

Widening the Lens

The Far Brook School Diversity Conference

STUDENT 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"

It's not enough to simply have representation—students must feel that their identities are validated and that their school is a place that accepts them completely. In addition, schools must hold educators and students accountable when they say and do things that make school unsafe for those they claim they want to support. Only when students feel they will be supported by their schools will they be able to fully become a part of that school community.

- Christina Torres, *Teaching Tolerance*
"All Students Need Anti-Racist Education"

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#Blackat INSTAGRAM POSTS

"I just think it's sad how it has taken 50 years and a revolution going on outside for the school to actually start listening to us. I also think it's sad how yet again we have to be the ones to give ourselves a platform to speak unapologetically."

#LongOverdue

"In 6th grade, one of my white classmates asked me to say the N-word. I don't know why, but he really wanted me to say it and was smiling about it. I don't think [the school] can just say it's an "antiracist" school. I didn't say anything because I didn't think teachers would do anything, or everyone would say I was a tattletale. Besides, when white kids do this stuff, all they do is talk to them."

#N-Word

#NoConsequences

"Yes, reading Huck Finn and TKAM [To Kill A Mockingbird] was awkward. We always had to read out loud in class. I didn't mind saying the N-word sometimes because I made it sound as ugly as nasty as it is for the class to hear. Depends on how I was feeling that day...Of course, I wish the word never existed."

#N-Word

"I had a tight group of friends all thru LS and up. Mostly white. We did everything together. I thought we were a "band of brothers." In 8th [grade], one of them had a b-day party at his house in the burbs, only I was not invited. I was told his neighbors would not be comfortable with a black kid coming over to the house. I was crushed, and learned to be distrustful."

#Othering

"We had to beg teachers and students to stop saying the N-Word. Only after we made a petition, wrote an open letter, and had several meetings with faculty did we see minor changes. Do you think we enjoy having to constantly advocate for ourselves? Why are black students treated like [the school's] free diversity consultants?"

#N-Word

#BlackStudentsasDiversityConsultants

To be a black girl at [the school] is to be excluded from a large portion of the social scene. All white friend groups uphold white supremacy, in the sense that the conversations, the parties, and offensive things that are said stay within the groups. The Microaggressions that do occur in public are telling of a much larger story.

#SocialExclusion

#WhiteSupremacy

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QUESTIONS

Question 1: How has the climate changed at your school since the killings of George Floyd and others and the national and international protests.

Question 2: Do you feel that all students feel a true sense of belonging in your community?

Question 3: Do you feel as though student's voices are heard by the adults in your school? How so? How could they be better (valued)?

Question 4: How do the inequities in society show up in your school? Has your school made sure that the inequities in society do not show up in your school?

Question 5: Do you feel that your history/social studies or other curriculum provides a full and accurate history of race in America?

Question 6: In your opinion, when racial micro and macro-aggressions occur in your school, are they responded to appropriately by teachers and administrators?

Question 7: What would you like to see change in the discussion or experience of race in your school?

Question 8: What are you proud of - with regard to your school's efforts to create an anti racist community.