 2. Political demands based on communities' experiences of the world must be accorded the same measure as professionally researched driven analyses."

As such, our focus in the literature review is to highlight some of the key barriers that have been shared primarily by students, parents and community members who have participated in research and offered their knowledge, and to frame our hearing of this knowledge and experiences within the context of calls for accountability made to governments and other decision-making stakeholders who have a responsibility to implement change that meaningfully addresses these barriers. We also draw from the grey literature on this topic in both sectors as this is also a place where people with lived experiences of racism within the K-12 and post-secondary education sectors share their knowledge.

A Note on Citational Practices and Structure of the Report

It is not controversial to say that research is often done in ways that are extractive, and many others have made this claim as well (e.g., Tuhiwai-Smith 2021; Tuck 2009a; Tuck 2009b). Social science research, in particular, often takes knowledge from people and their lived experiences, circulating that knowledge without proper acknowledgment or citation of where and who it comes from. Additionally, social science research frequently fails to share back the results of the research study or the recommendations that emerge from it. Within social science research, and educational research more specifically, there is often a "damage-centered" approach. As Eve Tuck (2009a) explains, damage-centered research constructs a narrative of people and communities as "broken," "conquered," and "damaged" as the foundation for why the research is important and why action to address the "damage" is necessary. More specifically, she states:

> *In damage-centered research, one of the major activities is to document pain or loss in an individual, community, or tribe. Though connected to deficit models—frameworks that emphasize what a particular student, family or community is lacking to explain underachievement or failure—damage-centered research is distinct in being more socially and historically situated. It looks to historical exploitation, domination and colonization to explain contemporary brokenness, such as poverty, poor health and low literacy. Common sense tells us this is a good thing, but the danger in damage-centered research is that it is a pathologizing approach in which the oppression singularly defines the community.* (Tuck 2009a, 413)

In her call to communities to put a moratorium on damage-centered research, Tuck (2009a) urges researchers and communities to ask, "What can research really do to improve the situation? The answers might reveal that research can do little in a particular situation or quite a lot in another. Or they may reveal that it is not the research that will make the difference but rather who will participate in the research, who poses the questions, how data are gathered, and who conducts the analysis" (423). As one way to counter damage-centered research and to address these questions, Tuck suggests using the Problem Tree, which she describes as "a useful approach to linking everyday injustices to systemic injustices" (Tuck n.d). This approach allows for research questions to be centered on systemic failures rather than individual limitations (also see Tuck 2009b).

Tuck's approach to research informs how we have chosen to write this report, drawing from literature that is not only research-based but also centers people and communities who have been on the front lines of calls for change in the post-secondary and K-12 education systems for

decades. We were provided with sources by the Canadian Network for Equity and Racial Justice to include in the report that addressed the K-12 sector and that address the post-secondary sector, and we also did our own literature searching,[1]

The choices we have made regarding which literature to include and how to structure the report also prioritize storytelling by those who experience racism within these systems. As a result, the report begins with the theoretical framing that we use at JHC to guide all of our work, which we refer to as a Human Rights Framework. At its core, this Framework situates accountability for change within the institutions that perpetuate historical and present-day oppression. We then present a review of the literature to understand the lived experiences of racism within the post-secondary and K-12 sectors (separately), with a focus on how individual, institutional and systemic racism impacts students, parents and communities. The review of the literature is divided into subsections that articulate the primary themes that emerged in the literature that we have cited. Thus, this is not a comprehensive review and we recognize that there are gaps in this literature review, such as the absence of a discussion on anti-Asian racism in both education sectors, which has been on the rise in Canada, particularly since the onset of the pandemic (Canadian Human Rights Commission) There is also a gap in discussion of the impacts of students who experience intersecting forms of discrimination and oppression in these sectors (e.g., students with disabilities, 2SLGBTQIA+ students, students who live with poverty and who experience houselessness, etc.). Lastly, we conclude the report with recommendations for change that are directly drawn from the literature as well as documents that establish human rights standards, including the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Final Report, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, among others. We recognize that the analysis of both K-12 and postsecondary student experiences and need for change necessitates distinct approaches, as these are fundamentally different education systems with unique structures, policies, and challenges. However, given the scope of the requested analysis, we have presented them together while striving to acknowledge their differences and the specific considerations each requires for meaningful change.

Human Rights as a Framework for Education

JHC employs a human rights framework grounded in understanding systemic discrimination and its historical roots to examine how discriminatory processes, norms and values manifest in education today. A rights based approach positions education as an empowering tool for achieving equity and dignity, framed by international human rights standards, while confronting systemic oppression.

Education as a Legal and Transformative Right

Education is more than a service; it is a cornerstone of human dignity and societal progress, as emphasized in numerous international treaties and declarations. Notably, Canada is a signatory to these treaties and, therefore, holds obligations under international law to promote, protect and fulfill education as a fundamental human right. Key international documents highlighting education as a human right are referenced here, recognizing that declarations serve as

[1] Notably, as a non-profit organization JHC does not have access to most of the published academic research which is mostly accessible through university library databases.

aspirational goals, while conventions and covenants, once ratified by a country, impose legally binding obligations on the state.

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) emphasizes the role of education in empowering individuals to participate in free societies and combating ignorance, prejudice, and inequality. It mandates universal access to primary education and the elimination of barriers to secondary and higher education, while protecting freedom of choice for private educational institutions that adhere to human rights principles.

The Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) highlights education's pivotal role in dismantling prejudices and fostering mutual respect and understanding among diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural groups. By addressing systemic discrimination through teaching and public information, CERD underscores education's potential to build harmonious, equitable societies.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) centers children as key rights holders, mandating states to provide free, compulsory primary education and accessible secondary and higher education. The CRC envisions education as a means of developing a child's full potential while fostering respect for human rights, cultural diversity, and environmental sustainability. It also calls for educational practices that uphold dignity and inclusion, ensuring that no child is left behind.

For Indigenous peoples, the United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) asserts the right to design and control education systems rooted in Indigenous languages and cultural methods. It highlights education as a bridge to preserving Indigenous identity while fostering respect and cooperation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

Each of these international treaties, of which Canada is signatory, frame the commitments to education for children and young people. Regardless of race, status, gender or other identity factor, all children and young people have the right to access education. To prohibit or create barriers is a fundamental violation of rights.

Each of these treaty bodies include monitoring and accountability mechanisms such as the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the Committee on the Rights of the Child. In these bodies, Canada is reviewed on a regular basis and recommendations made to strengthen the ongoing progress towards realizing this right for all. The Universal Periodic Review acts as another mechanism and space for rights in Canada to be reviewed and recommendations made to strengthen.

At the heart of these treaties lies a shared narrative: education is not merely an institutional process but a transformative right that transcends individual and cultural boundaries. It is a means to achieve equity, foster mutual respect, and build peaceful societies. Through education, individuals gain the tools to challenge systemic injustices, preserve cultural identities, and engage meaningfully with their communities. Together, these treaties provide a unified vision of

education as a pathway to dignity, understanding, and global solidarity—a right that must be protected, expanded, and cherished for all.

Prioritizing the Most Marginalized

Applying a human rights lens requires us to consider all individuals in our community—not just specific groups such as seniors, children, women, or those living with disabilities. This perspective demands that we focus on those who are most marginalized, bringing their stories and experiences to light while using an anti-oppression lens. By doing so, we uncover deeper narratives and build sustainable, inclusive solutions that address the needs of those who need them most, ultimately strengthening human rights across the board. This approach is grounded in principles of universalism and inclusion, locating us within a framework of intersectionality. The challenge lies in reaching the most vulnerable and often overlooked individuals and assisting in amplifying their voices and experiences.

A rights-based approach to education requires that policies and programs prioritize marginalized populations to achieve equity. Systemic barriers often exclude disadvantaged groups from accessing quality education. Applying a human rights lens means addressing these exclusions and centring the voices of the most vulnerable. When these voices are amplified, the resulting improvements in education extend to everyone, creating ripple effects that benefit the entire community.

The Four Pillars of a Rights-Based Framework

Human rights, as enshrined in the UDHR, the Canadian Charter and other international legally binding documents, are obligations on behalf of the state and state agencies to respect, protect and fulfill. These rights also serve as a framework for organizations and governments to uphold the rights of individuals and the collective in their work.

In detailing the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989, the United Nations articulates what is known as the 3Ps: participation, provision, and protection, which are tied to the broader concepts of dignity, human security, and freedom, respectively. These pillars form the foundation for understanding children's rights and the universal framework of all human rights. Adding the pillar of remedy, essential for justice and accountability, completes this framework.

These four pillars—participation, provision, protection, and remedy—are foundational to balancing individual and collective well-being. A rights-based approach demands addressing the intersections of oppression, ensuring that marginalized voices are heard and integrated into sustainable solutions.

<u>The Four Pillars</u>

1. Remedy and the Right to Justice

The pillar of remedy focuses on accountability by establishing accessible mechanisms for feedback, monitoring, and resolution. Remedy is vital for creating spaces where grievances can be addressed and rights upheld. These spaces must foster growth and learning rather than rely on punitive approaches. Without remedy mechanisms, human rights cannot be realized.

Organizations must ensure that marginalized voices have safe avenues to articulate and grow from concerns, facilitating justice and accountability within systems.

2. Provision and the Right to Security
Provision addresses the necessity of equitable access to survival and development resources, such as education. This pillar emphasizes non-discrimination, equity, and diversity, focusing on addressing systemic inequities that disproportionately affect vulnerable populations. Organizations must ensure that resources and opportunities are distributed fairly, creating inclusive systems that prioritize the needs of the most marginalized.

3. Protection and the Right to Freedom
Protection ensures individuals are safeguarded from abuse, exploitation, and rights violations. This pillar calls for robust policies and mechanisms to create secure, ethical, and inclusive environments. Protection extends to ensuring that human rights are respected and upheld within organizations and educational institutions through clear policies and accountability measures.

4. Participation and the Right to Dignity
Participation ensures that all stakeholders, especially marginalized groups, have meaningful involvement in decision-making processes. It goes beyond consultation, empowering individuals to shape decisions that impact them. Schools and organizations must remove barriers to participation, allowing diverse voices to guide solutions that are sustainable and human-centered. Participation fosters dignity and ensures that all individuals, regardless of age or ability, can contribute to shaping their communities.

Building a Rights-Based Framework

A rights-based approach in education requires collaboration across federal, provincial, territorial, municipal, and educational systems. Overcoming jurisdictional barriers is critical to ensuring all stakeholders—students, staff, administrators, and partners—benefit equitably.

Ultimately, embedding human rights within education requires systemic commitment to dignity, equity, and justice—both within institutions and in the broader community. This approach transforms education into a powerful force for individual and societal transformation, fostering global solidarity and sustainable progress.

Introduction

It has been well documented that racism and other forms of discrimination in post-secondary institutions and in K-12 education is pervasive, and that racialized and other marginalized students and community members are barred in multiple ways from equal and equitable access to degree completion and quality education experiences. This is concerning given that high school completion and post-secondary education degrees and certificates are foundational for financial security and economic mobility in today's world. In fact, according to Statistics Canada, during this decade (2019–2028) approximately 75% of new jobs will require a post-secondary education (Government of Canada, 2017). The anticipated increase in high skills occupations between 2019 and 2028 is also expected to result in an increase of jobs that will require a post-secondary education (Government of Canada 2017; (James and Parekh 2021).

While access to upward economic mobility through K-12 and postsecondary education is important, it is also crucial to note that it is against a backdrop of systemic and institutional racism in post-secondary education that the number of racialized students admitted to universities and colleges has seen an increase (Council of Canadian Academies 2024). This context is also of concern for the focus of this literature review given the plethora of research and community-based advocacy that has fought to call attention to the multiple factors that contribute to people's academic outcomes in K-12 and post-secondary education, including, race, gender, academic program they are applying to, proximity to a post-secondary institution, support systems, and discriminatory policies and practices that shape both sectors (James and Parekh 2021).

Context of Systemic and Institutional Racism in the Post-Secondary Sector

In the Spring and Summer of 2020 the murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor led to what many in the media and on social media referred to as a "racial reckoning". Importantly, the demonstrations that followed the murders of Floyd, Arbery and Taylor were public outcries of grief, anger and demands for politicians, decision-makers, and the wider public to reckon with the fact - to account for the fact - that systemic racism is the very fabric of our societies (CBC 2021). In Canada during this time, people also took to the streets to protest police violence and other forms of institutional violence (e.g., the disproportionate incarceration of Black men) against Black Canadians, again bringing to the forefront the lived experience of anti-Black racism in Canada. In the Spring of 2020, in Canada and around the world, the way the pandemic was visibly being felt in communities where the privilege of social isolation as a protective measure against the COVID-19 virus was not an option, also magnified inequity in our communities. Additionally, we also began to see a rise in Anti-Asian racism (Canadian Human Rights Commission; Zhang, Yuan, and Kang 2023) and other incidents of racism, hate and xenophobia that led the United Nations to refer to this moment as a "pandemic of hate" (United Nations). Notably, encounters with law enforcement ending in death and violence were not only seen in the United States. In Canada, in May 2020, Regis Korchinski-Beals' life ended after she fell from a high rise balcony in Toronto during a police wellness check, in June 2020 Chantel Moore was shot and killed by police during a wellness check in Edmunston (NB), and also in June 2020 a video was released showing an RCMP officer in Kinngait (NU) using the door of a pick up truck to knock over an Inuk man before arresting him.[2]

It was against this backdrop in which through public protest people refused to be silenced and accept the normalization of racism, that post-secondary institutions began to respond through various forms of policy and practice reform (Bero 2021; Smith and Birgit 2024). It is important to note that these reforms were also spurred by student activism and public protest. For example, at the University of Windsor (ON), students in the Master of Social Work for Working Professionals program voiced their concerns to the administration about the lack of attention being paid to race and racism in their courses (Smith and Birgit 2024). Similarly, at the

[2] Indeed, systemic and institutionalized violence against racialized people is an experience that has a long history in Canada, stemming back to colonization and the attempted genocide of Indigenous people that came with the forced establishment of the Canadian state and nation (CBC 2021).

University of Ottawa (ON) students made public their concerns over a professor who used the N-word in class (Morasse 2021), Student Unions and Associations across the country published statements of solidarity and calls for action on anti-Black racism (Ha and Alden 2020) and since 2020 students have been participating in All Out September 30 strikes to bring attention to anti-Indigenous racism (Noshin 2020). Additionally, in 2020 the Ontario Human Rights Commission wrote an open letter to all universities and colleges in the province urging commitment from these institutions to take action against "discrimination, xenophobia and targeting on campuses and in academic environments across Ontario" of Indigenous, Black and other racialized students (Chadha 2020). Importantly, students have been making calls to post-secondary to address racism and other forms of discrimination, with one example of many being the University of Saskatchewan Students' Union Association's demands for Indigenous content to be included and taught across the university, in every degree program (CBC 2015).

Some of the ways that post-secondary institutions have responded to these demands for change include making efforts to hire faculty and staff who reflect the diversity of their student populations. This, and other initiatives, are often in response to calls for greater inclusivity, such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action (Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2015), which have pushed post-secondary institutions to prioritize Indigenous representation in faculty hiring (Council of Ontario Universities 2020). In addition to hiring more Indigenous faculty, institutions have implemented several other measures, such as increasing scholarships for underrepresented groups, addressing pay equity, and offering education on issues related to racism and discrimination. At times, these educational programs have even been made mandatory for staff and faculty. Despite these efforts, however, many argue that the response has not been adequate in addressing the ongoing issues of racism and discrimination in post-secondary institutions and the barriers they present and impacts they have on Indigenous students (Council of Canadian Academies 2024).

One notable example of institutional efforts to address financial barriers for Indigenous students is the University of Waterloo, which offers free tuition to Indigenous students whose traditional territories the university occupies. However, while many universities have initiated Indigenization efforts in response to the TRC's Calls to Action, the scope and depth of these efforts vary significantly across institutions. For example, Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) found that "'Indigenization varies significantly' across Canadian universities and colleges (218) in a three-stage spectrum of Indigenous Inclusion, Reconciliation Indigenization, and Decolonial Indigenization moving from the least to the most significant path" (cited in Cicek et al., 2021, 7). Specifically, the authors define Indigenous Inclusion as work to increase representation of Indigenous faculty, students and staff, Reconciliation Indigenization includes education and awareness initiatives to increase understanding of Indigenous histories and cultures, and Decolonial Indigenization involves "decentring hierarchical Western Eurocentric post-secondary structures and 'empower[ing] Indigenous communities to regain educational sovereignty' (223). This looks like Knowledge Keepers and Elders in postsecondary spaces, exclusive Indigenous spaces, and Indigenous Knowledges centred in curricula" (cited in Cicek et al., 2021, 7). The authors also note that most institutions have not moved beyond Indigenous Inclusion, which is not enough to drive meaningful systemic change and truly work towards eradicating racism and other forms of discrimination in the sector.

Importantly, as noted above, much of the progress seen in the sector has been driven by the advocacy and legal actions of students, faculty, and staff who have worked tirelessly to ensure that post-secondary institutions better reflect Canada's diverse population. These efforts, often sparked by grassroots movements, have been instrumental in pushing universities toward becoming more inclusive and equitable spaces (Council of Canadian Academies 2024).

Barriers Faced by Post-Secondary Students

Canada's post-secondary sector is a significant site for learning and research on pressing issues in our world, and also plays a pivotal role in serving as a stepping stone for various professional and career opportunities for those who can access them. However, despite its significant role in societal development, the Canadian higher education system is entrenched in inequalities, inequities and oppression of racialized and other marginalized groups. In particular, the barriers faced by Indigenous, Black, and other racialized students have persisted for decades, despite numerous policy interventions, advocacy efforts, and institutional changes aimed at promoting inclusion and diversity. These barriers manifest in various forms, including systemic and institutional racism, a lack of representation of diverse bodies, voices and lived experiences in the staff, faculty and curriculum, financial strain and inadequate support services. In part, these barriers persist because of diversity, anti-racism and equity initiatives that continue to center whiteness (Walcott 2019). As James and Parekh (2021) have explained: "…despite the growing racially diverse student population and universities' claims of being inclusive, the whiteness and the colonial structure of the university remains. This reality is a reflection of the categorical inequality that is embedded in Canadian society" (p. 80).

Systemic Racism

As detailed in the introduction, systemic and institutional racism continues to be a significant barrier for racialized students in Canadian post-secondary institutions. This form of racism is often subtle and pervasive, embedded in the structures and policies of academic institutions. One of the most significant areas where systemic racism is evident is in the admissions process. Studies have shown that admissions practices, particularly those based on standardized testing, disadvantage racialized students. Standardized tests, which have been criticized for their cultural biases, often fail to account for the diverse backgrounds and experiences and worldviews of students, particularly those from marginalized communities (MacIsaac 2020). In the graduate school context, the preference for students with "white-sounding" names when seeking potential research supervisors further exacerbates these disparities. For example, a study by MacKenzie and Goldsmith (2024) found that emails from students with white-sounding names received significantly higher response rates from faculty members compared to emails from students with "non-white sounding names." This demonstrates a clear racial bias in how students are perceived and treated, even before they set foot in the classroom. Yet, we are increasingly seeing a move towards performance-based models used by provincial governments (namely Alberta and Ontario) that establish indicators to determine university performance and attach funding based on employment outcomes for students post-graduation. This model has been widely criticized for creating classrooms that are devoid of meaningful teaching and learning on anti-racism, anti-discrimination, equity and inclusion because instructors, researchers and the university as a whole is focused on achieving those employment outcomes instead. In turn, this focus also motivates universities to increase the enrollment of students who they believe can help them achieve these outcomes (i.e., for which they use assessments such as standardized testing) which

is dismissive of concerns that have been brought to universities about the ways that certain admission processes barrier students from equal and equitable access to higher education (Spooner 2021)

Once in the classroom, the systemic and institutionalized nature of racism in the academic sector continues to be felt by racialized students. For example, research has shown that when students' racial identities do not align with those of their instructors, their academic performance is negatively impacted. This is particularly true for racialized women. On the other hand, students who have instructors from the same racial background tend to perform better academically, suggesting that representation in faculty plays a crucial role in fostering an environment where racialized students feel supported and valued (Council of Canadian Academies 2024). That said, the underrepresentation of racial diversity of faculty across post-secondary institutions in Canada is also a significant issue reported by racialized students. Students from marginalized communities often express a desire to see more Black faculty hired, particularly in permanent, ongoing positions, rather than in temporary, contract lecturer roles (Charles & Birgit, 2024). The underrepresentation of faculty members who share similar lived experiences can create an environment where students feel alienated and unsupported. This lack of representation also contributes to the perpetuation of racial biases in teaching and curriculum design, which ultimately affects the academic success and mental health of racialized students.

Anti-Indigenous Racism

Indigenous students face additional barriers that are rooted in the specific historical and cultural context of colonization and genocide that Canada has been built on. These barriers include financial barriers, lack of culturally relevant support services, and anti-Indigenous racism. For many Indigenous students, the choice to attend a post-secondary institution means leaving their home communities and families, which can be emotionally and financially burdensome. Importantly, financial barriers have a unique impact on Indigenous students. For example, the high cost of living, particularly in Northern Canada, makes it even more difficult for Indigenous students to access post-secondary education (Sallaffie, Cherba, and Akearok 2021). Additionally, students often experience conflict between deadlines for funding applications and admission notices which come after funding application deadlines have passed. This forces students to defer or reject their admission opportunity, or to have to choose to take on employment (full or part time) to finance their studies and all costs associated with post-secondary education (e.g., housing, food, leaving one's home community). Notably, this choice often comes with a later consequence of needing to abandon their post-secondary education studies because of the challenges of meeting grade requirements to be able to continue to the following year when one is also trying to hold down employment (Indspire 2018; Sallaffie, Cherba, and Akearok 2021)

Indigenous students have shared that the transition from their home communities to academic institutions, where Indigenous knowledge and cultures are often marginalized or misrepresented, can be isolating and triggering. Often, students face racism and prejudice outside of their home communities, as well as resulting mental health challenges (Timmons 2013; Sallaffie, Cherba, and Akearok 2021). Students also shared that racial comments from fellow students, administration, and professors were not addressed appropriately or acknowledged by the institution when they were reported, compounding the impact of the racist incidents (Timmons 2013). Additionally, many Indigenous students report feeling devalued in classrooms where

instructors lack knowledge of Indigenous histories and cultures, contributing to a sense of alienation and loneliness. More specifically, students have shared that they feel triggered when instructors with no to little knowledge of intergenerational trauma were tasked with including this content in their courses (Indspire 2018). Indigenous students have also spoken of the burden of educating others about their cultures, which they feel is an unfair and unjust expectation placed upon them (Timmons 2013). This experience, and more generally the experience of not seeing their cultures, histories, and values reflected widely across the institution, was painful and lonely (Indspire 2018; Timmons 2013). In recent studies Indigenous students have also reported that the emotional toll of these challenges is compounded by the pressure that they feel to take on the responsibility of implementing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. Many students feel that institutions expect them to bear the burden of transforming the post-secondary system, both through their academic work and by educating others about Indigenous cultures and experiences. This responsibility that they are burdened with can contribute to burnout and emotional exhaustion, which ultimately impacts their academic success (Indspire 2018).

Overall, Indigenous students have also shared that the absence of culturally relevant content and the lack of recognition of their histories and knowledge can create an environment that feels hostile and unwelcoming. It is thus not surprising that, consistently, students who attended Indigenous post-secondary institutions reported experiences that were much more positive than those who attended non-Indigenous post-secondary institutions (Indspire 2018).

Anti-Black Racism

While there has been decades of research on the experiences of Black students in K-12 schooling, there is a gap in research seeking to understand the experiences of Black students in post-secondary institutions in Canada. Existing literature highlights that Black students face lowered expectations resulting from stereotypes by instructors that construct them as disengaged and uninterested in their own learning and that various factors, such as a strong support network of peers, instructors, staff, and strong mental health support services, contributes to positive academic outcomes (James and Parekh 2021; Luhanga et. al., 2023; Sangmen, Ofori, and Botchey 2024). Unsurprisingly, when Black students do have the opportunity to share their experiences in post-secondary education, they report experiencing racism that lead to feelings of isolation and anxiety and additional pressure to work harder to prove themselves as smart and capable as their white counterparts (Smith and Birgit 2024, James and Parekh 2021, Luhanga et. al., 2023).

Notably, students have also reported that issues of racism, and in particular anti-Black racism, receive little to no attention in their classrooms, across their institutions, and when reported. For example, students at the University of Windsor's Master of Social Work for Working Professionals program shared that when they brought issues of racism and anti-Black racism to program administration, their responses were not publicly acknowledged as systemic racism and anti-Black racism in the way that they had asked for and that administration had not engaged with mechanisms available at the university such as the Vice President's Equity Diversity and Inclusion Office effectively or sufficiently (Smith and Birgit 2024). Students in this same study also shared that often instructors are not prepared, knowledgeable or skilled to have difficult and uncomfortable conversations in the classroom about racism, anti-Black racism, and anti-racism

in ways that are trauma-informed and keep racialized people safe from further harm, particularly when it comes to anti-Black racism (Smith and Birgit 2024).

Overall, as a recent study published by James and Parekh (2021) tell us "neither high school nor university programs provide Black students with the kinds of educational experiences needed for university graduation and academic success that would enable them to realize their fullest social and economic potentials" (p. 67).

Lack of Representation

In the literature cited above, students have also shared that they are made invisible and absent from spaces of higher education as reflected in a lack of representation of their beliefs, values, experience, and worldviews in curriculum, staff and faculty (Smith and Birgit 2024; Council of Canadian Academies 2024; Indspire 2018; Luhanga et. al., 2023; Sallaffie, Cherba, and Akearok 2021). Importantly, a review of the literature also highlights that racialized students have also called for comprehensive education, across their courses, on race, racism and anti-racism. For example, in surveys completed by Master of Social Work students Smith and Birgit (2024) found that students overwhelmingly wanted to see a complete overhaul of program curriculum, and consultative engagement with students throughout this process, to include content on anti-racist practice and knowledge including learning about the Social Work sector's involvement in perpetuating structural racism, learning about individual, institutional and systemic racism, understanding white privilege, "understanding the intersection of anti-racism, anti-colonialism, equity and social justice", as well as developing and requiring students to demonstrate the "knowledge and skills to recognize and resist all forms or racism, particularly anti-Indigenous, anti-Black and anti-Asian racism" (p. 19). Notably, students also shared that there is a lack of trauma-informed practice in post-secondary teaching that comes from a lack of understanding of the ways that students who experience racism and other forms of discrimination will be impacted by certain course content. While trigger and content warnings have been recommended as ways to mitigate for this impact on racialized students (Smith and Birgit 2024), this lack in practice speaks both to a lack of understanding of individual, institutional and systemic racism as well as to the failure to center lived experience as expertise by hiring racialized faculty who can speak to and from their own experiences of structural marginalization.

Similarly, Indigenous students who participated in Indspire (2018) survey also shared they would like to see Indigenous content integrated into more of their courses. Importantly, students shared that they are not interested in seeing Indigenous content as "supplementary" to existing course content but rather that "each field/discipline in a post-secondary institution should contain some form of Indigenous representation" (17). Importantly, students also spoke of the harms they experience due to inadequate representation—both in course content and among Indigenous faculty and staff. They reported increased incidences of stereotyping and discrimination, as well as the expectation of providing the 'Indigenous point of view' in their courses. As such they called for an increase in hiring of more Indigenous instructors, as well as support staff and Elders who could support them with feeling connected to their cultures and communities, to creating social networks with other Indigenous students, and to dealing with the trauma and harms of the experiences of racism that they face (Indspire 2018; Timmons 2013).

Financial Barriers

One of the most pressing issues for students in Canada's post-secondary institutions is the financial barriers that hinder their academic success and well-being. Often, this translates into experiences of food insecurity for students. In fact, Food Bank use on campuses and among post-secondary students has been increasing significantly since the onset of the pandemic (Meal Exchange 2021). For example, according to Food Banks Canada Hunger Count, in March 2022 the UofA Campus Food Bank saw 400 visits alone, and in March 2023 that number skyrocketed to 1052 visits (Food Banks Canada 2023). In Fall 2021, 56.8% of students surveyed across 13 post-secondary institutions in Canada reported experiencing food insecurity. The highest rate of food insecurity was seen in students who identify as Two Spirit (98%) and when data was disaggregated by race, the highest rate of food insecurity was seen in Indigenous students (75.8%) (Meal Exchange 2021).

Additionally, in a study with University of Waterloo students, the authors found that students facing food insecurity are forced to make difficult choices between basic necessities and academic responsibilities. These students, often from low-income backgrounds, reported compromising the quality of food they purchased. For example, many reported choosing foods they perceived as more filling (e.g., chips) because they were a lower cost option, despite knowing that they were of lower nutritional value. Additionally, though students said they were aware of the health risks associated with such choices, they also reported feeling that they had no other option, demonstrating the profound effect of financial insecurity on their physical and mental health. Students in this study also noted that they were constantly preoccupied with acquiring food and budgeting for it, which often overshadowed their academic pursuits. This stress over food insecurity also had a social dimension, as students reported feeling stigmatized and excluded from socializing with peers due to their limited resources. Some even indicated that this stigma made it harder for them to access resources such as campus food banks. Notably, the experience of food insecurity was normalized by many students as fitting with the image of the "starving students" and the sacrifices students are expected to make to access higher education (Maynard et. al., 2018).

Though food insecurity for post-secondary students is a symptom of financial barriers imposed on students, financial difficulties are not limited to food insecurity. Tuition fees and associated costs are a substantial barrier for many students, especially Indigenous, Black and other racialized students. Between 2006 and 2016, tuition fees at Canadian universities increased by 40%, placing a significant burden on students and their families (Rodriguez, Zhao, and Ferguson 2016). In addition to rising tuition costs, precarious funding such as late loan installments increase the financial stress that many students feel (Maynard et. al., 2018). While the financial burden is felt across the student body, racialized students often face additional hurdles. For example, Indigenous students face unique financial challenges due to the high costs of leaving their home communities to attend university. Conflicts between Indigenous focused funding application deadlines required by Governments and admission acceptance deadlines can delay or prevent Indigenous students from attending their chosen programs. In many cases, students are forced to take on employment, which can interfere with their academic performance and increase the likelihood of students being unable to complete their academic program (Indspire 2018; Sallaffie, Cherba, and Akearok 2021). As a result, financial pressures force many students to choose between continuing their education and meeting their basic living needs.

Recommendations for Change: A Call to the Post-Secondary Education Sector

Post-secondary institutions have a significant impact on the shaping of our world, through research that informs policies and practices as well as through their direct influence on who ends up in certain sectors and career trajectories. It has also been widely argued that post-secondary institutions should be a regarded seat of debate and critical thinking (Council of Canadian Academies 2024; James and Parekh 2021; Universities Canada and the University of Toronto Scarborough 2021). Thus, post-secondary institutions have an inherent responsibility to address the barriers that they have established for equitable access to entry and completion of degrees.

The recommendations summarized below have been primarily drawn from the literature cited above, as we have found that most human rights documents focus on the K-12 education system rather than post-secondary. We have also drawn from our work with community members where such recommendations have also been offered.

Implement Policies, Processes, and Complaint and Remedy Mechanisms

- Establish clear policies, complaint mechanisms, and remedy processes to address racism and discrimination that is reported by students.
- Ensure that complaint processes meet key criteria, including prompt response, organizational awareness, serious handling of complaints, accessible mechanisms and clear communication with complainants.
- Make all relevant policies, procedures, and complaint mechanisms easy to locate on the university website, and use plain, accessible, and empathetic language to reduce barriers for students seeking support.
- Offer students continuous avenues to express concerns, such as exit surveys and town halls.
- Publicly recognize that past failures in handling discrimination complaints may have led to distrust among students, and actively work to rebuild trust in institutional policies, processes, and complaint mechanisms.
- Clearly and publicly communicate the outcomes of discrimination-related investigations and sanctions.
- Move beyond procedural responses by embedding a commitment to learning and institutional growth. Ensure that insights from complaints and grievances lead to meaningful change by transparently communicating how policies, training, and institutional practices evolve based on student experiences. Create feedback loops that inform students, faculty, and staff about the lessons learned and concrete steps taken to foster a safer, more equitable academic environment.
- Establish an independent ombudsperson role for students to report systemic racism and discrimination without fear of retaliation, ensuring cases are reviewed fairly and transparently.
- Require tenure and faculty evaluation processes to assess commitment to equity, anti-racism, and inclusion rather than treating these efforts as "extra" work.

Increase Representation in Faculty, Staff and Supports for Students

- Hire more full-time, permanent, tenure-track Black, Indigenous and racialized faculty.
- Implement hiring practices that clearly and widely communicate the institution's intentions to increase the number of Black, Indigenous and racialized faculty that include: clear communication in job postings of the institution's commitments to equity, diversity and inclusion and evidence of action on these matters; and, posting jobs specifically in places that will reach these candidates.
- Ensure search and hiring committees include Black, Indigenous and racialized faculty members. In the literature, Indigenous students have also recommended that community member representation (e.g., Elders, members from First Nations) be meaningfully included in hiring committees.
- Ensure meaningful inclusion of Black, Indigenous and racialized faculty and staff in decision-making and leadership and value and implement contributions that they bring to the table, rather than using representation as a symbolic gesture.
- Protect racialized faculty members' academic freedom by ensuring that advocacy for anti-racism, decolonization, and equity work does not negatively impact tenure, promotions, or research opportunities.
- Address the underrepresentation of Asian and South Asian faculty in leadership positions by: examining and eliminating biases in faculty hiring and promotion processes; ensuring equity measures include Asian and South Asian faculty, rather than assuming they are "overrepresented" due to misleading statistics; and, recognizing the barriers posed by the "perpetual foreigner" stereotype, which can hinder professional advancement.
- Do not expect Black, Indigenous and racialized students, faculty, and staff to educate others about their experiences without proper support and compensation.
- Ensure access to Indigenous and culturally responsive counselors for mental health and academic support and integrate Elders on campus to help students stay connected to their culture and ceremonies.
- Prioritize retention by fostering an inclusive workplace culture that enables Black, Indigenous, and racialized faculty to thrive. Representation alone is not enough—institutions must ensure the right conditions, mentorship opportunities, and systemic supports are in place to promote long-term career success, well-being, and advancement. This includes addressing workload inequities, recognizing and valuing contributions to equity work, and building structures that reduce isolation and increase professional growth opportunities.

Implement Ongoing, Comprehensive Anti-Racism Training and Initiatives

- Implement ongoing and continuous anti-racism training across all levels of the institution and require training for leadership, faculty, staff and instructors. More specifically, respond to student experiences of racism by integrating mandatory university-wide anti-racism training.
- Ensure training is designed to prevent and reduce incidents of racism and prejudice rather than serve as a one-time checkbox exercise. Training must go beyond performative actions to include ongoing reflection into practise, accountability measures and institutional change.

- Training should be designed and led by people with lived experience, but this work must be valued, resourced, and compensated appropriately, rather than being placed as an additional burden on racialized faculty and staff.
- Avoid anti-racism training that reinforces "otherness" rather than challenging systemic issues, and training focused solely on individual bias. Additionally, training should explicitly address power structures, power imbalances, and abuses of power.
- Challenge the Model Minority Myth, which often masks the racism, exclusion, and barriers faced by Asian and South Asian students. Ensure anti-racism training explicitly addresses: the erasure of racial discrimination against Asian and South Asian students; the impact of being perceived as "high achieving" or "self-sufficient", which can lead to lack of institutional support and exclusion from equity initiatives; and, the intersection of race, immigration status, and socio-economic barriers affecting Asian and South Asian students.
- Implement structural and policy changes alongside training to ensure that anti-racism efforts result in long-term, meaningful improvements rather than performative compliance.
- Facilitate ongoing opportunities for reflection and integration into practice, ensuring that training translates into real shifts in institutional culture, decision-making, and day-to-day interactions.
- Enable offices and centers with specialized mandates (e.g., anti-racism offices) and those with broader mandates (e.g., student services offices) to coordinate their work in order to increase reach across the institution and increase effectiveness.
- Institutional leadership must demonstrate a visible and sustained commitment to anti-racism, ensuring it is integral to institutional change and not just a symbolic effort.
- Collect disaggregated data from students on their experiences of racism in the institution and other barriers they experience to their success.
- Collect data on the success of anti-racism initiatives that have been implemented in order to understand if they are meeting the desired outcomes of, for example, reducing racism, increasing representation, increasing access to entry and degree completion for racialized students, etc.

Enhance Financial and Structural Support for Racialized Students in Post-Secondary Education

- Provide scholarships, bursaries, and fellowships specifically for racialized students.
- Expand mental health services that are culturally responsive to Asian and South Asian students, including multilingual counseling options and peer-led support networks.
- Adjust financial aid programs to account for the high cost of living in Northern and remote communities and ensure funding is accessible and responsive to unique regional challenges.
- Implement government measures to reduce the cost of living (including housing) in Northern Canada, making post-secondary education more accessible to students in these regions.
- Increase access to bridge and preparatory programs to better equip students for university education.
- Implement one-on-one support systems for students transitioning from Northern and remote communities, ensuring they have direct access to guidance and mentorship.

- Implement a holistic and inclusive admission process that assesses students beyond GPAs and standardized test scores and that include measures like an EDI representative on admissions committees, implicit bias training for admissions committee members, and creating admission pathways for those who experience financial barriers to access.
- Move beyond increasing diversity by committing to adopting long-term action plans aligned with anti-racism principles, that include established accountability measures (e.g., submitting progress reports on action plans). This work must build a culture of equity, inclusion and anti-racism rather than serving as a symbolic commitment.
- Establish permanent advisory councils made up of racialized and Indigenous students with capacity to influence decision-making over university policies and initiatives.
- Ensure student representation on university governing bodies, including senates, hiring committees, equity boards, and policy councils.
- Create funded leadership fellowships for racialized students to develop governance and advocacy skills within academic institutions.
- Recognize that representation alone is not enough—institutions must invest in retention strategies by ensuring the right conditions, mentorship opportunities, and systemic supports are in place to promote long-term career success, well-being, and advancement for racialized students and faculty.

Address Barriers that Result from the Colonial Structure of the Post-Secondary Sector

"Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning". Post-secondary education is an inherent Treaty right recognized and affirmed in international law". (Assembly of First Nations 2016, 1)

- Ensure Indigenous students have access to culturally responsive resources that aid in their transition to and navigation of post-secondary education.
- Increase investment into post-secondary opportunities in Northern and remote communities to stop the drain of students from their home regions, reduce the hardships of relocation, and protect Indigenous students—particularly women and Two-Spirit people—from the risks of violence and racism in unfamiliar urban environments.
- Provide accessible, culturally appropriate food options on campus and ensure Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and other Indigenous leaders are hired, adequately compensated, and easily accessible to students.
- Include Indigenous languages as accredited courses and ensure Indigenous students have access to language revitalization programs.
- Implement best practices in admission processes including: a) Reserving admission spots for Indigenous students, b) Including Indigenous staff in recruitment efforts, c) Establish Indigenous advisory boards with decision-making power to meaningfully contribute to admission decision-making processes, d) Considering cultural knowledge and life experiences in application reviews, e) Admitting students who meet other requirements even if they do not meet grade cutoffs, f) Offering bridge services to help students meet admission requirements, g) Ensuring access to culturally appropriate programming and services.

- Move beyond training to ensure pedagogical shifts in teaching and learning. Faculty and instructors must be educated on different ways of learning and integrate inclusive, Indigenous-informed teaching methodologies that reflect diverse knowledge systems.
- Allocate funds specifically to facilitate meaningful inclusion of Indigenous students through Indigenous-led trainings, workshops and education offered to all instructors to ensure curricula is culturally appropriate and relevant and anti-colonial.
- Advocate for continual Federal funding in Indigenous support programs (e.g., Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP) and the Post-Secondary Partnerships Program (PSPP)).
- Hold the federal government accountable for establishing clear standards and actively strengthening post-secondary education rather than deflecting responsibility onto provinces. Institutions must commit to their obligations under international treaties (e.g., the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)) and actively work toward fulfilling their human rights commitments.
- Advocate for policy changes at the federal and provincial levels to improve financial security for Indigenous students.
- Develop funding programs to assist students who must relocate for post-secondary education, covering expenses such as housing, food, childcare, and travel costs to return home.
- Financially support student-led groups that create spaces for shared experiences and empowerment and promote allyship groups that encourage privileged individuals to take action, reducing the burden on Indigenous and racialized students.
- Expand research on anti-Asian and anti-South Asian racism in post-secondary institutions by: investing in community-led research to document the experiences of students, faculty, and staff; and, ensuring Asian and South Asian communities are included in institutional equity reports and are not erased under broad “racialized” categories.
- Implement the 4Rs of Indigenous education: 1) Respect for Indigenous knowledge, cultural integrity, and ways of knowing and, therefore, Respect for the person; 2) Relevance to Indigenous perspectives and experiences which in part means the “institutional legitimation of Indigenous knowledge and skills” (p.11); 3) Reciprocal relationships, requiring a fundamental change of post-secondary institutions from positioning themselves as the creators and purveyors of knowledge and students as passive recipients of that knowledge, and; 4) “Responsibility through participation” in decision-making around how students navigate the post-secondary education experience (p. 15) (Kirkness and Barnhardt 1991)
- Acknowledge the challenges of working within a colonial system and ensure that settlers in academic institutions take responsibility for decolonizing their institutions rather than placing the burden solely on Indigenous faculty, staff, and students.
- Implement all Calls to Action relevant to the post-secondary education sector as per the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and ensure ongoing monitoring, accountability, and evaluation of their implementation.

Context of Systemic and Institutional Racism in the K-12 Education Sector

While terms such as anti-Black racism and anti-Indigenous racism in the context of the K-12 school system have more recently become part of the public conversation on racism in education, community members, including parents and students, have been sounding the alarm on these issues for decades. For example, in Ontario parents have been speaking out about their communities' experiences with racism and anti-Black racism since the 1980s and 1990s. In response to calls to address these issues, in the late 1980s the Ontario government developed a Provincial Advisory Committee on Race and Ethnocultural Relations which created policy on "race and ethnocultural equity" and shortly thereafter began mandating that School Boards create their own policies to address racial discrimination and racism within their institutions. Importantly, in 1992 Stephen Lewis, who was commissioned at the time by the Ontario Premier to consult with community members about their experiences of racism, heard from Black parents and students about the anti-Black racism they experienced in schools and in society more widely. As far back as more than 30 years ago, Lewis was reporting on the disproportionate number of Black students who were being streamed into non-academic programs in K-12 and who experience higher rates of disciplinary action (e.g., suspensions), the lack of Black teachers, administration, and guidance counsellors, and the lack of representation of Black history in the curriculum (Lewis 1992). Shockingly, Lewis also wrote: "it's as if virtually nothing has changed for visible minority kids in the school system in the last 10 years" (p. 20).

The overview of barriers faced by racialized K-12 students we provide below tells us that these same issues persist. More broadly, this overview also tells us that the symptoms of systemic racism in schooling continue to be seen in Eurocentric curricula that prioritize white experiences and worldviews, a lack of visible representation of teachers of colour, disproportionate levels of suspension and expulsions, and more. Further, we continue to hear from students and parents who have called on Ministries of Education, School Boards, and schools to end racism and other forms of discrimination. Recently, in response to a Manitoba School Trustee who publicly stated that "residential schools served a good purpose" and that "land acknowledgements cause division by "blaming whites for taking land and telling Indians that they should be sorry because their land was stolen", parents, teachers and organizations such as the Northwest Métis Council called for his removal from the School Board (Thompson and Woelk 2024). Similarly, in 2020, a group of parents, students, advocates and allies in Edmonton held rallies at the Alberta Legislature to protest the discrimination of Black students in the K-12 system (Huncar 2020). Lastly, secondary students schools in Newfoundland created a public art installation to share their experiences of racism in their schools and raise awareness (Lazarenko 2024).

Indeed, Ministries of Education and School Boards across Canada have implemented various policies and practices to address racism in K-12 schools, emphasizing equity, diversity, and inclusion. Many provinces have developed anti-racism education strategies, mandating culturally responsive curricula that reflect diverse histories, perspectives, and contributions, particularly those of Indigenous, Black, and other racialized communities. Anti-racism training for educators and staff is increasingly required to help recognize and address systemic racism and intersecting forms of discrimination in schools. Inclusive hiring policies aim to diversify the teaching workforce, ensuring students see themselves reflected in educators and leadership. Some

jurisdictions have introduced equity audits and data collection initiatives to assess racial disparities in student outcomes and experiences, informing policy changes (Carr 2008; Pauchulo, 2013; Attygalle and Hopson 2023). Additionally, Ministries of Education and Teacher Education programs across Canada have implemented a number of responses to address the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action (Webb and Mashford-Pringle 2022). These efforts reflect a broader commitment to fostering safe, inclusive, and equitable learning environments for all students. Yet, individual, institutional and systemic racism in K-12 schools in Canada persits and, notably, practice and policy initiatives are implemented because of action at the community level by those who experience the harms or racism in the K-12 system as part of their daily experience.

Barriers Faced by K-12 Students

Canada's K-12 education system is a crucial foundation for academic, social, and personal development, shaping future opportunities for students as they transition into higher education and the workforce. Importantly, The K-12 education system plays a pivotal role in how young people understand themselves, understand their worth and value in their communities and in society, and how they understand their responsibilities to contribute to social transformation. However, despite its role in fostering learning and growth, both of the individual and the collective(s), the Canadian school system remains entrenched in systemic inequities that disproportionately impact Indigenous, Black, and other racialized students. These students continue to face persistent barriers that limit their access to quality education, despite various policy reforms and advocacy efforts aimed at promoting equity and inclusion. These challenges manifest in numerous ways, including racial streaming, disproportionate disciplinary actions, a Eurocentric curriculum that marginalizes, or even erases, diverse histories and perspectives, and a lack of racial representation among educators and school leadership. In many cases, equity and anti-racism initiatives fail to dismantle the structures that uphold whiteness as the dominant norm, allowing systemic discrimination to persist. Despite claims of inclusivity and diversity, racialized students continue to navigate an educational system that normalizes whiteness while positioning their identities, histories, and experiences as peripheral (Chau-Wong and Oyasiji 2022; Dei, 2014; Glogowski and Rakoff 2019; James and Parekh 2021; James and Turner, 2017).

Systemic Racism

Racialized students face systemic barriers in Canada's K-12 education system that significantly impact their academic success, personal development, and long-term opportunities (Dei 2014; James and Parekh 2021; James and Turner 2017; Maynard 2022; Attygalle and Hopson 2023). Systemic racism in the K-12 sector permeates all facets of a student's schooling experience, from what happens in the classroom, playground, and cafeteria to the way that policies and institutional practices bar them from access to quality, fruitful and empowering educational experiences (Nixon, Habtom, and Tuck 2022). For example, discriminatory policies such as the "zero tolerance" discipline policy have disproportionately targeted Black students and have led to high rates of suspensions and expulsions among racialized students having broad psychological and social impacts (e.g., increased anxiety and depression, social shaming) on students and their families that leads to increased disengagement from school. Subsequently, this results in increased dropout rates and a higher likelihood of involvement with the criminal justice system (Bhattacharjee, 2003; Chau-Wong and Oyasiji 2022; Glogowski and Rakoff 2019; Attygalle, and Hopson 2023). Notably, the lack of mechanisms for students and families to report and challenge

discrimination and inequitable treatment further exacerbates issues of barriers to access that result from systemic racism, leaving many without a pathway to justice or remediation (Attygalle and Hopson 2023).

Furthermore, structural inequities extend beyond the classroom and into broader social systems. Many racialized families, particularly immigrant families, face challenges navigating the education system due to language barriers, cultural differences, and a lack of accessible support (Edgerton, Peter, and Roberts 2008). That said, the assumption that immigration status alone determines academic success ignores the systemic barriers that racialized students face, including racism, economic hardship, and inadequate institutional support. While Canada is often celebrated as an "education superpower" due to high rates of post-secondary attainment (Anders et. al., 2021), this narrative overlooks the racialized disparities in educational outcomes and economic mobility (Statistics Canada 2023). The success of some immigrant students is often used to dismiss systemic racism, rather than addressing the inequities that persist for Black students, Indigenous students, and other marginalized students (Anders et. al., 2021). This erasure is further reinforced by the Model Minority Myth, which falsely portrays Asian and South Asian students as uniformly high-achieving while masking the real barriers they face, including economic precarity, lack of culturally responsive support, and the systemic exclusion of their struggles from equity policies.

The psychological toll of these barriers is profound. Racialized students often struggle with a sense of belonging in school environments where they are marginalized, stereotyped, and subjected to racism and intersecting forms of discrimination (Angus Reid Institute 2021; Dei 2014; James 2010; James and Turner, 2017). Studies show that racism in schools is frequently ignored or inadequately addressed by teachers, leaving students to navigate hostile environments without proper support (Angus Reid Institute 2021; Chau-Wong and Oyasiji 2022). This lack of intervention further reinforces systemic inequality by normalizing discriminatory practices. While many schools focus on increasing exposure to cultures and languages that are often marginalized, many continue to fail to provide meaningful education on racism, colonialism, and social justice. Indeed, James (2010) has noted that anti-racism education in Canadian schools continues to look very much like multiculturalism education, lacking in meaningful discussions of the social construction of race, racism and colonization.

Ultimately, the challenges that racialized students face in K-12 education are deeply rooted in Canada's colonial history and the enduring structures of white supremacy. The legacy of residential schools, racial segregation, and discriminatory policies and practices continues to shape the experiences of students today (Carr 2008; James and Howard 2021). The lack of accountability mechanisms within school systems means that incidents of racism often go unreported, with students and families lacking clear pathways to seek redress (Attygalle and Hopson 2023). Addressing these inequities requires systemic change—moving beyond performative equity initiatives to dismantle the policies and practices that uphold racial injustice. Without transformative action, Canada's education system will continue to reproduce inequality and inequity, rather than serving as a vehicle for opportunity and empowerment for all students and transformation of society.

Anti-Black Racism

As we have noted above, and as many researchers, advocates, students, parents and community members have noted as well, anti-Black racism in schooling is not a new issue in Canada. A major issue contributing to the proliferation of anti-Black racism in K-12 is the distortion of history taught in classrooms. In many instances the history of anti-Black racism is, at best, simplified in curriculum or reshaped according to the biases of individual educators, resulting in a watered-down version of events that fails to capture the true extent of oppression experienced by Black people in Canada throughout history, and in the present (James and Turner 2017; Livingstone and Weinfeld 2017; Ontario Human Rights Commission 2023; Raza 2022; Wong 2020). For example, recently students in Ontario went public with their experiences of anti-Black racism in their schools and shared that often teachers misinform students by focusing their teaching on the treatment of slaves and stating that "it was not that bad" (Raza 2022). Also recently, a 2021 Angus Reid Institute survey found that one third of students in Canada report that they have never learned about slavery. These omissions and historical retellings intended to assuage the discomfort of teaching and learning about slavery and racial oppression means that many students grow up with an incomplete and incorrect understanding of slavery and systemic racism in Canada, and its significance in the creation of the nation state. Importantly, the impact of this teaching both contributes to the lack of belonging that Black students often feel in their schools, and also perpetuates the conditions for anti-Black racism by downplaying the ongoing impact of racial oppression in contemporary society (James and Turner 2017; Ontario Human Rights Commission 2023).

More broadly, while white students frequently see their own histories and identities mirrored in textbooks and among staff, Black students are often left without visible role models in teaching and administration staff, and without accurate reflections of their experiences, heritage, worldviews and cultures (Abawi and Eizadirad 2020; James, 2010; Livingstone and Weinfeld 2017; Nixon, Habtom, and Tuck 2022; Ontario Human Rights Commission 2023). This failure of the education system impacts students deeply. In addition to the research literature, community members, parents and students also tell us that these disparities reinforce a sense of alienation, as Black students are not encouraged to see themselves in positions of achievement or leadership (Livingstone and Weinfeld 2017). When the narratives of Black historical and contemporary success are marginalized, it sends a subtle yet powerful message about who is valued and who is not in the academic environment. These narratives are also perpetuated by the practice of labelling Black students as "at-risk" and the stereotypes that this practice relies on. For example, in James' (2012) in-depth analysis of the ways that a "web stereotypes" functions to marginalize Black students through the at-risk label reveals many common stereotypes that exist within Canadian schools (e.g., "as immigrants, fatherless, athletes, troublemakers, and underachievers" (p. 46). Notably, the stereotype of the Black male athlete in schooling was also highlighted by community members interviewed by James and Turner (2017), who shared that Black boys and young men are both regarded as incapable of being "good" students because their strength lies in their abilities as athletes and are supported to excel in athletics at the expense of their grades (e.g., "Many participants noted that the Black students who played on their school's sports teams were allowed to continue playing sports even while having poor grades or not attending classes" (p. 43)). More strikingly, in the James & Turner (2017) study "a number of the Black students…claimed that while their white peers were encouraged to take Academic courses and were 'supported to do well'" (p. 42) and that Black students are often "recruited to ensure

success of the school's sports teams. These Black youth then were seen primarily as having solely athletic contributions to the school, to the detriment of genuine care and attention for their academic success" (p. 43).

In addition to leading to the over-representation of Black students in special education programming and in applied courses in highschool (Glogowski and Rakoff 2019; James, 2010; James and Turner 2017), the at-risk label also leads to the heightened surveillance of Black students in the classroom, hallways, and outside recreation time by teachers and administration. The confluence of low expectations and strict monitoring results in students feeling "pushed out" of school as well as material impacts such as negative effects on their academic performance and higher rates of discipline and punitive actions especially in the form of suspensions and expulsions. For example, Black students have a higher likelihood than their Asian, white, and South Asian counterparts of being suspended (Glogowski and Rakoff 2019). Indeed, these surveillance and punitive practices not only limits their educational prospects but also reinforces harmful stereotypes about Black students, thereby reinforcing the very stereotypes of underachievement in which they are based.

Importantly, the impact of these systemic issues extends beyond the classroom, affecting Black communities more broadly and the families within them. Black parents who advocate for a more accurate and inclusive curriculum often encounter significant resistance from educational institutions, sometimes being dismissed or penalized for their involvement. This lack of meaningful engagement not only erodes trust between families and schools but also undermines the collective efforts to foster an educational environment that truly supports the growth and development of all students (James & Turner, 2017). The exclusion of Black students, parents and community members in decision-making processes further isolates these actors, intensifying the mistrust which many of them hold of the K-12 system. Ultimately, the cumulative effects of anti-Black racism in education create a self-perpetuating system that limits the academic and personal growth of Black students while simultaneously undermining the integrity of the broader educational framework. The lack of representation in the curriculum, combined with biased and racist disciplinary practices and a significant underrepresentation of Black educators, contributes to an environment where Black youth are routinely marginalized and their potential undervalued. This not only affects individual students but also reverberates throughout families and communities, reinforcing societal inequities that persist well beyond the school years (Glogowski and Rakoff 2019; James and Turner 2017). Addressing these issues requires a commitment to meaningful transformative change that is truly community-led.

Anti-Indigenous Racism

Anti-Indigenous racism in Canada's K-12 education system is deeply rooted in colonial history and continues to manifest in various ways, including residential school denialism (Office of the Independent Special Interlocutor 2024) and what Rice and colleagues (2024) refer to as "settler ignorance", Eurocentric curricula (Douglas, Purton, and Bascuñán 2020; Canada 1996; Webb and Mashford-Pringle 2022), as well as policies and practices that perpetuate colonial worldviews as the norm (Donald 2023) and stereotyping, stigmatization and racism (Angus Reid Institute 2021; Appel 2023; Gillies 2023). Despite growing awareness of the harms caused by the residential school system, denialism remains an issue, with some educators, parents, and officials downplaying or misrepresenting the severity of abuses experienced by Indigenous children

(Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2015). This undermines reconciliation efforts and retraumatizes Indigenous communities by dismissing their lived experiences. Additionally, anti-Indigenous racism is on the rise in Canada. Indigenous students often experience lower expectations from educators, racism from their peers, and disciplinary practices that disproportionately target them (Chau-Wong and Oyasiji 2022). For Indigenous students in care—who make up over 70% of children in the system in Alberta (Government of Alberta 2023)—their transience between schools and group homes results in systemic neglect, as schools often deprioritize investment in their education, seeing them as temporary or transient rather than as students deserving of long-term support. These factors contribute to lower graduation rates and reduced access to post-secondary opportunities, perpetuating cycles of marginalization and socioeconomic disparity (Statistics Canada 2017; Statistics Canada 2023).

Another major issue is the dominance of a Eurocentric curriculum, which prioritizes Western perspectives while minimizing or misrepresenting Indigenous histories, cultures, and contributions. Many textbooks and lesson plans still frame Canada's history through a settler-colonial lens, downplaying or omitting topics like land dispossession, removal of children and the violation of treaties, genocide and the legacy of residential schools. Indigenous knowledge systems, languages, and ways of learning are often excluded or treated as optional rather than integral parts of the curriculum (Canada 1996; Chau-Wong and Oyasiji 2022; Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2015; Webb and Mashford-Pringle 2022). The lack of Indigenous representation among educators and administrators further alienates Indigenous students, as they rarely see their identities reflected in positions of authority or within the education system itself (Winnipeg Indigenous Executive Circle 2023; 2021). Moreover, the chronic underfunding of on-reserve schools compared to their provincial counterparts results in inadequate resources, outdated materials, and limited access to culturally relevant programming (Statistics Canada 2017; Thompson 2018).

Notably, in Canada, many Indigenous students from remote and rural communities must leave their homes to attend secondary school due to the lack of local educational infrastructure, a symptom of ongoing systemic racism. In fact, 54% of First Nations students are forced to leave their home communities in order to be able to access secondary education (Assembly of First Nations 2024). Unsurprisingly, research has demonstrated a positive association between close proximity to school and obtaining a high school diploma because close proximity is "linked to lower financial costs of schooling, continued access to community support, [and] the presence of role models and mentors who have also pursued education" (Statistics Canada 2023). Thus, leaving home at a young age to pursue secondary education has lasting social, emotional, and educational consequences for students, their families, and their home communities. For example, First Nations people living in communities where they can access secondary education are twice as likely to complete high school than those who have to leave home in order to do so (Statistics Canada 2023). Additionally, students face racism and discrimination both in the school and in the community they have had to relocate to, negatively impacting students' mental health and academic performance (Statistics Canada 2017; Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2015).

Continuing the same impacts of residential schools, when students have to leave their home communities to access secondary education they experience disconnection from their cultures, languages, families and identities, and their communities suffer from the loss of the next

generation. The impacts of this kind of forced relocation have been written about and shared widely in the reporting of the highschool students who have lost their lives after relocating from their communities in order to be able to access highschool education. For example, between 2000-2019 there have been nine deaths of Indigenous high school students (aged 14- 18) in Thunder Bay. These students sought access to highschool which was not available to them in their home communities due lack of and inadequate Federal Government funding. The relocation resulted in their death. In each case, there were limited and sparse investigations, further enabling and perpetuating stereotypes of young Indigenous people. In addition to paying with their lives, during their time in Thunder Bay these students were subject to violence and harassment in their schools and in the community (Johnstone and Lee 2024; Talaga 2021).

The Experience of Undocumented Students

There is limited research literature on the topic of schooling access of undocumented children, and in Canada, the larger topic of the experience of undocumented people has been "understudied" (Villegas 2018, 1115). However, we know from our own work at JHC, as well as from the work of advocates and other organizations, that undocumented K-12 students in Canada face several barriers in accessing education, despite the country's commitment to providing schooling for all children (e.g., Anchan 2024; Bejan and Sidhu 2010) and our obligations under the Convention of the Rights of the Child. A major challenge is the complexity of and unclear policies that are intended to address the realities of undocumented children and their families. While access to education, and more specifically, who has access to K-12 education, is governed by provincial legislation, schools often have more autonomy in making these decisions. For example, in Ontario, the *Education Act* states that all children have a right to access K-12 schooling, and in the early 2000s the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) (Canada's largest school board) passed the "Students Without Legal Immigration Status" policy which protects children's rights to access schooling by not requiring proof of status. However, this policy continues to be implemented "unevenly" with the TDSB claiming that the implementation of the policy was too difficult given the size of the Board. The Board then decided to download the responsibility onto individual schools who continue to ask students for immigration documents for enrolment (Villegas 2018). Of greater concern, in Alberta, in response to advocates' calls to address the increasing number of undocumented students who are being denied enrolment into K-12 schools, the Minister of Education stated that provincial legislation does "not require school authorities to provide programming to children who do not have legal status in Alberta or in Canada" (Anchan 2024).

In Alberta, the exclusion of undocumented children from accessing K-12 education presents significant legal and ethical concerns. While the *Alberta School Act* mandates education for all resident children without explicitly requiring proof of immigration status, certain public and Catholic schools in the province have refused undocumented children enrolment and prohibit access to receiving an education. Furthermore, the Edmonton Public and Catholic School Boards and provincial government officials have refused to adequately address the situation when informed of undocumented children denied enrolment into K-12 schools, despite multiple attempts to engage with them on the issue. The schools in question have taken the stance that school authorities are not obligated to provide education to children without legal status. This position directly contradicts Canada's commitments under both domestic and international human rights frameworks. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees equality

and security of the person under Sections 7 and 15, ensuring that all individuals—regardless of their legal status—have the right to fundamental protections, including education. The Charter applies to any person in Canada and ensures that whether they are a Canadian citizen, a permanent resident, or a newcomer, they are entitled to the rights contained within.

Additionally, Canada is signatory to several international human rights and legal treaties and conventions, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) reaffirm that every child has the right to education, free from discrimination.

The UDHR affirms the fundamental right to education for all individuals, regardless of their immigration status. Article 26 of the UDHR explicitly states that everyone has the right to education, emphasizing that primary education should be free and accessible to all. This principle reflects the global commitment to ensuring that every child has the opportunity to develop intellectually, socially, and economically, without discrimination. Furthermore, as per article 28 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (which Canada ratified in 1991) recognizes "the right of the child to education" and directs signatories (including Canada) to "make primary education compulsory and available free to all." Article 13 of the ICESCR guarantees the right to education for all, emphasizing accessibility and non-discrimination.

Denying undocumented children access to schooling not only violates these legal principles and Canada's human rights obligations at the international level, but also has long-term detrimental effects on the children and society at large. Education is a critical tool in breaking the cycle of poverty, fostering social inclusion, and enabling individuals to contribute meaningfully to their communities. When children are barred from attending school, they face increased risks of social exclusion, economic precarity, and psychological distress. Without access to education, undocumented children prevented from attending K-12 schools are left in a state of vulnerability, unable to develop the skills and knowledge necessary for future stability and growth. Moreover, this exclusion undermines Canada's commitment to uphold human rights and equality, calling into question its commitment to fostering an inclusive and just society. Addressing this issue requires urgent legislative and policy intervention to ensure that all children, regardless of their immigration status, are granted their fundamental right to education.

Missing Narratives: The Erasure of Asian and South Asian Student Experiences

While systemic racism in K-12 education has been increasingly acknowledged in relation to Black and Indigenous students, the experiences of Asian and South Asian students remain largely absent from policy discussions, research, and equity initiatives. The lack of disaggregated data on their experiences contributes to this invisibility, reinforcing the false assumption that Asian students are universally successful in Canadian schools. This assumption is deeply tied to the Model Minority Myth, which frames Asian and South Asian students as academically gifted, obedient, and economically secure—masking the very real struggles they face, including economic hardship, bullying, exclusion from equity programs, and racial stereotyping. The pressure to conform to this myth not only erases disparities in academic outcomes within diverse Asian communities but also discourages students and families from seeking support when they encounter discrimination. Many Asian families, navigating a school system shaped by Eurocentric norms, internalize expectations to remain silent, assimilate, and avoid disrupting

authority, fearing that speaking out could jeopardize their children's educational prospects. As a result, Asian and South Asian students often experience isolation, cultural loss, and heightened mental health struggles, as they are caught between the pressures of academic achievement, familial expectations, and the societal demand to "fit in."

However, beyond the harm it causes within Asian communities, the Model Minority Myth also reinforces systemic racism by pitting racialized groups against one another and upholding white supremacy. By portraying Asian students as a "successful minority", it is used to invalidate the systemic barriers faced by other racialized communities, particularly Black and Indigenous students, by suggesting that racism is not a factor in educational disparities. It also pressures Asian and South Asian students to distance themselves from other racialized groups, reinforcing division and weakening solidarity in broader anti-racism efforts. Ultimately, this myth serves to protect existing power structures by discouraging collective action and obscuring the need for systemic change.

Recommendations

The K-12 education system plays a significant determining role in social and economic mobility. As the foundation of a student's academic journey, the K-12 system not only prepares individuals for post-secondary education and the workforce but also shapes their critical thinking, civic engagement, and sense of belonging in society. However, for many racialized students, the education system continues to reinforce systemic barriers that limit access to quality instruction, resources, and support systems. Schools influence future opportunities by providing—or, in some cases, restricting—access to quality instruction, resources, and support systems. Given this impact, the K-12 system also bears a crucial responsibility to address structural inequities and systemic barriers that affect student outcomes, ensuring that all learners have equal, equitable and meaningful opportunities to succeed (James and Parekh 2021; Nixon, Habtom, and Tuck 2022; Tuck and Tuck 2013).

The recommendations summarized below are informed by international human rights instruments, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and the Truth and Recommendation Commission Calls to Action, as well as literature cited above.
These recommendations aim to eliminate systemic racism in K-12 education by ensuring that schools fulfill their human rights obligations to racialized students and uphold the four pillars of a rights-based approach: Remedy, Provision, Protection, and Participation.

Build and Prioritize Relationships with Indigenous Peoples and Communities

- Work with Indigenous communities to reduce education gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students by implementing long-term, systemic policy changes rather than temporary pilot projects.
- Eliminate disparities in federal funding for Indigenous youth being educated on- and off-reserve and ensure transparent public reporting on the allocation of education funding.

- Protect language rights of Indigenous peoples by implementing fully funded Indigenous language education programs in all provinces and territories..
- Ensure full integration of the history and ongoing impacts of colonization into all grade levels—teaching truth before reconciliation to ensure all students understand systemic oppression and resistance.
- Create funded opportunities for Elders and Cultural Brokers to meaningfully contribute to decision-making, to support Indigenous students and families in schools, and ensure that Indigenous knowledge is respected and valued.
- Advocate to provincial and federal governments to ensure funding to meaningfully include Indigenous ways of knowing and values across the curriculum.
- Provide funding for schools to establish partnerships with Elders, allowing teachers to connect with Indigenous knowledge keepers in a way that is ethical, respectful, and not extractive.
- Address the disproportionate burden placed on Indigenous teachers in leading reconciliation efforts within schools. Reconciliation is a collective responsibility, and Indigenous educators should not be expected to single-handedly address colonial harms within school systems.
- Advocate to the Federal Government to allocate and structure sufficient financial, material and human resources to ensure the full enjoyment of education, cultural and linguistic rights for Indigenous children.
- Ensure Indigenous governance participation in decision-making at all levels of education policy, curriculum design, and school operations. This includes representation on school boards, curriculum advisory committees, and education ministries.

Engage Communities and Families in Meaningful Ways to Address Racism in K-12

- Build partnerships between communities, schools and families to ensure that learning is holistic, lifelong, and reflecting of diverse lived experience.
- Ensure representation of Black, Indigenous, and racialized voices at the School Board, administration, and teaching levels to build trust and accountability.
- Establish mentorship programs that connect Black, Indigenous, Asian, and racialized youth with professionals and community leaders in various career paths to provide guidance and support.
- Establish the conditions for parents to participate in the education of their children. Ensure all parents are aware of how school systems function so they can navigate them appropriately.
- Ensure accessible and multiple avenues for parental engagement, recognizing the barriers faced by low-income families, parents working multiple jobs, and those with limited access to technology.
- Conduct education and capacity-building for decision-makers, including school boards, teachers, and policymakers, on Canada's obligations under the CRC and other human rights treaties. This includes mandatory training on how international human rights frameworks apply to education governance and policy decisions.

Implement Curriculum Changes that are Anti-Racist

- Audit curriculum content to identify and remove misinformation, colonial bias, and Eurocentric narratives that distort history and contemporary realities.

- Ensure that anti-racist curriculum reforms include an explicit focus on present-day oppression—not just historical injustices—so that students understand contemporary systems of power and privilege.
- Include diverse perspectives and lived experiences into all subject areas without putting the onus and responsibility on individual teachers to do on their own.
- Develop culturally responsive programs, resources and learning materials that accurately reflect the history and present-day realities of racialization in Canada.

Build Safe and Brave Environments in Primary and Secondary Schools

- Fund student led initiatives that address racism in schools, ensuring that youth are active participants in shaping anti-racism efforts.
- Create and implement accountability mechanisms and remediation processes at all levels in the K-12 system to address racism and other forms of discrimination experienced by students and families.
- Repeal Section 43 of the *Criminal Code* which permits the use of force by schoolteachers and parents under the guise of "reasonable correction": "Every school teacher, parent or person standing in the place of a parent is justified in using force by way of correction toward a pupil or child, as the case may be, who is under his care, if the force does not exceed what is reasonable under the circumstances".
- End punitive discipline policies such as out of school suspensions and expulsions for youth in Grade 6 and under. Utilize restorative justice practices instead of punitive practices (e.g., suspensions, expulsions).
- Implement ongoing anti-racism training for all teachers that goes beyond one-time professional development sessions and is integrated into teaching practices.
- School boards should actively assess student safety by regularly surveying students on whether they feel safe and included in school environments and whether they see themselves represented in curriculum materials and school leadership.
- Adopt trauma-informed practices across all schools to support students who experience racism and other forms of systemic harm.
- Eliminate all academic streaming from K-12 education, ensuring that racialized students are not disproportionately directed into lower-track programs that limit future opportunities.

Transparency and Accountability Through and with Data Collection

- Implement transparent reporting and evaluation of education attainment gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people
- Ensure that Ministries of Education work collaboratively with communities and School Boards to develop a specific procedure for collecting data on student achievements and for translating this data into meaningful policy changes that address the systemic barriers that certain groups of students face.
- Collect disaggregated data on school suspensions, expulsions, programs of study, and learning outcomes as well as non-completion rates, special education identification, confirmation of post-secondary acceptances and graduation rates. This information should only be collected for the purposes of changing the very policies and practices that barrier certain groups from achieving successful outcomes in K-12 education.

- Conduct a comprehensive review of provincial and federal education laws, policies, and procedures to assess compliance with Canada's international human rights obligations, particularly under the CRC.
- Ensure that all policies and practices in the K-12 system align with Canada's human rights obligations, emphasizing that children's rights should not be violated based on where or to whom they are born.

Conclusion: The Role of International Human Rights Law in Correcting Systemic Racism

The persistent barriers faced by racialized students in Canada's K–12 and post-secondary education systems are not isolated challenges—they are systemic failures that reflect deeper social and institutional inequities. These barriers, which include discrimination, underrepresentation, lack of culturally responsive curricula, and unequal access to resources (among many others), directly undermine students' academic success and sense of belonging. Yet education is not merely a service; it is a cornerstone of human dignity and societal progress. This principle is embedded in international treaties such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)—all of which Canada has committed to uphold and advance.

Despite these international obligations, government agencies and educational institutions across Canada continue to fall short of their legal and moral responsibilities. The gap between Canada's commitments and its practice is not just a policy failure—it is a human rights violation. To address this, systemic changes must be implemented. Further, the Canadian Network for Equity and Racial Justice (CNERJ) must resist the over-reliance on research as the sole form of evidence. We know what the barriers to academic success are, because racialized students, their families, and their communities have told us—repeatedly. The phrase "we have been researched to death" (Castellano 2004; Tuhiwai-Smith 2021) underscores the exhaustion and frustration many communities feel when their lived realities are mined for data but ignored in policymaking. As Tuck (2009a) and Walcott (2020) argue, research alone rarely results in meaningful change, because policymaking is ultimately about political will, not "research evidence".

Thus, CNERJ must center the voices of those with lived experience. For example, in future conferences, CNERJ should invite students, parents and their communities to speak about their experiences for themselves, and to provide their own ideas for solutions. Communities can identify their own needs and offer solutions. Their truths do not require validation by academic or institutional researchers to be legitimate. Trusting communities, and privileging their knowledge, is both an ethical imperative and a necessity in the pursuit of justice. Furthermore, it is imperative to shift the role of education from one that passively reproduces colonial inequalities to one that actively redresses historic oppression. Education must empower, not exclude. Canada must also be held accountable to the international recommendations issued by treaty-monitoring bodies, particularly those informed by civil society and grassroots organizations. CNERJ can play a role in monitoring the recommendations and direction provided to Canada through the treaty body associated with ICERD in particular and ensure that

membership in the network is engaged and contributing to the UN mechanisms and increase both domestic and international pressure for Canada to uphold rights. These frameworks provide not only aspirational standards, but enforceable mechanisms for justice.

True equity in education requires more than reform, it demands the recognition of education as a human right, actively protected, equitably resourced, and shaped by those who live its realities.

References

Abawi, Zuhra, and Ardavan Eizadirad. "Bias-Free or Biased Hiring? Racialized Teachers' Perspectives on Educational Hiring Practices in Ontario." *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy*, no. 193 (2020): 18–31. https://journalhosting.ucalgary.ca/index.php/cjeap/article/view/68280.

Anchan, Mrinali. "Advocates Sound Alarm over Children without Status Being Denied Education in Alberta." *CBC News*, December 19, 2024. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/advocates-sound-alarm-over-children-without-status-being-denied-education-in-alberta-1.7413118.

Anders, Jake, Silvan Has, John Jerrim, Nikki Shure, and Laura Zieger. "Is Canada Really an Education Superpower? The Impact of Non-Participation on Results from PISA 2015." *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability* 33 (2021): 229–249. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11092-020-09329-5.

Angus Reid Institute. *Diversity and Education: Half of Canadian Kids Witness Ethnic, Racial Bullying at Their School.* October 19, 2021. Accessed January 27, 2025. https://angusreid.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/2021.10.19_canada_school_kids_racism_diversity-1.pdf.

Appel, Jeremy. "Indigenous Youth Continue Facing Discrimination at School, Work." *Alberta Native News*, June 28, 2023. https://www.albertanativenews.com/indigenous-youth-continue-facing-discrimination-at-school-work/.

Assembly of First Nations. *First Nations K–12 Education Transformation Review and Costing Analysis*. 2024. https://afn.bynder.com/m/94c28002b27d9f7/original/First-Nations-K-12-Education-Transformation-Review-and-Costing-Analysis.pdf.

Assembly of First Nations. *Resolution No. 36/2016: Inherent and Treaty Right to Post-Secondary Education.* Adopted at the Annual General Assembly, Niagara Falls, ON, July 2016. Accessed March 27, 2025. https://www.afn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Inherent-and-Treaty-Right-to-Post-Secondary-Education-July-2016.pdf.

Attygalle, Kaushi, and Robin Liu Hopson. *A Progress Report on Anti-Racism Policy across Canada.* Toronto: People for Education, 2023. Accessed January 25, 2025. https://peopleforeducation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/PFE-AntiRacismReport-EN-2023-v1d.pdf.

Bhattacharjee, Ken. *The Ontario Safe Schools Act: School Discipline and Discrimination.* Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2003. Accessed March 27, 2025. https://www3.ohrc.on.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/The_Ontario_Safe_Schools_Act%3A_School_discipline_and_discrimination.pdf.

Bejan, Raluca, and Navjeet Sidhu. *Policy without Practice: Barriers to Enrollment for Non-Status Immigrant Students in Toronto's Catholic Schools*. Toronto: Social Planning Toronto, 2010. https://assets.nationbuilder.com/socialplanningtoronto/pages/423/attachments/original/1472011308/Policy-Without-Practice-Social-Planning-Toronto-July-2010.pdf.

Bero, Tayo. "Addressing Anti-Black Racism on Campus." *University Affairs*, 2021. Accessed March 27, 2025. https://universityaffairs.ca/features/addressing-anti-black-racism-on-campus/.Canadian Human

Rights Commission. "Anti-Asian Racism: A Troubling Trend." *Canadian Human Rights Commission*. Accessed March 27, 2025. https://2020.chrcreport.ca/anti-asian-racism-a-troubling-trend.html.

Canada. Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*. Ottawa: Canada Communication Group, 1996.

Carr, Paul R. "The 'Equity Waltz' in Canada: Whiteness and the Informal Realities of Racism in Education." *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Education* 3, no. 2 (2008): 4–23.

Castellano, Marlene Brant. "Ethics of Aboriginal Research." *Journal of Aboriginal Health* (2004): 98–114.

CBC. *What Systemic Racism in Canada Looks Like.* YouTube video, 4:48. Posted March 18, 2021. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7GmX5stT9rU.

CBC. "Students' Union Wants Mandatory Indigenous Content at University of Saskatchewan." *CBC News*, November 27, 2015. Accessed March 27, 2025. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/students-union-wants-mandatory-indigenous-content-at-university-of-saskatchewan-1.3338594.

Chadha, Ena. "Letter to Universities and Colleges on Racism and Other Human Rights Concerns." *Ontario Human Rights Commission*, 2020. Accessed February 03, 2025. https://www3.ohrc.on.ca/en/news-center/letter-universities-and-colleges-racism-and-other-human-rights-concerns.

Chau-Wong, Carol, and Abisola Oyasiji. *Racism in Education.* Coalition for Equal Access to Education, March 2022. Accessed November 27, 2024. https://calgaryfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/Racism-in-Education.pdf.Cicek Jillian Seniuk, Alan Steele, Sarah Gauthier, Afua Adobea Mante, Pamela Wolf, Mary Robinson, and Stephen Mattucci. "Indigenizing Engineering Education in Canada: Critically Considered." *Teaching in Higher Education*, 2021. https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2021.1935847.

Council of Canadian Academies. *Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in the Post-Secondary Research System.* Ottawa: Expert Panel on EDI Practices for Impactful Change, Council of Canadian Academies, 2024. https://doi.org/10.60870/kx7v-vj32.

Council of Ontario Universities. *Lighting the Fire: Experiences of Indigenous Faculty in Ontario Universities.* December 14, 2020. Accessed March 27, 2025. https://ontariosuniversities.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Lighting-the-Fire-Experiences-of-Indigenous-Faculty-in-Ontario-Universities-December-14-2020.pdf.

Dei, George J. Sefa. "Personal Reflections on Anti-Racism Education for a Global Context." *Encounters on Education* 15 (2014): 239–249.

Donald, Dwayne. "Unlearning Colonialism and Renewing Kinship Relations." *The Alberta Teachers' Association Magazine* 103, no. 2 (2023). https://teachers.ab.ca/news/unlearning-colonialism.

Douglas, Velta, Fiona Purton, and Daniela Bascuñán. "Possibility Not Difficulty: Difficult Knowledge in K–12 Classrooms as Opportunities for Renegotiating Relationships with Indigenous Knowledge." *The Alberta Journal of Educational Research* 66, no. 3 (2020). https://doi.org/10.11575/ajer.v66i3.56962.

Edgerton, Jason D., Tracey Peter, and Lance W. Roberts. "Back to the Basics: Socio-Economic, Gender, and Regional Disparities in Canada's Educational System." *Canadian Journal of Education* 31, no. 4 (2008): 861–888.

Food Banks Canada. "How Campus Food Banks Are Helping Students Stay Hungry for Knowledge, Not Food." *Food Banks Canada*, 2023. Accessed March 27, 2025.

https://foodbankscanada.ca/how-campus-food-banks-are-helping-students-stay-hungry-for-knowledge-not-food/.

Gillies, Carmen. “Anti-Indigenous Deficit Racism and Cultural Essentialism in K–12 Education: We Want You to Recognize There’s a Problem.” *Journal of Critical Race Inquiry* 10, no. 2 (2023): 68–88.

Glogowski, Krystyna, and Adam Rakoff. *Mistrust and Low Expectations: Educational Disadvantage and Black Youth in Ontario.* Toronto: Pathways to Education Canada, 2019. Accessed March 27, 2025. https://youthrex.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/BlackYouth_Research_Spotlight_June5.pdf.

Government of Canada. *Imbalances between Labour Demand and Supply (2019–2029).* 2017. Accessed February 03, 2025. http://occupations.esdc.gc.ca/sppc-cops/l.3bd.2t.1ilshtml@-eng.jsp?lid=29&fid=1&lang=en.

Ha, Andrew, and Charlotte Alden. "UBC Black Student Union Speaks Out Following Anti-Racist Protests in United States, Canada." *The Ubyssey*, 2020. Accessed March 27, 2025. https://ubyssey.ca/news/bsu-statement-may31/.

Huncar, Andrea. "Edmonton Schools Failing Black Students, Advocates Say." *CBC News*, July 25, 2020. Accessed March 27, 2025. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/black-students-edmonton-systemic-racism-1.5662889.

Indspire. *Truth and Reconciliation in Post-Secondary Settings: Student Experience.* 2018. Accessed March 27, 2025. https://indspire.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/JMGD_003_IND_TR_REPORT_FINAL_V3_NOV15_V3.pdf.

James, Carl E. *Seeing Ourselves: Exploring Race, Ethnicity and Culture.* 4th ed. Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing, 2010.

James, Carl E., and Philip S. S. Howard. "Multiculturalism, Multicultural Education, and Racialized Students in Canada." In *The Education Systems of the Americas*, edited by S. Jornitz and M. Parreira do Amaral, 1–14. Global Education Systems. Cham: Springer, 2021.

James, Carl E., and Gillian Parekh. "Fixed Trajectories: Race, Schooling, and Graduation from a Southern Ontario University." *Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 51, no. 4 (2021): 67–84.

James, Carl E., and Tana Turner. *Towards Race Equity in Education: The Schooling of Black Students in the Greater Toronto Area.* Toronto: York University, 2017. Accessed January 10, 2025. https://youthrex.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Towards-Race-Equity-in-Education-April-20172.pdf.

Johnstone, Marjorie, and Eunjung Lee. “A Colonial Legacy of Cultural and Epistemic Genocide: Limited Education Access, Family Dislocation and Premature Death of Indigenous Youth in Northern Ontario, Canada.” *Whiteness and Education* 9, no. 1 (2024). https://doi.org/10.1080/23793406.2022.2136581.

Kirkness, Verna J., and Ray Barnhardt. "First Nations and Higher Education: The Four R's – Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, Responsibility." *Journal of American Indian Education* 30, no. 3 (1991): 1–15.

Lazarenko, Arlette. "More than 100 Teens in N.L. Fight Back against Racism through Art." *CBC News*, November 27, 2024. Accessed November 27, 2024.

https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/students-racism-sharing-our-cultures-schools-newfoundland-labrador-1.7386038.

Lewis, Stephen. *Report on Race Relations in Ontario.* Toronto: Government of Ontario, 1992. Accessed February 03, 2025. https://ia903104.us.archive.org/22/items/stephenlewisrepo00lewi/stephenlewisrepo00lewi.pdf.

Livingstone, Anne-Marie, and Morton Weinfeld. "Black Students and High School Completion in Quebec and Ontario: A Multivariate Analysis." *Canadian Review of Sociology/Revue canadienne de sociologie* 54, no. 2 (2017): 174–197. https://doi.org/10.1111/cars.12144.

Luhanga, Florence, Sithokozile Maposa, Vivian Puplampu, Eunice Abudu, and Irene Chigbogu. "'You Have to Strive Very Hard to Prove Yourself': Experiences of Black Nursing Students in a Western Canadian Province." *International Journal of Nursing Education Scholarship* (2022). https://doi.org/10.1515/ijnes-2022-0094.

MacIsaac, Janet. *1L Cohort Diversity Report: Towards an Inclusive Law Program*. Windsor: University of Windsor, 2020.

MacKenzie, Megan, and Benjamin E. Goldsmith. "Are Academics More Likely to Answer Emails from 'Melissa' or 'Rahul'? The Answer May Not Surprise You." *The Conversation*, 2024. Accessed January 25, 2025. https://theconversation.com/are-academics-more-likely-to-answer-emails-from-melissa-or-rahul-the-answer-may-not-surprise-you-241352.

Maynard, Robyn. "Canadian Education Is Steeped in Anti-Black Racism." *The Walrus*, November 29, 2017. Accessed February 17, 2025. https://thewalrus.ca/canadian-education-is-steeped-in-anti-black-racism/.

Maynard, Merryn, Samantha B. Meyer, Christopher M. Perlman, and Sharon I. Kirkpatrick. "Experiences of Food Insecurity Among Undergraduate Students: 'You Can't Starve Yourself Through School'." *Canadian Journal of Higher Education* 48, no. 2 (2018): 130–148.

Meal Exchange. *2021 National Student Food Insecurity Report.* 2021. Accessed March 27, 2025. https://www.mealexchange.com/resources.

Morasse, Catherine. "Debate Continues Year after U of O Professor's Use of N-Word in Class." *CBC News*, 2021.

Nixon, Jade, Sefanit Habtom, and Eve Tuck. "Rupture, Not Injury: Reframing Repair for Black and Indigenous Youth Experiencing School Pushout." *Journal of Visual Culture* 21, no. 1 (2022): 132–160. https://doi.org/10.1177/14704129221088300.

Noshin, Wasifa. "All Out Strike Tackles Systemic Racism on September 30." *Excalibur*, September 28, 2020. Accessed March 27, 2025. https://www.excal.on.ca/news/2020/09/28/all-out-strike-tackles-systemic-racism-on-september-30/.

Office of the Independent Special Interlocutor. *Sites of Truth, Sites of Conscience: Unmarked Burials and Mass Graves of Missing and Disappeared Indigenous Children in Canada.* Ottawa: Office of the Independent Special Interlocutor, 2024. Accessed March 27, 2025. https://osi-bis.ca/historical-report/.

Ontario Human Rights Commission. *Anti-Black Racism in Education Roundtables: What We Heard Report.* June 23, 2023. Accessed January 10, 2025. https://www3.ohrc.on.ca/en/what-we-heard-report-anti-black-racism-education-roundtables.

Pauchulo, Ana Laura. *Anti-Racism Education in Canada: Best Practices.* Edmonton: Centre for Race and Culture, 2013. Accessed December 03, 2024. https://cfrac.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Anti-Racism-Education-in-Canada-1.pdf.

Raza, Ali. "Being Black in School: Peel Students Open Up About the Racism They Face in the Classroom." *CBC News*, April 13, 2022. Accessed December 04, 2024. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/peel-students-racism-panel-1.6408851.

Rice, Carla, Susan D. Dion, Hannah Fowlie, and Andrea Breen, "Identifying and Working through Settler Ignorance," in *Critical Studies and the International Field of Indigenous Education Research*, ed. Greg Vass and Melitta Hogarth (New York: Routledge, 2024).

Rodriguez, Carlos, John Zhao, and Sarah Jane Ferguson. *Insights on Canadian Society: Co-op Participation of College and Bachelor's Graduates.* Catalogue no. 75-006-X. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2016. Accessed November 28, 2024. http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75-006-x/2016001/article/14692-eng.htm.

Sallaffie, Moriah, Maria Cherba, and Gwen K. Healey Akearok. "Survey of Nunavut Post-Secondary Students: Determinants of School Completion, Post-Secondary Education, and Education Success." *Canadian Journal of Education* 44, no. 3 (2021): 764-787.

Sangmen, Anthony Abbot, Desmond Oklikah Ofori, and George Fiifi Botchey. "Black Students in Canada's Higher Education System: A Systematic Literature Review." *Canadian Journal for New Scholars in Education* 15, no. 2 (2024): 244–257.

Smith, Charles C., and Birgit Rhode. *Situational Assessment of the University of Windsor's MSWwp Program for Reflection of Antiracism Principles in Program Content and Delivery.* Toronto: Charles C Smith Consulting, 2024.

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples.* 3rd ed. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2021.

Spooner, Marc. "The Ugly Side of Performance-Based Funding for Universities." *Academic Matters*, Spring 2021. Accessed March 27, 2025. https://academicmatters.ca/the-ugly-side-of-performance-based-funding-for-universities-2.

Statistics Canada. *How Does the Remoteness of One's Community Factor into High School Completion among First Nations, Métis and Inuit?*. October 23, 2023. https://www.statcan.gc.ca/o1/en/plus/4596-how-does-remoteness-ones-community-factor-high-school-completion-among-first-nations.

Statistics Canada. *Let's Talk On-Reserve Education: Survey Report*. 2017. https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1509019844067/1531399883352#sec1. Accessed December 15 2024.

Statistics Canada. *A Portrait of Educational Attainment and Occupational Outcomes Among Racialized Populations in 2021.* Catalogue no. 98-200-X2021011. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, January 18, 2023. Accessed January 07, 2025. https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/as-sa/98-200-X/2021011/98-200-X2021011-eng.cfm.

Talaga, Tanya. "Canada's Indifference to the Deaths of Seven First Nations Teenagers Is 'Just Plain Racism'." *CBC News*, September 16, 2021. https://www.cbc.ca/documentaries/the-passionate-eye/canada-s-indifference-to-the-deaths-of-seven-first-nations-teenagers-is-just-plain-racism-tanya-talaga-1.6080264.

Thompson, Karihwakeron Tim**.** *The 176 Million Dollar Question: Are the Promised Federal Education Funds for First Nations Actually Flowing?* Toronto: Yellowhead Institute, December 4, 2018. https://yellowheadinstitute.org/2018/12/04/federal-education-funds/.

Thompson, Sam, and Daisy Woelk. "'Shock and Disbelief' after Manitoba School Trustee's Indigenous Comments." *Global News*, April 25, 2024. Accessed December 04, 2024. https://globalnews.ca/news/10450040/school-trustee-manitoba-racism-presentation-reconciliation/.

Timmons, Vianne. "Aboriginal Students' Perceptions of Post-Secondary Success Initiatives." *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 33, no. 1 (2013): 231–237.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. *Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.* Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015.

Tuck, Eve. "Re-Visioning Action: Participatory Action Research and Indigenous Theories of Change." *Urban Review: Issues and Ideas in Public Education* 41, no. 1 (2009a): 47–65.

Tuck, Eve. "Re-Visioning Action: Participatory Action Research and Indigenous Theories of Change." *The Urban Review* 41, no. 1 (2009b): 47–65.

Tuck, Eve. "The Problem Tree." *Eve Tuck*. Accessed January 10, 2025. https://www.evetuck.com/problem-tree.

Tuck, Eve, and Beverly Tuck. "Making School More Meaningful: Perspectives on the Purposes of Schooling from an Alaska Native Context." In *Why Public Schools? Voices from the United States and Canada*, edited by J.L. View, D.A. Laitsch, and P.M. Earley, 14–20. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, 2013.

United Nations. "A Pandemic of Hate." *United Nations*. Accessed January 10, 2025. https://www.un.org/en/hate-speech/impact-and-prevention/a-pandemic-of-hate.

Universities Canada and the University of Toronto Scarborough. *The Scarborough Charter on Anti-Black Racism and Black Inclusion in Canadian Higher Education: Principles, Actions, and Accountabilities.* 2021. Accessed March 27, 2025. https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/principal/scarborough-charter.

Villegas, Francisco J. "'Don't Ask, Don't Tell': Examining the Illegalization of Undocumented Students in Toronto, Canada." *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 39, no. 8 (2018): 1045–1060. https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2018.1467265.

Walcott, Rinaldo. "Data or Politics? Why the Answer Still Remains Political." *Royal Society of Canada*, 2020. Accessed January 21, 2025. https://rsc-src.ca/en/covid-19/impact-covid-19-in-racialized-communities/data-or-politics-why-answer-still-remains.

Walcott, Rinaldo. "The End of Diversity." *Public Culture* 31, no. 2 (2019): 263–274. https://doi.org/10.1215/08992363-7286885.

Webb, Denise, and Angela Mashford-Pringle. "Incorporating Indigenous Content into K–12 Curriculum: Supports for Teachers in Provincial and Territorial Policy and Post-Secondary Education Spaces." *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy*, no. 198 (2022): 2–129.

Winnipeg Indigenous Executive Circle. *State of Equity in Education Report,* 2023. https://www.wiec.ca/reports/#:~:text=The%20State%20of%20Equity%20in,in%20the%20city%20of%20Winnipeg.

Winnipeg Indigenous Executive Circle. *State of Equity in Education Report,* 2021. https://www.wiec.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/WIEC-2021-State-of-Equity-in-Education-Report-1-1.pdf

Wong, Jessica. "Educators, Parents Work to Embed the Black Experience into School Curriculum." *CBC News*, September 12, 2020. Accessed January 10, 2025. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/black-canadians-school-curriculum-1.5706510.

Zhang, You, Shangcao Yuan, and Phoebe Kang. "Neo-Racism, Neo-Nationalism, and the Recruitment of Chinese International Students to Canada in the Era of the Pandemic." In *International Students from Asia in Canadian Universities: Institutional Challenges at the Intersection of Internationalization, Racialization and Inclusion*, edited by Ann Kim, Elizabeth Buckner, and Jean Michel Montsion, 217–229. 1st ed. New York: Routledge, 2023.