

Widening the Lens

The Far Brook School Diversity Conference

ADMINISTRATOR CONSTITUENT GROUP CONVERSATION STARTERS

QUOTES FOR DISCUSSION

"Since the wider sense of community for all students and adults is compromised when racism is left unexamined, conversations on race and racism should be held across and among the various constituencies in the school community. Talking about race and racism is not something only black people and other people of color should do. While interracial dialogue that directly addresses race, racism, and privilege may be difficult to engage in, it is necessary that these conversations take place."

- Edith G. Arrington, Diane M. Hall, and Howard C. Stevenson

"The Success of African American Students in Independent Schools"

"Anti-racism practice involves developing new policies and procedures; anti-racism education for teachers' personal development; reviewing hiring practices to ensure diversity in the context of race and ethnicity; examining curriculum materials to identify racial bias; developing anti-racism curriculum materials, resources, and strategies; and ensuring inclusive classroom practices."

- Carol Tator and Frances Henry

"Anti-racist work means acknowledging that racist beliefs and structures are pervasive in all aspects of our lives—from education to housing to climate change—and then actively doing work to tear down those beliefs and structures. Those beliefs and structures don't just exist in primarily white/and or privileged institutions—they thrive there."

- Christina Torres, *Teaching Tolerance*, July 2020

Teaching Tolerance: All Students Need Anti-Racism Education

"One of the biggest mistakes teachers make in education is approaching race and racism issues as if they are merely curricular topics and not real, lived issues among the humans in the classroom."

As a team, we believe it is essential for all educators to have the competence and the confidence to engage in honest conversations with their students about issues of race and racism. To not do this is dishonest. The skills to engage in these conversations are not always easily learned, they come from teachers engaging in difficult and honest reflection and conversations with their peers. However, if teachers do not embark on the journey of gaining the necessary competence and confidence to have courageous conversations about race, then how will students ever have an opportunity to also learn these skills? Is it difficult? Yes. But it is essential if this country is ever going to come to grips with its racialized past, a past that is always present in the classroom, regardless of whether we recognize it or talk about it."

*Eddie Moore, Jr., Ali Michael, and Marguerite Penick-Park, Education Week,
"Race & Racism Are Not 'Merely Curricular Topics'"*

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#Blackat INSTAGRAM POSTS

I had the first black headteacher in the school's history for my home teacher. Social Studies. I loved him. My parents liked him and got along. He had an Afro like me. He was strong. He made me serious. I excelled in his class. At last, I was really me.

#Representation

I realize I have forgotten/blocked out/didn't register much of the racial trauma I endured at [the school], but one memory is vivid over a decade later: I remember my college counselor ACTIVELY discouraging me from applying to the University of Pennsylvania, my top choice school. I got in early.

#LowExpectations

Both of my kids have complained multiple times of being coerced into pictures to make situations seem more "diverse". This really angers me. Creating fake diversity in pictures is dishonest at best and makes black students feel that they are being used by their school as props. The way to create diversity in the school is to actually admit more black students at every point of entry and every time there is an opening due to attrition.

#Representation

#PerformativeDiversity

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QUESTIONS

Question 1: As an Administrator, what conversations are you having in leadership teams about the racial climate in your schools? What steps are you taking to identify and address the existence and perpetuation of racism in policies and practices?

Question 2: What conversations are you having/what steps are you taking regarding revising/updating curriculum?

Question 3: What conversations are you having/steps are you taking regarding hiring and retention of teachers of color?

Question 4: Is specific DEI professional development required for faculty and staff, including administrators?

Question 5: Has your administrative team made a determination to prioritize anti-racism? If so, how is that manifested? (Require PD, statements to the community, new curriculum...) If not, what obstacles do you face?