



# Addressing Anti-Asian Racism: A Resource for Educators



Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario

**tdsb**

Toronto District School Board



## Cover Designs and Illustrations

The artwork on the cover as well as throughout this document are components from the specific work of Meera Sethi. She was inspired by Dr. David Suzuki's quote:

**“The human brain now holds the key to our future. We have to recall the image of the planet from outer space: a single entity in which air, water and continents are interconnected. That is our home.**

**Our identity includes our natural world, how we move through it, how we interact with it and how it sustains us.”**

**-David Suzuki**

Sethi wished to show a sense of connectedness between humans and everything else in the world: the wind, the oceans, the waterways, the fish and the trees. To invoke diverse Asian identities, she has used patterns, motifs from Asian communities and a maximalist sense of colour from Japanese poster design.

Meera Sethi is a Canadian contemporary artist whose practice encompasses a range of mediums to pose questions about the relationship between migration, diaspora, hybridity and belonging.

[meerasethi.com](http://meerasethi.com)

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# A message from the Toronto District School Board

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) is pleased to partner with ETFO in the creation of *Addressing Anti-Asian Racism: A Resource for Educators*. The TDSB has been a leading board in addressing equity, anti-racism and anti-oppression. Strengthened by its Equity Policy and the Multi-Year Strategic Plan goals, the TDSB has centred the work of equity and anti-oppression as foundational in our work as educators. The TDSB is committed to an inclusive curriculum, supporting student engagement and delivering effective educator professional learning to help all students succeed.

Anti-Asian racism is pervasive in our society. The current increase in racist attitudes and behaviors towards Asians and people of Asian descent due to the COVID-19 outbreak has negatively impacted the health, well-being and safety of educators, students, families and communities of Asian descent. This resource offers new learnings and innovative actions to ensure immediate changes in learning environments and partnerships with families and communities.

*Addressing Anti-Asian Racism: A Resource for Educators* provides a foundation for reflection, discussion and social justice action. It was created by a team of educators of Asian descent whose lived experiences, both personal and professional, knowledge and passion for social justice are reflected in its pages. It is our hope that this resource is shared widely and used to build capacity among staff and educators across Ontario to effectively understand, respond, intervene and act when issues of injustice, human rights, equity and oppression arise.

**Karen Murray**

Centrally Assigned Principal  
Equity, Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression  
and Teachers Leading and Learning

**Jacqueline Spence**

Superintendent  
Equity, Anti-Oppression and Early Years

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# A message from the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario

Over the last 20 years the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) has been a leader in education initiatives to address inequities in schools and our communities. At the foundation of our work is to build a better future by fighting for equity and social justice. The development of this resource, *Addressing Anti-Asian Racism: A Resource for Educators* is one example of a significant tool developed to support the professional learning of educators as they offer high-quality learning in public schools.

This timely and important resource aims to offer an urgent response to the global virus that has impacted and changed our world. The COVID-19 pandemic has given rise to violence and overt forms of discrimination that has impacted some of Ontario's racialized and marginalized communities. Anti-Asian violence has spiked since this outbreak in 2020 and has affected the mental health, well-being and safety of educators, students, families and our communities. The anti-Asian discrimination resurfacing today has deep historical, colonial roots in this country and this is an urgent time to ensure we end this troubled history of racism.

ETFO in partnership with the Toronto District School Board developed this resource to offer tools for educators to act against racism, to provide support to allies and all ETFO members and to work proactively to address the plague of racism that infects all our communities and schools. This innovative project demonstrates the strength of working together and is one way that our union will continue to work tirelessly to create concrete, systemic change through education and awareness. To do this work of combating racism we need your help and encourage you to not only read and use this resource but to share the tools with others to create change within their lives. Our collective actions can and will make a difference, but we must be resilient.

**Sharon O'Halloran**

Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario

General Secretary

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## About the writers



### Emily Chan

I was born in Toronto and raised by a community of Chinese Canadian activists. In high school, I taught Chinese Canadian

history to younger grades to fill the gaps in the curriculum. I've worked in the popular education, environmental justice and workers' rights movements in Toronto and New York City. An elementary teacher since 2007, I share my love and enthusiasm for social justice, collaboration and the transformative power of student voice.



### Stephanie Cheung

Born and raised in Toronto by parents from Hong Kong and Shanghai, I rarely felt that my identity was

reflected in my learning at school. I later moved to China for two years to teach high school ESL. I earned a Master's in Cultural Studies and Critical Theory from McMaster University and a Master's in Teaching from OISE studying Asian North American literature and culturally relevant teaching practices for English Language Learners. I have been an elementary educator since 2013. I hope this resource inspires educators to empower their students' identities and voices.



### Stella Kim

I am a first generation queer Korean Canadian. My parents arrived on Turtle Island or Canada in the late 1970s for reasons that I'm still growing to understand. Identity has always been a struggle for me, a journey of becoming. I am a secondary science and physics teacher who has worked in the TDSB for the past 15 years in various roles. The best part of teaching is listening to and working with students, problem solving with them on how to make schooling more effective, more inclusive and more meaningful.



## **Melvin Lowe**

I was born in Hong Kong and immigrated to Toronto at the age of 8. I am proud of my Chinese-Canadian Heritage and have

been involved with numerous Chinese community agencies within the Greater Toronto Area. I have been a Health and Physical Education teacher in the secondary level with the focus on the importance of physical activity as a social benefit to society. I have been involved with the well-being of Mental Health projects both within the board and in the community. This work has led to awareness of battling systemic racism and providing a voice for all.



## **Kien Luu**

I am a proud Canadian of Chinese ancestry, who grew up in Toronto, of an 11-member household. As refugees, my family

arrived in Canada during the boat people exodus from Vietnam. Canada is my home and in any possible way, I aspire to make a lasting contribution to our nation. It has been an honour to be part of this team of amazing educators to contribute to this resource. I hope this guide will make a lasting impact on changing the equity landscape and inclusion conversations that educators hold within classrooms, communities and continents.



## **Sangeeta McAuley**

As a South-Asian woman educated in Toronto, I maintain strong ties and connections to my family and birthplace in Mumbai, India. I have been an educator for 30 years, using my passion for social justice and anti-racism work to push boundaries with educators and students across the TDSB and Ontario. Acknowledging my complicity as a Brown person, I am honoured to serve students, families and communities as we work together to transform trajectories of the underserved.



## Jason To

Born in Hong Kong and immigrated to Toronto at the age of 5, I have grown to embrace my Chinese-Canadian identity.

I've been a secondary mathematics teacher for 12 years with a focus on equitable and inclusive mathematics education. I also work in my educational role, along with various community organizations, to raise awareness and to dismantle the practice of academic streaming as a form of systemic racism.



## Mary Tran

I am first generation, Vietnamese-Canadian. As refugees my family arrived in Canada, fleeing Vietnam by boat after the fall of

Saigon, a journey I am still learning about. I have been an elementary educator for seven years, working in the classroom and centrally. I commit to equitable and inclusive education for all, dismantling systems of oppression to provide a space that uses student identity and voice to drive practice.

## Development Team

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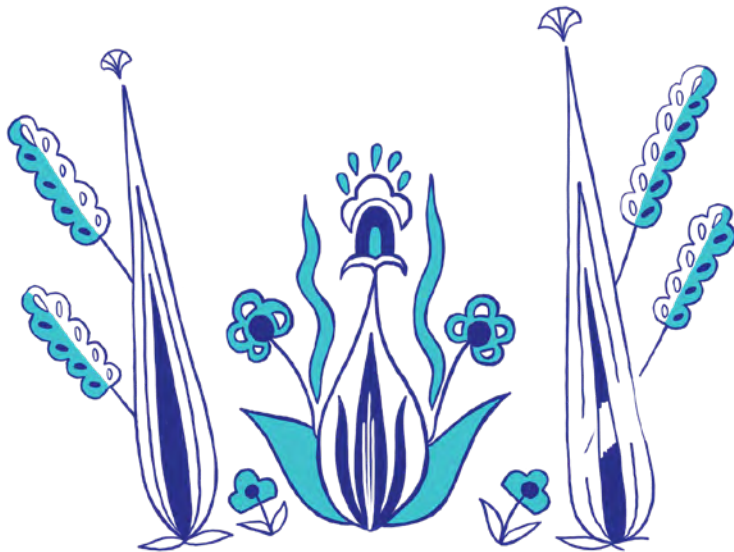


# 1

## Section One

### Setting the Context

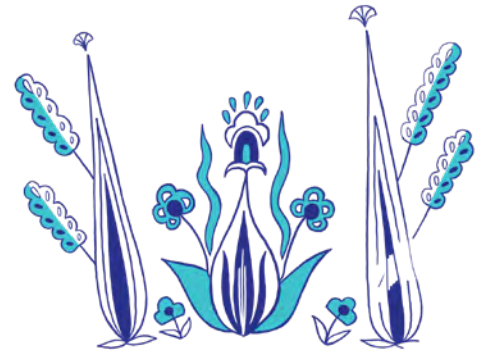
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# Section One

## Setting the Context

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## Document Introduction and Rationale

*Addressing Anti-Asian Racism* invites you into a courageous conversation about race. We, the writers, are Asian Canadian educators committed to a vision of a world free of racism. We have experienced discrimination and felt racism in our hearts, as students and educators.

Weaved throughout this document, are our voices, sharing the stories and personal experiences that reveal the complexities and impacts of anti-Asian racism. They may create discomfort. They may echo your own stories.

Together, grounded in the desire for personal growth, the ways we learn and teach inspires us to seek justice with each other, students, schools and communities. This resource document provides experiences, analyses and tools to address human rights issues with respect to anti-Asian racism, with an understanding that the world is ready for change.

This resource is long overdue. Over 47% of the TDSB student population self-identified as Asian ([TDSB, 2011](#)). Though this demographic looks different in schools across Ontario, the need to address racism in every school community is necessary. A growing majority of Canadians agree

Over  
47%



**of the TDSB student population self-identified as Asian**

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**As long as Asians have been in Canada, we have been confronting racism in everyday life in addition to discriminatory government policies and practices.**

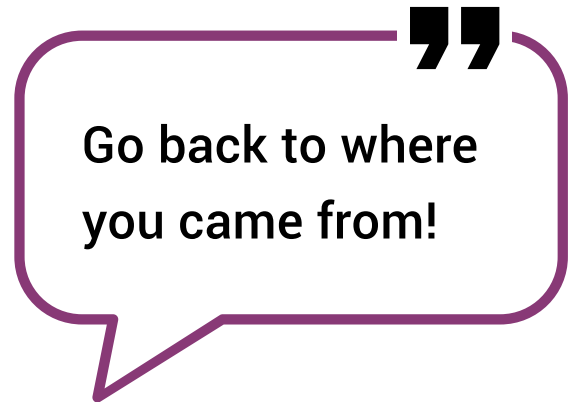
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that systemic racism is a serious problem ([Dangerfield, 2020](#)). The awareness about race and racism in Ontario and across Canada means that this is an unprecedented opportunity to take action in schools.

*Addressing Anti-Asian Racism* is an educational resource created by the TDSB in partnership with ETFO. The TDSB and ETFO strive for fairness, equity and inclusion as essential principles in schools and are integrated into all programs, operations and policies ([TDSB, 2014](#); [ETFO, 2020](#)).

The TDSB is committed to an inclusive curriculum, supporting student engagement and delivering effective teacher professional learning to help all students succeed. Further, ETFO's Anti-Racism Policy 5.0 defines the need for anti-racism to be addressed within system-wide education



policies, as well as strategies to implement anti-racist practices at the local schools level ([ETFO, 2011](#)). This resource provides a foundation for reflection, discussion and social justice action.

“Go back to where you came from!” Many Asian Canadians have heard this kind of racism. It is also a common assault that students hear in schoolyards or muttered under someone’s breath in the hallways. Historically and up to present day, Canadians of Asian ancestry are often treated as though our presence is a threat to the well-being of other Canadians. The current rise of anti-Asian hate crimes in the face of COVID-19 is a disturbing reality for many students, educators and community members in Toronto and globally ([Flanagan, 2020](#)). News reports document a surge in racist attacks on people of Asian descent (or presumed Asian ancestry), a phenomenon called the ‘shadow

pandemic' (Kwong, 2020; Lam, 2020). As long as Asians have been in Canada, we have been confronting racism in everyday life in addition to discriminatory government policies and practices.

Regardless of the demographics of a specific school population, anti-Asian racism is pervasive across Canadian society. Having a diverse school population alone does not shift fundamental power dynamics that enable racism to exist in society. Students and educators must understand what racism is, and how it looks and feels for racialized people whether your school community is diverse or homogenous (e.g., predominantly white or Asian populations).

We hope that you take elements of what you may learn here in this anti-oppressive education resource and find a way to practice anti-oppressive education in the best way possible. If you work in a majority white school, for example, you may begin with the examples and stories in Section Two to shift how we talk about “others”. In a homogenous racialized school community, use the guidelines in Section Three to re-examine bias, share

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## Having a diverse school population alone does not shift fundamental power dynamics that enable racism to exist in society.

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experiences and find ways to boost student leadership and nurture a sense of solidarity across difference.

We offer an education approach focused on human rights that includes an anti-oppressive framework and Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy as a starting point of best practices for all school communities.



## Addressing Anti-Asian Racism at-a-glance

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**Section Two** of this resource begins with a definition of “Asian,” a background on Asian Canadian Identities as well as a historical context of Asian Canadian experiences. We explain the Myth of the Model Minority and explore the fact that since we do not live in separation from other human rights issues, we explore Centring Indigeneity and Black Lives, as well as the impacts of white supremacy and privilege. The section ends with a discussion of anti-oppressive framework and Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy as they relate to anti-Asian racism and Asian Canadian identities.

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**Section Three** starts with an examination of building anti-oppressive learning environments that address advocacy strategies for educators and school administrators. Additionally, there are practical suggestions on working with parent and community groups. More strategies are offered to help educators and administrators get started on noticing, naming and interrupting anti-Asian oppression and xenophobia.

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**Section Four** offers resources for further learning. If you are interested in cultivating community connections with your school, then several community-based organizations are listed. If you are curious about learning more about anti-oppression, a list of ETFO curriculum resources, articles and workshops are provided. Many equity policies are also referenced in Section Four. Finally, we provide suggested academic articles for further exploration of anti-Asian racism discourse.

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# 2

## Section Two

### Conceptual Frameworks, Knowledge and Issues

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## Section Two

# Conceptual Frameworks, Knowledge and Issues

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## Asian Canadian Identities and Historical Context

Canadians with Asian ancestry are diverse, evolving and one of the largest communities of colour in Canada ([Statistics Canada, 2011](#)). The TDSB and ETFO's definitions of "Asian" are broad and inclusive, but is not limited to people who come from or whose ancestors come from the following locations ([TDSB, 2020](#); [ETFO, 2020](#)):

### **Central Asia:**

Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan.

### **East Asia:**

China, Hong Kong S.A.R., Japan, Mongolia, North Korea, South Korea, Taiwan.

### **South Asia:**

Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka.

### **Southeast Asia:**

Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam.

### **Western Asia:**

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Cyprus, Georgia, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.

Geographically, Asia is expansive and encompasses Turkey on the western boundary across to Japan on the east and Siberia to the north-east. However, racial identity cannot be based solely on geography, nationhood and citizenship. It becomes nuanced and complicated by other factors including colonized experiences, other constructed identities such as culture, gender identity, language, religion, spirituality, class and sexuality. It is worth noting the limitations of such discussions and what this resource attempts to do.

We attempt to explore and address a particular brand of racism that impacts bodies read as “Asian.” Anti-Asian racism has a particular scope that reads bodies of East Asian, South Asian and South East Asian identities. This is the focus of the work in this document. This is not at all to negate or dismiss the experiences of racism that communities from Central and Western Asia experience (in terms of the above information). It is to recognize that such discussions of racial oppression are more uniquely and appropriately taken up in focused spaces of anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, anti-Middle Eastern racism and anti-Arab discrimination, where discussions of stereotypes, discrimination and structural racism impacting certain community groups can be explored more intentionally.

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**“Where are you really from?”  
Like many Asian Canadians, I  
have been asked this question  
countless times.**

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“Where are you really from?” Like many Asian Canadians, I have been asked this question countless times. My Chinese Canadian identity was constantly challenged by friends, teachers and strangers while I was growing up. People refused to accept that I was born, raised and educated in Toronto. Yet, Asians have been on this land since the late 1700s, almost as long as European settlers ([Chan, 2014](#)). We are part of Canada’s complicated history. We’ve been indentured servants, labourers, skilled workers and live-in caregivers. Early Asian settlers included Chinese labourers who mined for gold, worked in laundries and built the railroad in the 1800s; Japanese workers helped to establish the fishing industry in the late 1800s; and in the 1900s, Sikhs and other Asians participated in the agriculture and forestry industries ([Wallace, 2018](#)).

Many Asian groups faced discrimination and hardship due to racist government policies that restricted immigration, housing, marriage, voting, education and other civil rights. These policies were enacted by the same white-settler lawmakers that legislated the forced removal, displacement and genocide of the Inuit, First Nations and Métis peoples from coast to coast to coast ([Lawrence and Dua, 2005](#)). This included the enslavement of both Indigenous and African Peoples. The sweat of exploited Asian labourers was on the backs of Indigenous Peoples whose right to land and resources were taken away ([Lawrence, 2020](#)). As Asians settled in Canada, the exclusion and racism that we experienced was and continues to be impacted by colonization.

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In the mid-1880s, thousands of mostly men made the treacherous journey to flee poverty and famine in China in search of Gold Mountain, a term that referred to gold mining in North America. What they found instead were hostile prospectors in desperate need of people to do the back-breaking labour of building a transcontinental railway.

Almost 20,000 Chinese workers completed the railway from coast to coast (Yee, 2010). When these labourers of Chinese descent were injured, they were left to die by their employers. They were often taken in, cared for and housed by Indigenous communities ([CCNC, 2019](#)).

In 1885, when the Canadian Pacific Railway was celebrated by settlers for uniting this land, not one Chinese labourer was present ([Marsh, 2017](#)). That is not even the full story. The ceremony literally railroaded the sovereignty rights of Indigenous nations who have been on this land known as Turtle Island since time immemorial. The treaties signed by the Confederation with Indigenous Peoples under duress meant that Indigenous Peoples were, and continue to be, subject to systems of assimilation, with the establishment of reserves, residential schools and the *Indian Act* ([Chan, 2017](#)).

**As soon as the railway was built, Asian workers were no longer wanted, and ads for a “white Canada” were created.**



As soon as the railway was built, Asian workers were no longer wanted, and ads for a “white Canada” were created that urged, “Japs keep moving” and “Chinese must go!,” while news headlines revealed racist acts such as, “Mob raids Hindus.” Several government policies were enacted to stop Asian immigration to Canada, including a “head tax,” a levy applied only to Chinese people that increased from \$50 to \$500 over 15 years. Such restrictive and racially targeted treatment was originally applied to Indigenous Peoples. While the railway was celebrated as a new frontier for settlers to travel, the government instituted a “pass system” where “Indian Agents” dictated and severely limited the movement of First Nations and Métis people living on reserves from the West Coast to the prairies ([CBC Radio, 2015](#)).

### **Mid-1880s**

Thousands of mostly men fled poverty and famine in China in search of Gold Mountain.

### **1885**

Almost 20,000 Chinese workers completed the Canadian Pacific Railway from coast to coast.

### **1885**

Government policies enacted to stop Asian immigration, including a “head tax” applied only to Chinese people.

### **1914**

Hundreds of Sikhs traveled on the Komagata Maru, were denied entry on the B.C. coast and met a violent, tragic end.

### **1922**

A year-long school strike in Vancouver’s Chinatown paved the way to dismantle school segregation.

### **1923**

Chinese Exclusion Act instituted on July 1 to stop Chinese people from coming to Canada.

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**The Chinese Exclusion Act was later instituted on July 1, 1923 to stop Chinese people from coming to Canada, effectively dividing families who had begun to settle here.**

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Moreover, in 1910, immigration officials passed laws that barred African Americans from entering Alberta and Saskatchewan ([Mundende, n.d.](#)). A significant challenge to colonial immigration laws that excluded South Asians from Canada took place in 1914, when hundreds of Sikhs who traveled on a ship, the Komagata Maru, were denied entry on the B.C. coast and met a violent, tragic end ([Johnston, 2016](#)). This historical moment is an impactful lesson on colonial relations between Britain and its colonies, India and Canada.

The *Chinese Exclusion Act* was later instituted on July 1, 1923 to stop Chinese

people from coming to Canada, effectively dividing families who had begun to settle here ([Lee, 2017](#)). For many, Canada Day became known as Humiliation Day. The political nature of discriminatory policies was especially evident during the Second World War when over 20,000 Japanese Canadians, including babies and children, were removed from their homes and sent to internment camps from 1941 to 1949 ([McRae, n.d.](#); [Omatsu and Price, 2020](#)).

Segregation laws excluded Indigenous, Chinese and Black students from schools, types of work and participation in colonial and settler society. As a result, neighbourhoods such as Chinatown, Little India and Little Tibet were established not as tourist destinations, but places of refuge to shop, do banking and socialize. Some of these exclusionary laws were overturned through grassroots protest and advocacy for equal rights; for example, a year-long school strike in Vancouver's Chinatown in 1922 paved the way to dismantle school segregation ([Stanley, 2011](#); [Robertson, 2016](#)).



## Section Two | Conceptual Frameworks, Knowledge and Issues

Discriminatory policies also impacted certain facets of Asian Canadian communities, for example Gay Asians Toronto grew out of a need for political advocacy to resist homophobic laws, and for social connection ([Boras et al, 2015](#)). Beginning in the 1980s, Gay Asians Toronto challenged homophobia both within Asian communities and pushed for inclusion within Toronto's majority white, mainstream gay community.

Racialized segregation laws still exist today. The Canada Caregiver Program was created in the 1990s to meet the demand for nannies, live-in caregivers and personal support workers. Tens of thousands of workers, a majority of whom are women from the Philippines, experience exploitation and human rights abuses by employers, as well as immigration restrictions ([Galerand et al, 2015](#)). A growing number of Filipinex domestic workers continue to advocate for stronger labour protections and equitable immigration laws, but it is hard to ignore the continued discriminatory legislation ([Caregivers, n.d.](#)).

These examples illustrate the systemic barriers that Asian Canadians experienced along with other racialized groups. They also

### 1941-1949

During the Second World War, over 20,000 Japanese Canadians were removed from their homes and sent to internment camps.

### 1970s

Changes to Canadian immigration legislation enabled thousands of Vietnamese refugees to escape war-ravaged Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

### 1980s

Gay Asians Toronto challenged homophobia and pushed for inclusion in Toronto's majority white, mainstream gay community.

### 1990s

Canada Caregiver Program created. Tens of thousands of workers, a majority of whom are women from the Philippines, who experience exploitation and human rights abuses by employers, as well as immigration restrictions.

reveal our shifting identities within Canadian society. With increased advocacy and cross-racial solidarity with Jewish Canadians, for example, changes to Canadian immigration legislation in the 1970s eventually meant that thousands of Vietnamese refugees were able to escape war-ravaged Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos and come to Canada due to humanitarian efforts ([CBC, 2017](#); [RCI, 2014](#)).

Our belonging as Canadians goes beyond our places of origin: we have broad identities with respect to gender expression, sexuality, class, skin colour, religion, immigration status and generational roots. We are also workers of all kinds who may be undocumented, in skill trades, arts, sports as well as professionals and investors. Asian Canadians express our many identities to cultivate a strong sense of community.

An initiative by local South Asians called 'Rewriting the Script' is an example. In 2001, a group of queer South Asian Torontonians produced a film to celebrate their lesbian, gay and transgendered identities. They opened up unique conversations within the South Asian community and among parents and elders about the difficulties of coming out

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**Our belonging as Canadians goes beyond our places of origin: we have broad identities with respect to gender expression, sexuality, class, skin colour, religion, immigration status and generational roots.**

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with their sexuality in terms of cultural expectations and cross-generational relationships ([Bhandari, 2015](#)). Community art projects like Rewriting the Script convey the multi-layered challenges that we face as people of Asian descent within our own communities, and with stereotypes and discrimination in Canadian society more broadly.

Asian Canadians have made significant contributions to every aspect of Canadian society, including in the dismantling of discriminatory government policies. When my parents immigrated to Toronto in the 1960s, they joined the momentum of community activism to establish social justice and civil rights organizations. For



generations, Canadians of Asian descent have strongly advocated to create a more equitable home for all racialized Canadians.

The government has since apologized and issued redress for some historical wrongs, such as the head tax and the Japanese internment ([CBC, 2016](#), [CRRF, n.d.](#)). Yet, the stereotypes of Asians as passive or as a “model minority” continue to silence our contributions, complex identities and solidarity with other racialized communities. Asian Canadian identities continue to evolve as we acknowledge our histories, fight injustice, honour diverse cultures and take responsibility in reconciliation.

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**For generations, Canadians of Asian descent have strongly advocated to create a more equitable home for all racialized Canadians.**

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**Questions to consider:**

1. What do you know and what have you learned about Asian Canadian contributions and challenges facing Asian Canadians?
2. How does new learning on Asian Canadians impact you as an educator?
3. Why is learning about Asian Canadians a complex and on-going task?

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## Myth of the Model Minority

What is the Model Minority Myth? It is a way to categorize a minority group, so they appear as though they have conformed to colonial values and assimilated into Canadian society so smoothly that we can hold them up as an example. I remember my first experience being pushed into the model minority category. My family had immigrated from South Asia and when my sister and I started attending school, the teachers told my parents that they should speak only English at home, so we could do better. My parents complied, eager for us to succeed and not realizing that we were giving up a part of our identities to become “good” Canadian students. The teachers would go on to say to other minority groups, “See that student? She’s only been in Canada for a short time, but her English is so good!”

The Model Minority Myth portrays Asians as “apolitical, quiet, uncomplaining—essentially embracing a don’t-rock-the-boat mindset. As ‘good’ people of color,

the model minority doesn’t get into trouble. They’re not criminals, they’re not violent protesters, they keep their heads down—and it works, supposedly.” ([Wu, n.d.](#))

But, Asians have not always been in the model minority group. This is a stark contrast to “the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1881, when an estimated 17,000 Chinese workers were brought to Canada and endured long working days, for around \$1 a day.” ([Kwong, 2016](#)) At that time, they were labelled as “forever foreigners,” dangerous and threatening because they were taking jobs from white Canadians, spreading the “yellow peril” and threatening the white supremacist way of living. Asians were seen as “the other” because they were different.

Are Asian people seen to be a model minority or forever foreigner? Or both? This dilemma is at the heart of the struggle



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**As a start, it is important to question our beliefs and practices as educators, so that we can understand the struggle Asian students may face.**

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Asian people face. If they live in the Model Minority Myth, they have to excel, maintain the illusion of success and appear as a monolithic group to fit in. But, if they remain as forever foreigners, they deny their identities, aligning with other minority groups and feeling perpetually on the outside of Canadian society. As a South-Asian, I often have to choose between being a model minority or a forever foreigner depending on which one will benefit me in the moment and it is a constant struggle.

We may not see it, but Asian students are feeling the effects of harmful stereotypes and racism and it can lead to mental health challenges and the need to access support in schools. According to the 2011-2012 Census Portraits (TDSB, 2015), “Southeast Asian students feel significantly less safe than others at school” and “students of Vietnamese descent were much less likely to have an adult(s) whom they could turn

to for personal support.” Also, “more South Asian students than others worried about their future, school work and family matters” (TDSB, 2015).

There is so much more to know about the experiences of Asian students that requires digging deeper into data, history and discourse with colleagues and families. As a start, it is important to question our beliefs and practices as educators, so that we can understand the struggle Asian students may face as a model minority or forever foreigner.



### **Questions to consider:**

1. Is it possible that I am perpetuating the Model Minority Myth?
2. How can I challenge racist beliefs and stereotypes of Asian peoples amongst students and colleagues?
3. How might I explore Asian histories in connection to curriculum?
4. Which texts might I use to support Asian students in developing positive self-images and a sense of belonging at school?

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## Centring Indigeneity and Black Lives

In this section, we explore the roots of the system that oppresses Asian people, Indigenous Peoples and Black people and uncover how these oppressions intertwine. It is important to note that although different forms of racism are deeply connected, anti-Black racism and anti-Indigenous racism have had specific historical and systemic implications that resulted in significantly different impacts on these groups. In both exploring and differentiating these issues, we hope it will become clear that centring and finding solidarity with Indigenous Peoples and Black lives is essential in the work of recognizing, confronting and disrupting anti-Asian racism.

My parents have first-hand experience with colonialism, disenfranchisement and racism. As children, both my parents lived under the Japanese Occupation. They were given Japanese names. It was illegal to speak Korean and engage in other Korean cultural practices. Those oppressive laws ended after World War II when Korea was divided into two distinct countries occupied by the United States and the Soviet Union. Neither of my parents recognized when

**“The Asian diasporas, Indigenous Peoples and Black communities are today named, but not afforded much value – we need to find solidarity with communities of colour.”**

- Kimberley Wong  
(Price, 2020)

they passed the Canadian citizenship test in the 1970s that they had new and profound responsibilities as settlers in Canada. They had been taught a different story, a story of peaceful nation building.

My parents came to Canada seeking peace and the opportunity to build a better life. They heard that Canada was a place of economic opportunity and social mobility for anyone who works hard. Everyone had the same rights, regardless of skin colour or religion. Canada was a multicultural and tolerant “mosaic” in comparison to the assimilationist “melting pot” of the United States. Canada’s national mythology creates and perpetuates the idea that



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racism is not part of Canada's past or present. This racial "amnesia" allows people to deny the existence of racism in Canada and it preserves the racist status quo ([Razack, 2004](#)). That racial amnesia extends to colonialism.

It is important to reiterate that when arriving in Canada, non-Indigenous immigrants, including Asian people, have become part of Canada's historic and ongoing project of colonialism. Though portrayed as "terra nullius" (Latin for "nobody's land") on European maps prior to First Contact, the rich land now known as Canada was home to an incredibly diverse collection of hundreds of ethnically, culturally and linguistically distinct groups. These Indigenous Peoples inhabited this land since time immemorial and continue to do so, resisting, surviving and thriving

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**When arriving in Canada, non-Indigenous immigrants, including Asian people, have become part of Canada's historic and ongoing project of colonialism.**

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**"Before we look at where we are today and where we are heading, it is important that we first look at how we arrived at this place... Among Indigenous Peoples in Canada and throughout the Americas, there are many variations, but there is one constant: the land was stolen from underneath us."**

- [Manuel & Derrickson, 2016, pp. 4](#)

despite the theft of their lands - the source of their wealth - and attempts to erase their existence.

While most Black people were enslaved, Asian people were indentured servants, artisans or labourers. ([Government of Canada, Asian heritage month, 2020](#)).

Black Canadian communities are diverse and longstanding, some of which stretch back to the beginning of settler colonialism in this country ([United Nations, 2017](#)). The enslavement of Africans existed in Canada from the 16th century until its abolition in 1834 ([Aladejebi, 2016](#); [United Nations, 2017](#)). Currently, Ontario is home to slightly

more than half of the country's total Black population— comprising immigrants, as well as those born in Canada ([Statistics Canada, 2020](#)). Many Black Canadians can trace their roots in this land across many generations to communities like Africville, while others identify their ethnic origins to countries like Jamaica, Nigeria, and Somalia ([Statistics Canada, 2020](#)).

Canada's practice of settler colonialism has resulted in systemic barriers that prevent people from fully participating in all parts of society. This is especially true for Black Ontarians of all backgrounds. Whether descendants of people who were enslaved, members of early Black Canadian communities, or those with immigrants experiences, Black people in Ontario live a shared present-day experience of anti-Black racism.

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Asian people began arriving independent of white settlers by the mid-1800s. Economically, they exploited natural resources such as gold while seeking to establish communities of their own. They often faced systematic and legislated anti-Asian racism ([Government of British Columbia, Chinese Legacy BC, 2017](#)). In doing so, Asian people began a history of complicity with and benefiting from a white colonial system built on a racial hierarchy while simultaneously experiencing oppression.

Asian and other non-white people can often feel like they are on the sidelines to discussions of anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism, discussions that began long before they arrived to Canada. My father in particular knows that racism is alive and well in Canada. Back in the days of our corner store, he would read *The Toronto Star*, *The Globe and Mail* and *The Toronto Sun* back-to-back each day. Today he watches the news endlessly. A Black man is shot during an interaction with police. A group of Indigenous Peoples have a standoff with the Canadian government around a pipeline. An Indigenous man is beaten after being pulled over by RCMP. The Special Investigations Unit is called after a Black Indigenous woman dies during a wellness check.

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**The anti-Asian racism this system generates is not the same as anti-Black or anti-Indigenous racism. Anti-Asian racism has its own unique sting that generates fear, humiliation, trepidation and anger.**

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There was little doubt in both my parents' minds that racism was alive and well in Canada. They had experienced enough anti-Asian racism in their time here not to believe otherwise. My parents see these events as connected because they know these events don't happen in a vacuum: they happen in a system. Audre Lorde wrote that "all oppression is connected" (1983). It is no coincidence that a system that has produced anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism also produces anti-Asian racism.

The anti-Asian racism this system generates is not the same as anti-Black or anti-Indigenous racism. Anti-Asian racism has

its own unique sting that generates fear, humiliation, trepidation and anger. We are successful, upwardly mobile examples of hyphenated Canadians until a pandemic breaks out and we become vectors of contagion. We are a "model minority" but a "forever foreigner." The specificity of anti-Asian racism accomplishes what Toni Morrison identified as "the very serious function" of racism: "distraction" (Herron, 2019). We are distracted from realizing how all oppressions are connected and how eliminating anti-Asian racism means pushing for sovereignty, healing and justice for the most marginalized among us. It is necessary to centre Indigeneity and Black lives as we engage in understanding anti-Asian racism.

To enrich students' knowledge and understanding of Canadian history, we must go beyond the curriculum to affirm and value Black and Indigenous Peoples' lives. As Canada and Canadians continue to deny the existence of racism as part of their colonial constructs, Indigenous, Black and Asian people continue to exist within a society that silences this part of their identity. As



educators, we often repeat the “feel-good” national stories of the Underground Railroad which portrays Canada as a haven for escaped slaves. Consider how we might hear an *Indigenous Land Acknowledgment* at the start of the school day along with *Oh Canada*; is that the extent of Indigenous discourse for the day? Is Asian history only relegated to the month of May? It is clear that the curriculum is not neutral. Whose stories are valued and whose stories are silenced is a reflection of who has power.

When racialized communities reclaim control of the narrative, they are able to fill in the gaps of how events have shaped and continue to reshape the formation of Canada. As a racialized educator, I understand the significance of this work and the impact it has on the well-being and success of racialized students and

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**To enrich students' knowledge and understanding of Canadian history, we must go beyond the curriculum to affirm and value Black and Indigenous Peoples lives.**

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educators. Looking at the history of schooling in Canada is just a microcosm of the social and institutional constructs of oppression and racism.

The Canadian education system has a long history of institutional policies and practices that have been used to oppress racialized communities. Two of these institutional practices are residential schools and racially segregated schools. Neither slavery nor racially segregated schools are just an “American thing;” Black children in Canada were forced into segregated schools. Asians also faced racial discrimination in schools and in some instances were fully excluded from attending. Residential schools have a long history in Canada.

While many Indigenous children and families were able to preserve their language and teachings in spite of the residential school system, the residential school system was aimed to destroy children’s traditions, culture and identity. These policies and practices have operated Eurocentrically, where the resulting oppression and silencing have often been framed as necessary and supportive.

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**To affirm and value Black lives, Indigenous Peoples lives and Asian lives we must accurately and authentically affirm their lived experiences and histories in classroom spaces.**

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To affirm and value Black lives, Indigenous Peoples lives and Asian lives we must accurately and authentically affirm their lived experiences and histories in classroom spaces. When we can centralize these narratives we can start to see the interconnectedness of oppressions that existed and continue to prevail in society and education and we can work toward true reconciliation. Addressing and confronting anti-Asian racism is connected to Black liberation and the fight for Indigenous Peoples rights.



### **Questions to consider:**

1. Are you a settler or First Nations, Métis or Inuit? From your position, what do you see as our responsibilities as settlers in the classroom to Indigenous Peoples?
2. How do you understand the necessary work of addressing Indigeneity and Black lives when confronting anti-Asian racism?
3. What national mythologies do students know? How might those mythologies silence diversity and the experiences of minority groups and marginalized people?
4. What actionable and sustainable steps could you take in classrooms or schools to centre Indigeneity and Black lives?
5. How are Asian communities in North America working in solidarity with Black and Indigenous Peoples? (some examples include: [Asians In Support of Wet'suwet'en](#), [Letters for Black Lives](#), [Asians 4 Black Lives - Toronto](#))

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## White Supremacy and Privilege

“White supremacy?” you marvel, flipping through this resource guide to this page. “What happened to multiculturalism?” Let me begin by a reflection on my experience with school-based multiculturalism. I loved lunchtime during Multicultural Day at school. Getting nods from the other kids complimenting the Korean barbeque made me feel proud enough to forget past, more painful interactions about race. “Your eyes are so small! How can you even see?” “Why is your nose so flat?” “Chinese names are made up by banging pots and pans: Chin! Ping! Chong!” When things went back to normal, the rapport would linger for a few days, then drift away, forgotten until next year. The other kids might have learned that galbi is delicious and what a hanbok was, but not much else.

Sharing differences through celebrations can look and feel good, but they ultimately bypass intentions towards racial equity (Gorski, 2019). Unspoken beliefs, stereotypes and practices about what is normal are not

**“You cannot dismantle what you cannot see. You cannot challenge what you do not understand.”**

- Layla F. Saad  
(Saad, 2020, pp. 38)

surfaced. Past and present economic and social power imbalances are ignored. To address anti-Asian racism, we need to first unveil why it exists.

Race has no scientific, biological basis (Kolbert, 2018). It is an idea we are taught by society. We learn how to recognize race based on physical characteristics and ancestry. If we met on the street, my eye shape, hair colour, hair texture and skin colour would tell you that I’m probably Asian. And I am, because I’m Korean. Unspoken beliefs, stereotypes and prejudices often lead to misconceptions



about race. One misconception is that Indigenous Peoples are identified as Asian. They are not, because Indigenous Peoples have lived in Canada since time immemorial. Though there is no genetic evidence for race, it remains a powerful shorthand that informs how we interact with each other, how we view the world and view ourselves. For example, think of the biases and stereotypes often associated with Asian identity.

Race also affects our ideas about Canadian culture. Though I am Korean, my family is white. We have had many conversations about race and culture over the years, from food and festivals to arguments about how bias and prejudice differs from racism. In some of our surprising first talks, my white stepson said, “I don’t have a culture, I’m white.” Though the association may be unconscious, in Canada our dominant cultural perspective is a white one.

White supremacy is an ideology based on the belief that white identity is the norm, standard and ideal. It does not refer to extreme hate groups or far right extremists. It is not about good and bad people. It is about the accumulation of social, cultural and institutional power that has and continues to advantage a group of people.

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## Historically and currently, power and privilege in Canada are distributed along racial and other socio-cultural lines.

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Power refers to the ability of a group to affect and influence other groups, the course of events or the allocation of resources. White supremacy is related to the idea of white privilege in that white privilege is the reward of white supremacy.

Privilege refers to the advantages an individual or group receives simply by virtue of where they were born, what they look like, and how their demographics happen to line up with dominant identities. It is not something you can earn. Privilege grants opportunities and advantages to some while limiting and disadvantaging others.

Historically and currently, power and privilege in Canada are distributed along racial and other socio-cultural lines. In Hollywood (Vary, 2020) and in Canadian media (Newman-Bremang, 2020), portrayals of Asian people are typically

constructed by white people who are both behind and in front of the camera. In Canada, in politics ([Grenier, 2020](#)), the judiciary ([Harris, 2019](#)), policing ([Marcoux, Nicholson, & Kubinec, 2016](#)), business ([Ravilojan, 2020](#)), medicine ([Kassam, 2017](#)), education ([Turner, 2014](#)) and the Sunshine List ([McLaughlin & Crawley, 2018](#)) reveals that influential positions are still predominantly and disproportionately held by white people compared to the communities they serve.

Simultaneously, Black and Indigenous Peoples face poorer outcomes in hospital care ([Amin, 2019](#)), Black households earn \$15,000 less than white households ([Slaughter & Singh, 2020](#)), and Indigenous Peoples are ten times more likely to

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**Though Canada has taken important steps to address and apologize for past, historic racist legislation and practices, Indigenous, Black and Asian groups have yet to achieve equality in Canadian society.**

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be shot by police than a white person ([Flanagan, 2020](#)). Within education, data from the TDSB reveals significantly diverse disparities in achievement and well-being for Black, Indigenous and Asian students through attendance, bullying, suspension and expulsion data. Clearly, there are stark divides in how groups experience Canada.

It can be difficult to confront data revealing broad racial inequities. It's worthwhile to remember that data does not reveal who does or doesn't work hard. It does not say that individual white people do not face adversity, or that individuals from minority groups cannot achieve success. It points to oppression, which is systemic. Though Canada has taken important steps to address and apologize for past, historic racist legislation and practices, Indigenous Peoples, Black and Asian groups have yet to achieve equality in Canadian society. This is the reality of the system that we are born into.

The status of women in Canada (and the US) can help us to understand how a group holding institutional power, men, can infuse a whole society with an ideology, patriarchy. In the fight for voting rights or suffrage, women did the hard work of organizing, rallying and lobbying. However, because men had sole legal authority, only men

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**Clearly, a system in which an identity group holds systemic power and privilege, the interests, perspectives and ideas of other groups are minimized, ignored and even dismissed.**

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could grant the right to vote. Historically, most doctors were men. In medicine, the male body was (and continues to be) the reference for health ([Ellenby, 2019](#)). Scientists and religious leaders, who were mostly male, used science ([Zuckerman, 2018](#)) and religion ([Crandall, 2012](#)) to prove and normalize male superiority. In schools, male teachers taught history from the perspective of men, and taught the ideas of other men.

Within this discussion there's an unspoken dimension: race. The history of Asian, Black and Indigenous women differs from this account, which is an implicitly white one. For example, Asian, First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Black women were not granted suffrage until after World War II, some 30 years after

white women. Clearly, a system in which an identity group holds systemic power and privilege, the interests, perspectives and ideas of other groups are minimized, ignored and even dismissed. Access to opportunities and resources are limited or blocked.

My parents refer sparingly to their past. I think growing up under the Japanese occupation, the Korean War and the division of the Koreas was traumatic. They focused firmly on the present, driven by visions of the future. I think it was impossible not to be inspired by the stories from the white missionaries and American GIs after the war who came to supply aid, save their souls and “keep the peace.” They firmly believed that in Canada, if you worked hard, you would succeed and passed on a feverous work ethic to my sister and I.

We were all so focussed on being accomplished, that we didn't dwell much on our specific challenges, including our experiences of racism or how they shaped us. There wasn't time to get into why my favorite toys growing up were my blonde and blue-eyed Barbie dolls, or why my sister abruptly decided she didn't like kimchi. Besides, the social rewards or privileges we received, especially compared to other minority groups, offered just enough

incentive for us to keep our heads down, frantically paddling our feet under the water.

Unlike Indigenous Peoples and Black people, Asian people consented to come and consented to participate in the project of Canada. Many, like my mother, aspired to be immigrants and compiled a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate her worthiness: letters from a sponsor, employers and reports from post-secondary institutions. This process, instituted in 1962, directly replaced Canada's overtly discriminatory policies against non-European and non-American immigrants ([Dirks, 2006](#)).

Banning Asian immigrants, and then lifting the ban to offer entry only to those with connections, resources, and particular skills would later inspire the sly "upgrading" of Asians from being a foreign "peril" to the "model minority" ([Chow, 2017](#)). This underhanded, uneasy compliment often slips by, bypassing important questions, such as: "What is 'model' behavior? Who is being compared here? Why?"

The ideology of white supremacy has positioned Asian identity in the murky middle of a racial hierarchy. The lateral violence and internalized oppression that being neither here nor there produces,

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## **The ideology of white supremacy has positioned Asian identity in the murky middle of a racial hierarchy.**

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upholds and perpetuates this hierarchy through notions of a white normality, distracting everyone from the power, privilege and oppression at play. Splintered and isolated, we turn on each other and on ourselves trying to get ahead. Challenging the stereotype that "submissiveness" and complicity are part of Asian culture isn't hard: there are many examples of modern-day protests against systemic injustices in countries including Hong Kong, China, South Korea, India.

In Canada, for generations, Asian Canadians have fought against discriminatory laws and racist practices. While standing up to an intangible, omnipresent ideology sounds like standing up to a ghost in a haunted house, we are not alone in our struggle. Our future is tied to Indigenous and Black communities, who are subjected to this racial hierarchy in ways far more punishing than we have ever known. We must seek liberation together.



### Questions to consider:

1. Think back to your childhood. How old were you when you became aware of your race and culture? How did this happen?
2. On a piece of paper, brainstorm as many responses to the following question as possible in two minutes: “I know racism is happening when...” Review your responses. This section makes a distinction between racism at the individual level and systemic or structural racism. How many of your responses are examples of racism at the individual level? How many are examples of structural racism? Do you have more examples of one than the other? Why do you think this is?
3. Have you heard the term white supremacy before? When? How does this discussion compare to what you’ve heard elsewhere?
4. This section presents data revealing divides in how different racial groups experience Canada. How did this make you feel? Why do you think you felt this way? What further questions do you have about this data and where can you find the answers?
5. What is a meritocracy? Can a society in which some groups are oppressed and some are not be described as a meritocracy? Why or why not?



## Terminology

### >> Institution, n.

Referring to institutions. Relating to large-scale and established customs, practices, laws and organizations that govern the political or social life of a society. Examples of institutions include: marriage, schooling, prisons, government, business, court, police.

### >> Internalized oppression, n.

Occurs when members of an oppressed or non-dominant social identity group accepts or affirms stereotypes, feelings, opinions, beliefs and views about their own population as a result of prolonged experiences with systemic oppression. These ideas can be negative or positive, inferior or superior, desirable or undesirable and are often unconsciously, subconsciously and involuntary.

### >> Lateral violence, n.

Displaced violence directed against one's peers rather than adversaries. This construct is one way of explaining minority-on-minority violence in developed nations. It is a cycle of abuse and its roots lie in factors such as: colonisation, oppression, intergenerational trauma and the ongoing experiences of racism and discrimination.

### >> Oppression, n.

Systemic social inequity reinforced by social institutions that is also embedded within individual consciousness. Results from institutional and systemic discrimination and personal prejudice limiting and restricting opportunities and resources. Oppression works to benefit dominant or privileged groups and disempowers or subordinates others.

**>> Power, n.**

The ability of a group to affect and influence others, the course of events or the allocation of resources.

**>> Privilege, n.**

Unearned access to resources, opportunities, benefits, advantages and rewards that are available only to some groups and denied to others as a result of social membership.

**>> Race, n.**

A socially constructed grouping of classifying people based on characteristics such as colour of skin, shape of eyes, hair texture and/ or facial features as well as ancestry.

**>> Racism, n.**

The belief that one group of people is superior to others. This can be experienced through individual acts or through institutional practices that treat people differently based on their colour or ethnicity.

**>> White privilege, n.**

Unearned access to resources, opportunities, benefits, advantages and rewards that are available only to white people by virtue of their skin colour.

**>> White supremacy, n.**

An ideology based on the belief that white identity is the norm, standard and ideal.

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## Anti-Oppressive Framework and Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy

If you start looking for it, you will see that oppression happens every day in schools. It can be as simple as how you pronounce a student's name. When I was in elementary school, I dreaded attendance time on the first day because I knew that when teachers would get to my name, they would stumble. They might try to pronounce it, but generally I had to do that for them and I always said it phonetically, rather than the way it should have been pronounced, just to avoid the embarrassment.

Think of that responsibility on a 5-year-old student. Should it be on them, because an adult does not want to take the time to learn how to say the name properly? When a student has to deny who they are to please someone in power, this is an oppressive measure.

Let's take a look at which students experience oppressive measures most often. Some examples include but are not limited to, students who are sent out to the hall to sit, students who are sent to the office, students who are streamed into other programs. Really, students who just don't fit into our vision of colonial classroom structures: mainly racialized and other marginalized students.

This theory about oppression also applies to families. Families who do not speak English, single-parent families, and families living in poverty. The deficit model of thinking is often targeted at these families: Why "can't" they just get it together and help their kids? Without realizing it, we are contributing to the narrative of underserved communities who have historically been marginalized and prohibited from reclaiming their voices.



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Many Asian students and families who do not fit into the “Model Minority Myth” (see Section 2) face barriers to success, such as “social exclusion from peers and teachers; lack of positive coping skills; and substance abuse, tied to stress” (Celis, 2015).

What can educators do to address the impact of racism and oppression in schools when there are feelings of discomfort and denial? This section is based on two human rights approaches in education: an anti-oppressive framework and Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy.

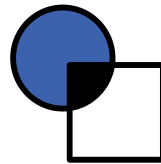
**An anti-oppressive framework in education is a way of thinking and practice focused on several key principles:**



Examining Biases



Challenging Power and Privilege



Recognizing Intersectionalities



Leveraging Marginalized Voices



Holding High Expectations



Critically Investigating Historical Context



Supporting Students' Mental Health and Well-Being



Mobilizing Students to Take Positive Social Action

## Using an anti-oppressive framework provides us with an opportunity to:

1



Liberate students and educators from oppression by challenging ideas, everyday interactions, institutional policies and internal (or personal) oppressions that exist both historically and in the present;

2



Demand self-awareness and critical thinking about our own assumptions and experiences;

3



Teach about systems of power and privilege;

4



Support marginalized communities to reclaim control of their narratives (history and experiences); and

5



Envision how we can live free from oppression.

As illustrated by the examples above, when we teach within an anti-oppressive framework, we understand that oppressive practices can go unnoticed (Kumashiro, 2009). There is much complexity when we unpack how oppression looks and feels with students every day. It can be uncomfortable and controversial when we reflect upon or draw attention to the ways that we, or students, experience oppression (Kumashiro, 2009). How can we commit to an anti-oppressive education practice? It's vital to have colleagues, mentors, friends and family that we can touch base with so that we are well-supported to have challenging conversations, talk about difficult topics with students and address oppression in classrooms and school communities.

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**How can we commit to an anti-oppressive education practice? It's vital to have colleagues, mentors, friends and family that we can touch base with so that we are well-supported...**

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### **Questions to consider:**

1. How do the ways that I teach contribute to oppression?
2. What does oppression look like with students? with families?
3. How can I develop more awareness about the impact of race and racism both in our own practice and with students' experiences?
4. How can I engage with the stories and experiences of students if I do not share these lived experiences?

Once we start to see teaching and learning within an anti-oppressive framework, every lesson, every interaction, every curriculum concept looks different and we start to question our teaching pedagogy. This is a good sign!

If we want to serve Asian students, our pedagogy can “utilize students’ culture as a vehicle for learning” (Ladson-Billings, 1995). This means, building on students’ lived experiences and a broad definition of

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culture to create a more culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy. We can engage Asian students by going beyond food and celebrations to their rich cultures that include values, life experiences, spiritual beliefs and more.

In classrooms and schools, this can translate into considering: What are some differences between a “multicultural approach” to pedagogy and engaging in Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy (CRRP)?

### Multicultural Approach and Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy

Multicultural Approach	CRRP
The goal is to share elements of different cultures.	The goal is to transform thinking and change trajectories.
Uses diversity on a superficial level (e.g., focus is on festivals, food, fun, folk).	Explores power and privilege to challenge oppressive measures.
The definition of culture is <b>monolithic</b> (rigid and unchanging).	The definition of culture is fluid and encompasses the intersection of social and personal identities.
Discussion topics support the status quo.	Discussion topics can elicit feelings of discomfort, guilt and vulnerability.
Assumes that students may have similar experiences within their cultures.	Builds on the <i>lived</i> experiences of students to motivate and differentiate. Understands that while categories may intersect for groups of students, they can experience culture differently.

(ETFO, 2019)

The multicultural approach is designed to celebrate and assumes that all Asian students have the same cultural identity, but as a South Asian I know this to be untrue. My lived experiences are very different from other South Asians, East Asians and Southeast Asians.

An example of the limitations of the multicultural approach can be seen during 'Heritage months.' Some questions to consider include: What is the value of Heritage months? Are we disrupting the narrative of Asians as a model minority or forever foreigner when we ask students to bring in their cultural food? Can we change the racism and oppressive measures they have experienced by making Chinese lanterns? It is becoming clear that these Heritage months are a way for us to check off that we have done something. We can then pat ourselves on the back and say, "We've done such a great job celebrating Asian heritage." But this toxic positivity means no real change in oppressive measures against Asian students have occurred. In fact, when educators engage in the multicultural approach, it can serve to validate stereotypes about Asian students and their families.

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**Critical consciousness is developed when we provide students with opportunities to challenge the status quo, to ask questions and to critique norms and beliefs.**

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If we look more closely at using CRRP, it is built on the three tenets described by Ladson-Billings (1995): high expectations, cultural competence and critical consciousness.

High expectations refers to setting high academic, behavioural and social standards for all students. In keeping the bar high for all Asian students, we send the message that all students can achieve success and work towards reducing the discrepancies that exist between different groups.

Cultural competence ensures that minority groups can value their own cultures while learning about the cultures of others. In



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this case, the educator is also a learner and recognizes that cultural expertise is diverse and lies in the lived experiences of students and their families. When we work to understand what makes each Asian student unique, they can celebrate who they are and the many contributions Asian people have made to Canada: “We can’t tell the history of Toronto, even Canada, without telling the stories of the Chinese Canadian. We have to tell their stories illustrating their daily living, community spirit, struggles, successes, failures, dreams and for the younger generation, to learn about the history of their ancestors and what brought them to where they are.” (Kwong, 2016).

Critical consciousness is developed when we provide students with opportunities to challenge the status quo, to ask questions and to critique norms and beliefs. For example, if Asian students are taught about the concepts of model minority and forever foreigner, they can analyze the barriers that may be preventing them from feeling they belong.

Engaging in CRRP is hard work. It means creating learning opportunities that can change the trajectories for Asian students. It means focusing on building critical consciousness, questioning inequities and examining our own privileges to address unconscious biases we may have about Asian people.

Where can we start? As educators, we need to do research about Asian history and the contributions Asian people have made and then consider how to bring this history into classrooms. Using rich texts to begin discussions of identity, inviting family members to come and share their life stories, engaging students in focus groups to discuss fairness, racism and how they see themselves are all entry points to CRRP with an anti-oppressive framework.



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## Intersectional Identities and Allyship

As an Asian, straight, able-bodied, middle-class, cisgender woman, my Asian identity has always been the part of me that I have had to negotiate most often. In my earliest years of school, I was one of the only Asian students in my class, I spoke English with my siblings at home, and Vietnamese with my parents, but for some reason, I was placed in an ESL class. I didn't know what it was at the time; I just drew pictures, coloured and complied. I wanted to take part in everything my school friends were doing; things that were not part of my Vietnamese culture. Sleepovers? Playdates? The more my parents said no, the more I resented them. I didn't want to be Vietnamese, I wanted to be Canadian. After all, I was born here. The more I wanted to be like my peers the more I began masking parts of my own identity to fit in. I even dropped out of Vietnamese school, despite spending my Saturdays with teachers and other children who looked like me. From my earliest years, I began to form my own internalized racial oppression, erasing parts of me to locate myself in a system built around racial hierarchies, power and privilege.

**“Cultural patterns of oppression are not only interrelated but are bound together and influenced by the intersectional systems of society. Examples of this include race, gender, class, ability and ethnicity.”**

- Kimberlé Crenshaw

Race is not the only qualifiable identity in our society. The intersectionalities of race, gender, class, sexuality and a myriad of other identities are complex, each assigned within a different hierarchy system. The constructs and complexities of our multiple identities are pivotal in understanding how we interact with the world and cannot be viewed independently, or what legal scholar and civil rights activist Kimberlé Crenshaw defines as “single axis framework” (Crenshaw, 1989). The idea that these structures of identity are monolithic upholds the oppression of marginalized groups and dismisses the different forms of discrimination that overlap and silence

“Our skin can be an incredible source of pride and power, but it is equally a source of unbearable pain, frustration, and -- in our weakest moments -- shame.

- Viet N. Trinh (Trinh, 2015)

voices. I cannot identify as just a woman without my Asian identity. These are not mutually exclusive. Depending on place and time; one part of my identity might afford me some privilege, while another will keep me on the margins of society.

However, the barrier here is not being Asian or a woman. The barriers exist at the socio-structural level in which these social categories intertwine; racism, patriarchy, heterosexism, sexism, classism, etc., or in short what Brandon Patterson (2015) describes as, “a system that favors being white, male, straight and cisgender.” A system that has historically oppressed, and exploited social categories to dehumanize marginalized groups, to maintain the dominance of the most “favorable” groups. My Asian experience, and the self-shame I

harbored is not unique, Trieu & Lee studied cases of internalized racial oppression among Asian Americans who all shared similar positions of inferiority, self-doubt and self-hate. This racialization and discrimination is deeply rooted, and in the current state of a pandemic; lateral violence and anti-Asian sentiments have only escalated.

Being an Asian Canadian sometimes feels like a paradox, I am connected to the historical oppression of Asian communities, while my Canadian identity affords me privileges, or at least it should. My visible identity would tell you, I’m Asian not Vietnamese -- just Asian. Since the spread of COVID-19, many Chinese citizens have experienced discrimination, or anyone who “looks” Chinese, my Asianness fits this

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**The idea that these structures of identity are monolithic upholds the oppression of marginalized groups and dismisses the different forms of discrimination that overlap and silence voices.**

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**Asians have been victims, perpetrators, and participants in a system structured on power and privilege, trying to assimilate in a dominant culture...**

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description. Sinophobia or anti-Chinese is a fear or dislike of China, and everything related to it. These sentiments are nothing new, they have been embedded into society from policy and practices of the past to the plights of SARS and now COVID-19.

As Asians, the duality of fearing for our health and well-being while confronting the stigma of a disease is our lived reality. The problem stems from a disease being racialized; fear-mongering quickly shifted the social location of Asians from being the “model minority” to a “yellow peril” (Lee, 2020) thereby, legitimizing hate crimes targeted at the Asian community globally. The impact, Asians are seen as a homogenous group; creating tensions within Asian communities around the world, affecting “intragroup relationships” (Trieu & Lee, 2017, p. 71).

Asians have been victims, perpetrators, and participants in a system structured on power and privilege, trying to assimilate in a dominant culture, some of us have used “defensive othering” (Trieu & Lee 2017, p. 70) to disassociate from other Asians. The anti-Asian, anti-Chinese, xenophobic rhetorics from the past reemerge through the stereotypes, discrimination and racial tensions of the present. During this critical time in society, we need to consider how actions perpetuate and give permission to spread false narratives. It is an opportunity for marginalized groups to come together in solidarity to dismantle the hierarchies that have been historically established.

”

**“If you have come here to help me you are wasting your time, but if you have come because your liberation is bound with mine, then let us work together.”**

- Lila Watson, 1985 United Nations Decade for Women Conference in Nairobi

How can we incorporate intersectionality in practice to address the systemic discrimination that impacts individuals and marginalized groups? Intersectional identities are complex aspects of identity. Barriers to opportunity are often created, which can be addressed through anti-oppressive work and allyship. Anti-oppressive work first requires awareness and acknowledgment of all marginalized groups. It also calls on those who identify with dominant groups to elevate the voices of those most marginalized. This is the crux of allyship.

If any part of your identity has ever been disenfranchised, you might agree that there is a need for all marginalized communities to join in solidarity and social action against all forms of injustice. By understanding the historical oppressions; intrapersonal and institutional, and recognizing how they manifest in contemporary society, we can begin to understand the action needed to change the trajectory of the history of marginalized groups. By considering the intersectional identities of marginalized groups, we can begin to work towards liberating all groups of people.



### Questions to consider:

1. What role does my identity play in schools and in the classroom? Consider the positionality of these identities amongst colleagues and students.
2. What skills and capacities do I have, and which ones do I need support to build on to challenge assumptions and biases?
3. How can we encourage students to explore aspects of their identity and value the voices of those historically marginalized?
4. What opportunities can I present to students that validate the way they see the world and how the world sees them?
5. What do allyship and solidarity look, sound and feel like amongst staff members, staff and students, school and community?

## Terminology

### >> Intersectionality, n.

The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage; a theoretical approach based on such a premise. (Oxford Dictionary)

### >> Lateral violence, n.

Displaced violence directed against one's peers rather than adversaries. This construct is one way of explaining minority-on-minority violence in developed nations. It is a cycle of abuse and its roots lie in factors such as: colonisation, oppression, intergenerational trauma and the ongoing experiences of racism and discrimination. ([CRRF Glossary of Terms, 2015](#))

### >> Sinophobia, n.

1. a fear or dislike of China, or Chinese people, their language or culture
2. a fear of goods made in China or goods labelled as made in China (Collins English Dictionary)

### >> Xenophobic, adj.

Having or showing a dislike of or prejudice against people from other countries. (Oxford Dictionary)

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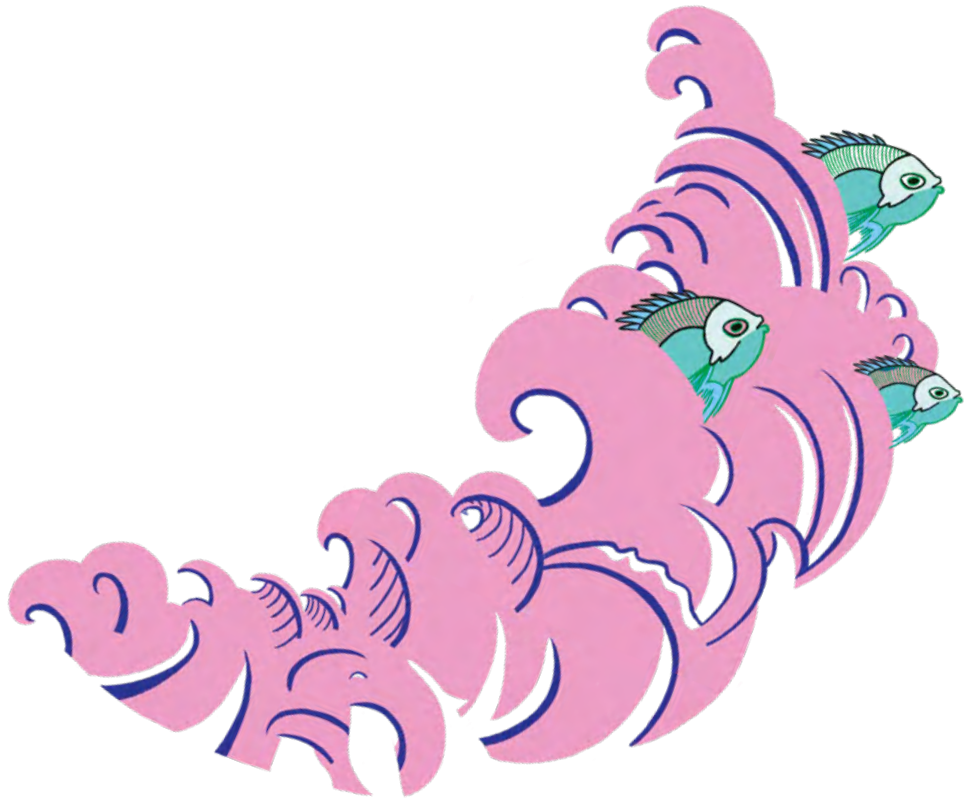


# 3

## Section Three

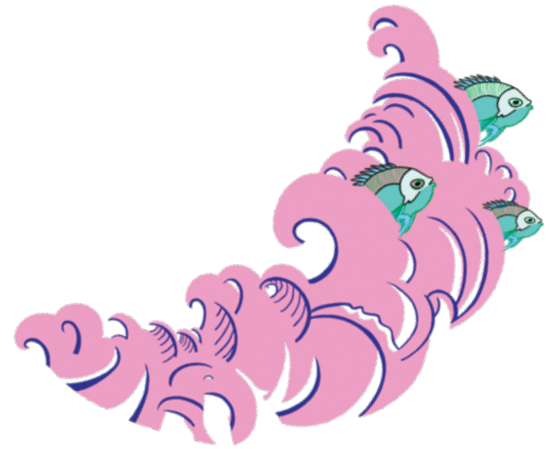
### School Leaders' and Educators' Toolkit

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# Section Three

## School Leaders' and Educators' Toolkit



## Building Anti-Oppressive Learning Environments

In this section we address the question, *How can educators and administrators build anti-oppressive learning environments in their schools?* We focus on eight guiding principles and provide examples, experiences and best practices for each.

### Educators

#### 1 Examining Biases

In elementary school my teacher called my parents in for a meeting to recommend that I receive ESL support because I didn't say very much in class. Perplexed by her suggestion, my parents clarified that I was born and raised in Toronto and that my first language is English. She was surprised. My teacher had assumed based on my

Chinese identity that I was a non-native English speaker. Her assumption stemmed from the stereotype of Asians as "forever foreign." We all have implicit biases that inform our beliefs and actions. Our task as educators is to vigilantly examine our assumptions by reflecting on questions such as: *Why do I feel or think this way? Are my beliefs informed by evidence or based on assumptions? Where do these assumptions come from?* "Perpetual foreigner," "model minority," Asian boys as "weak," Asian girls

as “passive.” How might these historically entrenched and racist stereotypes be informing my practice? Most importantly, *What am I going to do to change that?* When we see our students as individuals as opposed to monolithic groups, we start to unlearn problematic associations. Examining our biases and microaggressions often entails a degree of discomfort. But this is usually a good sign that the work we are doing is anti-oppressive.

## 2 Challenging Power and Privilege

An anti-oppressive educator continually examines their own power and privilege and teaches their students to do the same. *What is power? What is privilege? Who has it and who does not? How can we make things more fair and equitable?* Consider these questions regularly in your decision making and interactions with students and families. Work with your students to define these terms and embed these questions in all areas of learning. At the primary level, I engaged students in inquiries about, “Power on the Playground” and “Why is it easier for you than me?” to uncover concepts of privilege. There will be times where your power and privilege may cloud your judgement. It is important to model vulnerability for your students and say,

“I made a mistake,” “I’m sorry,” “Here’s how I will do better.” When we hold ourselves accountable, we empower students to engage in difficult conversations and question power systems.

## 3 Recognizing Intersectionalities

Intersectionality is crucial for destabilizing assumptions of “Asian-ness” as monolithic. We know that “Asian” encompasses diverse cultural and ethnic identities, and it alone does not account for differences of class, gender, sexuality and ability. It is important to teach students about class, gender, sexuality, and ability in order to help them understand that identity is complex and fluid. One essential resource is trans author Vivek Shraya’s, *The Boy & the Bindi*, about a young boy who wants to wear a bindi even though it is typically worn by women in South Asian communities. The book disrupts normative representations of culture and gender and teaches children to take pride in their unique identities. When exploring books about intersectional identities with primary students, try to include prompts such as: *What shade is your skin? Or, How are families represented in this story?* An anti-oppressive educator ensures that intersectional identities are respected and reflected in the learning process.

#### 4 Leveraging Marginalized Voices

The 2011-12 TDSB Census Portraits show that East and Southeast Asian students reported feeling “less comfortable participating, answering questions, and speaking up in class” than their peers ([Yau et al., 2015a, pp. 2](#); [Yau et al., 2015c, pp. 2](#)). This data illustrates the absence of East and Southeast Asian student voices in our schools. It suggests that we have not created the necessary conditions for students to feel safe to participate. Students need to see themselves reflected in their learning. Use resources from diverse Asian perspectives to initiate culturally relevant conversations. I talk about my experiences as a second-generation Chinese Canadian, as well as my encounters with racism, to encourage students to share their own stories. Participation can be challenging for English Language Learners. Provide them with diverse opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and connect to their own identities. These efforts should be ongoing and not relegated to cultural holidays. Do not assume that because your students are not speaking up, they have nothing to say. It is crucial to foster an environment where they feel empowered to speak and where their voices are heard.

#### 5 Holding High Expectations

Anti-oppressive educators have high expectations for all students. The tendency, however, is to focus on academic achievement. High expectations must encompass all areas of growth, including leadership, creativity and risk-taking. It is easy for us to assume that many of our Asian students do not need our support because of their academic success. But despite performing as well as or better than their peers in academic achievement, East and Southeast Asian students reported feeling less confident in most academic abilities ([Yau et al., 2015a, pp. 6](#); [Yau et al., 2015c, pp. 6](#)). Holding high expectations for Asian students includes believing that they can be leaders, performers, artists, and athletes. To help strengthen these skills, encourage your students to become more involved in school activities. Do not confuse perfectionism with high expectations. Instead, let’s teach our students to embrace mistakes as an essential part of learning and success.



## 6 Critically Investigating Historical Context

When we teach diverse histories, our students develop an understanding of who they are and why they matter. We also challenge dominant narratives of white supremacy that teach children to equate “Canadian-ness” with “whiteness.”

At the primary level, have students investigate their own family histories and explore Asian communities (e.g., Little India, Little Tibet, Koreatown). Encourage students to ask questions: *Who lives here? What makes this place special or important?*

At the junior level, have students learn about Asian Canadian politicians, activists and community organizers, and invite them into your classrooms. At the intermediate level, give voice to marginalized Asian histories by having students learn about the Komagata Maru incident (1914), the *Chinese Exclusion Act* (1923-1947) and the Japanese internment (1941-1949).

Challenge your students to critically analyze both the positive representations of national goodwill (like Canada’s response to the 1970’s Vietnamese refugee crisis) and racist power structures that persist today (like

the lack of protections for Filipinex migrant workers). By confronting Canada’s racist history and treatment of Asian communities, we dispel the myth of an infallible Canadian multiculturalism in our fight for racial justice.

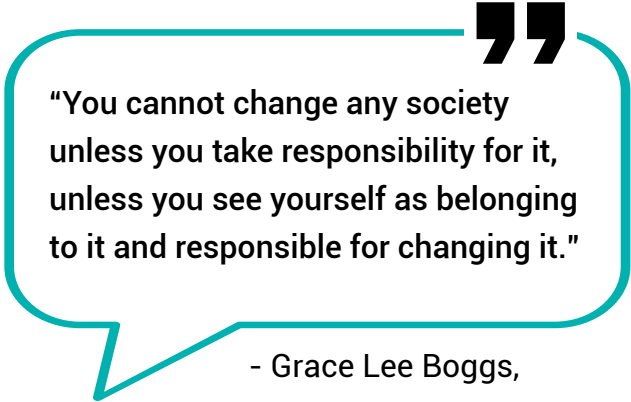
## 7 Supporting Students’ Mental Health and Well-being

According to 2011-12 TDSB Census Portraits, many East and Southeast Asian students and some of South Asian descent felt that they did not have adults at school they could turn to for help (Yau et al., 2015a, pp. 3; Yau et al., 2015b, pp. 3; Yau et al., 2015c, pp. 3). Students of East Asian and Vietnamese descent were less likely to report feeling positively about themselves or their futures. Many of these students experienced significant anxiety, loneliness, and low self-confidence (Yau et al., 2015a, pp. 5; Yau et al., 2015c, pp. 5). The stereotype of the quiet Asian student may make us dangerously ignorant of those who are suffering silently and alone.

To support mental health, we can make time to connect with students and families. We can validate students’ feelings and teach healthy coping strategies. Talking about race and racism is an important part of identity building and healing. By prioritizing

mental health, we establish safety and trust and we create a culture of compassion and belonging.

## 8 Mobilizing Students to Take Positive Social Action



“You cannot change any society unless you take responsibility for it, unless you see yourself as belonging to it and responsible for changing it.”

- Grace Lee Boggs,  
Interview: Revolution as  
a New Beginning

It is not enough to just talk about the existence of racial injustice. After establishing the historical and systemic basis for these inequalities, the next question is: *What are you going to do about it?* Social action is fundamental to anti-oppressive teaching and the goal should always be to create change. To do so, ask your students: *What really matters to you? Where do you want to see change? How can we go about achieving that?* Connect with community groups for inspiration and assistance and consider programs that promote civic engagement. Girls'

Government is a program that engages Grade 8 girls in public policy and issues that are relevant to their communities.

Remember, students are never too young to make change. In one school, Kindergarten and Grade 1 students wrote letters to the principal asking for age-appropriate play equipment because they were too small to use the playground. For students' actions to be meaningful, the social and political issues they engage with need to stem from their own values and insights.

## School Administrators

### 1 Examining Biases

One of the most difficult yet critical responsibilities of a school administrator is confronting biases and microaggressions held by the educators they lead. For example, contrary to the stereotype about “wealthy Asian families,” TDSB data shows that most Asian students come from lower income groups (Yau et al., 2015a, pp. 1). This stereotype may cause educators to ignore issues of access to resources for Asian students. An anti-oppressive administrator engages in brave conversations with other adults about such biases, microaggressions and -isms while maintaining positive relationships. They

make clear that we all hold biases that need to be pointed out, not as a challenge to one's character but as a moment for reflection. An administrator, however, is also willing to have their biases uncovered by others. Even the most "woke" school leaders are susceptible to falling into stereotypes and can demonstrate a willingness to listen and model learning for others.

## 2 Challenging Power and Privilege

An anti-oppressive administrator tackles inequitable systems and processes head on. They examine which students get included and excluded in programming, whose voices are more heard during staff meetings, which educators receive leadership opportunities, and through which processes students and families become underserved. It is also important for administrators to model how to recognize their own power and privilege. One impactful leadership move to foster a culture of (un)learning is to demonstrate vulnerability. As the lead learner in a school, an administrator articulates how their social identities shape their thinking and show by example how to be challenged, ask questions, accept responsibility for failures and make changes to professional practice in response to new learning.

## 3 Recognizing Intersectionalities

An anti-oppressive administrator understands that staff and students' identities are an amalgam of sexual orientation, gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, etc., where various intersectionalities lead to different lived realities, privileges and barriers. For instance, queer South Asian women in Toronto face racism within the white-dominated 2SLGBTQ+ community for not conforming to white-centric notions of queer women ([Patel, 2019](#)). Understanding dynamics such as these can assist administrators to respond to students' needs, as well as supporting parents' understanding of schools' responsibility to uphold human rights and inclusive learning environments. A good start to uncover intersectionalities is through discussions with community, parents and students. Which aspects of their identities make them feel included/excluded in the school community? Is the school experience different for Canadian-born vs. immigrant Asian students? If so, how might that be captured in school improvement planning?

## 4 Leveraging Marginalized Voices

An anti-oppressive school leader makes deliberate efforts to seek out voices from underrepresented groups. When

developing a school improvement plan, invite community members from particular racial, ethnic or cultural backgrounds to share unique insights as to why some groups of students are struggling. Analyzing achievement, well-being and demographic data provides additional layers of information. An equity-centred administrator also uses the students' and educators' identities as assets to develop a vibrant community. Instead of putting up traditional decals only during Asian Heritage Month, why not have a dedicated wall for Asian students to share modern depictions of their family traditions? How about supporting staff to differentiate social studies topics that reflect students' identities? Creating a space where everyone sees themselves reflected and valued is a hallmark of an anti-oppressive administrator.

### **5 Holding High Expectations**

Holding high expectations for staff as an anti-oppressive administrator means to deeply engage them in school improvement plans to ensure success for underserved students. While a culture of accountability is needed, that comes not from heavy-handedness but rather from developing a culture of focused and iterative learning, collaboration, vulnerability, measuring desired outcomes and constructive two-way feedback. Empower racialized teachers

that reflect the underserved students in the community to take on co-leadership roles. This is especially important for tackling anti-Asian racism in schools, as teachers of Asian descent bring unique perspectives and are anecdotally and quantitatively underrepresented in both formal and informal educational leadership positions.

### **6 Critically Investigating Historical Context**

System policies and practices in education are rooted in historical contexts that warrant examination through a critical equity framework. In the TDSB, South and Southeast Asians are underrepresented in terms of receiving a gifted exceptionalism in elementary school ([Brown et al., 2017, pp. 4](#)). Also, research has uncovered that, when holding achievement constant, the learning skills of racialized students are judged to be worse compared to their white peers ([Parekh et al., 2018](#)), which has implications for future access to school programming. Guiding educators to interrogate biases and microaggressions rooted in historically white normality and replacing them with culturally responsive classroom norms will allow students to be seen as capable learners and feel valued in their learning spaces.



## 7 Supporting Students' Mental Health and Well-being

East and Southeast Asian students have some of the lowest reported levels of emotional well-being in the TDSB (Toronto District School Board, 2018, pp. 36). While parents and educators play a role in supporting their mental health, these students report having less positive relationships with their parents. East Asian students with non-Canadian-born parents and Vietnamese students are less likely to have a school adult they can turn to for support, compared to other ethnoracial groups (Yau et al., 2015a; Yau et al., 2015c).

An anti-oppressive administrator supports Asian students and their families to develop positive self-images and if necessary, connects them to culturally relevant professional services such as the Hong Fook Mental Health Association. They also ensure staff members make caring connections with Asian students and provide strategies to address racism, as they are far less likely to speak up than other racialized students (Yau et al., 2015a). Finally, an anti-oppressive administrator monitors their efforts by gathering information through formal and informal means, such as interviews, focus groups and surveys to assess the effectiveness of mental health supports.

## 8 Mobilizing Students to Take Positive Social Action

True anti-racism education involves an aspect of social action driven by students. An anti-oppressive administrator sets an expectation that all students have opportunities to explore and act on issues of discrimination, including anti-Asian racism.

For example, they can support this work by purchasing the necessary resources and building staff capacity to facilitate age-appropriate inquiry-based learning opportunities that address various forms of discrimination through professional learning, collaborative planning and team teaching. They can provide a chance to celebrate the anti-racist work of students and staff and share how much they value this type of learning. Establishing a Principal's Human Rights Award and holding a community event to showcase students' positive social contributions could signal to students both the importance of learning about social justice and the value it holds in the school community. Finally, students' social activism projects can be intentionally geared towards informing equity-based aspects of the school improvement plan as they relate to student well-being or achievement.

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# Working with Parent and Community Groups

## Parents

Anti-oppressive administrators and educators strive to prioritize authentic partnerships with parents and families. TDSB census data from 2011-12 shows that East and Southeast Asian parents were much less likely to communicate with teachers or attend school meetings and events (Yau et al., 2015a, pp. 4; Yau et al., 2015c, pp. 4). It is necessary for us to address language and cultural barriers to foster greater parent engagement. We can survey families to find out their preferred means of communication; seek support from ESL teachers, TDSB translation services and community groups; provide translations, where possible, for newsletters and emails; organize events for the Asian communities most represented in our schools so that teachers, students, and parents can connect; and ensure that our school councils are reflective of our school population. Remember that a lack of involvement does not mean a lack of interest.

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**Historically, we know that white supremacy has strategically used the Asian “Model Minority Myth” to further oppress Black and Brown communities.**

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In addition, we also have a responsibility to help address the lateral racism that exists between racialized communities. Racism and colourism exist within Asian communities both overseas and here in Canada. Historically, we know that white supremacy has strategically used the Asian “Model Minority Myth” to further oppress Black and Brown communities. For instance, some Asian families may be resistant to talking about anti-Black racism and may hesitate to decentre their own lived experiences with racism. In these instances, it is important to seek support from allies within Asian communities and other racialized groups whether they be colleagues, parents or

community members. By working with these individuals, we can determine ways of educating families about lateral racism. This might mean bringing in guest speakers for a parent event or sharing anti-racism resources in their first language. Solidarity with parents and between racialized groups is essential for building anti-oppressive communities.

## Community Groups

Before engaging community members to be part of the classroom learning, consider these questions: Which aspects of curriculum can be enhanced by community perspectives? Who are not historically invited to participate in classroom learning? Do I want to focus on cultural exploration or to promote civic engagement? What are the end goals of the community partnership? Having these and other questions answered will ensure that community involvement is authentic and meaningful for everyone.

Welcoming community visitors takes preparation to make the most of the experience. Educators can co-construct expectations for the visit with students in advance to foster a safe and respectful space for all visitors. For instance, students may need to know the appropriate cultural practices for addressing elders or receiving

gifts and tokens of the particular Asian community they are working with. Educators can also ensure that students have all the necessary background information for the visit to understand the purpose of the experience. The community visitors would also benefit from being prepared prior to their visit. Share with them students' interests, questions and other pertinent information so they can be more targeted with meeting the learners' needs.

During the visit, classroom educators can review any pre-learning with students and be ready and willing to support the visitor with maintaining students' attention, learning new vocabulary and assisting students with individual learning needs. Educators can also prompt students to relate the learning back to their own identities and critically consider any implications as they relate to notions of power and privilege.

Following the experience, give students an opportunity to critically demonstrate their learning and reflections. If the community group is running campaigns or taking political action, see what roles students can play to put their learning to practice. Finally, find ways to share the group's learning with the broader school community through posters, a class play, or a podcast to summarize the big ideas.

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## Addressing Lateral Violence and Supporting Allyship

As long as we who are fighting oppression continue to play the game of competition with one another, all forms of oppression will continue to exist. No one oppression can be ended without all ending, and this can only happen when we succeed in replacing the assumptions of competition, hierarchy, and separation with cooperation, an understanding that each being has value beyond measure, and the knowledge that we cannot harm anyone or anything without harming ourselves.

- Anne Bishop (Bishop, 2006, pp. 19)

In this introduction, we will offer some ideas in response to the questions: How can educators and administrators address biases, microaggressions, prejudices and discrimination leading to lateral violence and internalized oppression? How might we support allyship, solidarity and inclusion for all?

The work of promoting eliminating bias, microaggression, prejudice and discrimination is built on shared beliefs in equity, the value of diversity and the importance of inclusive education. While

groups and schools practice these guiding principles on an ongoing basis in different ways, explicitly reviewing and refreshing shared beliefs ahead of deliberate work around challenging lateral violence, working for solidarity and allyship can be invaluable. It can reconnect community members, meaningfully extend the purpose for gathering beyond addressing flare ups of conflict and establish necessary background knowledge to understand and talk about what's going on.

At the heart of these issues is knowing, supporting and respecting identity. Therefore, beginning with self-reflection on how community members self-identify, and acknowledging and discussing intersectionalities can be a good first step.

This could be through activities such as “circles of ourselves” or digging into a visual like the “identity iceberg”. Talking about culture through a “culture wheel” activity can also be insightful. Like the air we breathe, we often take culture for granted despite always being surrounded by it. Initial work around identity can build mutual understanding, interrupt assumptions and build relationships before moving on to more complex issues.

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**Lateral violence is one way individuals and groups uphold and re-create oppression, while internalized oppression describes how oppression can imprint on individuals.**

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Lateral violence and internalized oppression are manifestations of oppression, which by definition is systemic or society-wide. Lateral violence is one way individuals and groups uphold and re-create oppression, while internalized oppression describes how oppression can imprint on individuals. They are both rooted in the concepts of power and privilege. Power and privilege are complex topics that can be difficult to broach though everyone has direct lived experience of both. Activities like “mapping power,” “flower of power” and “privilege walks” can provide a structure to get groups talking. Note that follow up is required to address the issues that are revealed.

The privilege walk, for example, recently popularized through BuzzFeed and other sites, has faced a variety of critiques. Of particular concern is how it requires more marginalized individuals to relive and share their experiences of marginalization in order for more privileged participants to receive a powerful learning experience (Bolger, 2018).

While challenging, it is valuable to raise a group’s consciousness because it allows participants to discuss where identities sit with respect to dominant structures

of power and privilege and consider how all forms of oppression are related. This can shift the dialogue from reflection to the question, “What would removing oppression and barriers in our own lives mean to us?” thus opening the door to thinking about addressing lateral oppression and allyship.

Effectively addressing lateral oppression and supporting allyship means recognizing how power and privilege can play out on the individual level. Once a group has established common understandings around who they are, why this work is important, and the community’s shared values and vision, focused work can begin.

## Addressing Lateral Violence

**“When a powerful oppressor has directed oppression against a group for a period of time, members of the oppressed group feel powerless to fight back and they eventually turn their anger against each other.”**

– Jane Middleton-Moz

Lateral violence fuels further oppression and promotes violence against vulnerable, marginalized groups. It is a cycle of violence with historical roots in colonization, oppression and the ongoing experiences of racism and discrimination. Working collaboratively, anti-oppressive educators and administrators can create working and learning environments that are free from

oppressive behaviours; free from all forms of violence, and harassment. The Canadian Race Relations Foundation (CRRF) defines lateral violence as “violence directed against one’s peers rather than adversaries” (2015). In schools, lateral violence can take on a variety of toxic behaviours. For example: name calling, blaming, gossiping, jealousy or shaming. This type of violence might go unnoticed or ignored because it can come in subtle forms. It can happen in the absence of others, making it harder to notice and name. Lateral violence can also be overt and deliberate acts of violence intended to inflict harm or fear. By building positive relationships and getting to know the identity of others, we can begin to work on acceptance and appreciation of our differences.

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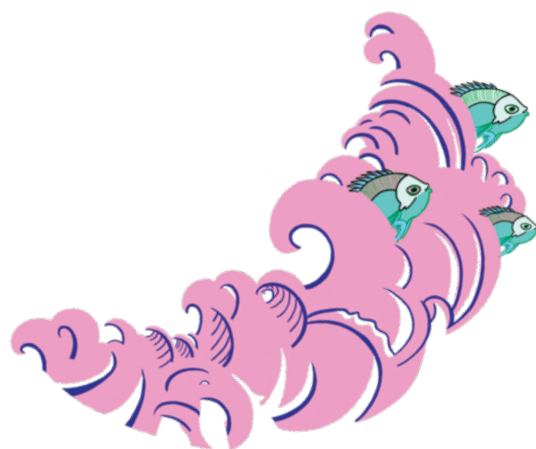
## Being cognizant of the make-up of schools and classrooms can help build more equitable and inclusive spaces.

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It can be challenging to address lateral violence because there are a combination of historical, cultural and social factors that result in a range of oppressive behaviours. Where lateral violence exists, it can affect the learning and working conditions of staff and students. The first step towards addressing lateral violence is to recognize that it exists, having the language to name the behaviours so that they do not become normalized. For example, addressing harassment in the hallways should be done immediately, identifying the behavior and explaining why the behaviour is hurtful or harmful and then providing space to discuss the impact of these actions and determining the best way to resolve the forms of violence that exist, taking the necessary steps towards resolving disputes.

Educators and administrators should strive towards establishing an understanding of the history(ies) of marginalized individuals and groups to build and strengthen positive relationships between staff and students and the school community. Consider: Who are the Asian groups at your school? Do you know if they have stories of immigration, or refugee experiences? How can this information help support and build school community? When addressing lateral violence, reflect on how anti-Asian racism differs from other forms of oppression at your school, for example anti-Black racism or anti-Indigenous racism. How are the experiences of these groups the same? What does anti-Asian racism look like, sound like, feel like? For bystanders, for victims, for perpetrators, for families/communities? Being cognizant of the make-up of schools and classrooms can help build more equitable and inclusive spaces.





## Supporting Allyship and Solidarity

Being an ally can look different depending on social location and one's understanding of their identity in relation to power and privilege. Recently, many people have stepped up and out, identifying themselves as an ally before actively engaging in any of the work of allyship. But being an ally requires more than being sympathetic or empathetic to a group's circumstances. For this reason, some activists have called for a language shift ([Clemens, 2017](#)).

Allyship is a lifelong process of unlearning and relearning, building trusting relationships with marginalized communities and amplifying their voices. Being an ally is not a title, it is a verb, it requires action. Allies have the ability to create an impact and bring about social change. Allyship is a skill that can work to break down barriers for marginalized groups if practised well.

The following list can help educators and administrators get started on noticing, naming and interrupting anti-Asian oppression and xenophobia.

### >> Self Reflection

#### Corresponding Points

- Locate self in relation to the Asian community and diaspora
- Understand positionality in relation to the Asian community
- Recognize implicit and explicit biases
- What are the assumptions and where do they come from?
  - From home
  - Religion/Faith/Creed
  - Politics
  - Friend/Colleagues and Peers

### >> Knowledge Building

#### Corresponding Points

- Learn history(ies) of the Asian and Asian diasporas to understand the roots and forms of oppression
- Do not rely on others to teach you history of oppression and consider the sources used and whose voices are missing
- Who are you reading and why?
  - Build critical consciousness
  - Question dominant perspectives
  - Integrate minority points of views

## >> Asking Questions

### Corresponding Points

- How much do I know about the Asian communities and the people I am seeking to do the work with?
- What do you need? What might be some challenges? (don't make assumptions)
- How much space are you taking up in conversations?
- Hold space to voices of those who identify as Asian
- Mute your voice and listen
- How are you interrupting the status quo?

## >> Taking Action

### Corresponding Points

#### Interrupt and act on all levels

- **Individual** - Create space. Listen more and hold space to hear the ideas, opinions and feelings of those most marginalized. Validate experiences and decentralize yourself. Take guidance from those we seek to work with and stay committed. Recognize that mistakes will happen and take accountability for actions. This can be an uncomfortable process, so understanding that and accepting that the emotions that come with this work are normal.
- **Counter oppression by speaking out** when others speak or behave in ways that are racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, xenophobic, ableist, ageist and misogynist.
- **Acknowledge mistakes** (these will happen).
- **Collective** - Community organizations working together to share resources and ideas to actively improve access for all marginalized groups. Understanding what is needed to help everyone feel safe, navigating possible barriers such as language and physical accessibility to create more inclusivity for all.
- **Advocate** by using social media and/or other platforms to circulate messages, learning materials or information on anti-oppression movements and groups.
- **Systemic** - Move towards political action. Call or write to local, municipal governments to advocate for change. Active use of power and privilege to build capacity of marginalized groups and take action towards ending oppressive policy and practices.

## Terminology

### >> Allyship, n.

An active process in which a person in a position of privilege seeks to work in solidarity with a more marginalized group of people to dismantle oppression. Allyship is often described as life long work and involves consistent and ongoing effort, including unlearning and relearning, re-evaluating and building trusting relationships with more marginalized individuals and groups.

### >> Bias, n.

The opinion, perspective or slant that informs actions and/or text. Bias can be positive or negative.

### >> Culture, n.

The mix of beliefs, values, behavioural and social norms, traditions, patterns of communication, laws and meanings held by a group of individuals who share a historical, geographic, religious, racial, linguistic, ethnic and/or social context.

### >> Discrimination, n.

The act of differential treatment toward a person or group because of a prejudice.

### >> Diversity, n.

The presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes within a group, organization, or society. The dimensions of diversity include, but are not limited to, ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation and socio-economic status. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009)

**>> Equity, n.**

A condition or state of fair, inclusive and respectful treatment of all people. Equity does not mean treating people the same without regard for individual differences. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009)

**>> Inclusive education, n.**

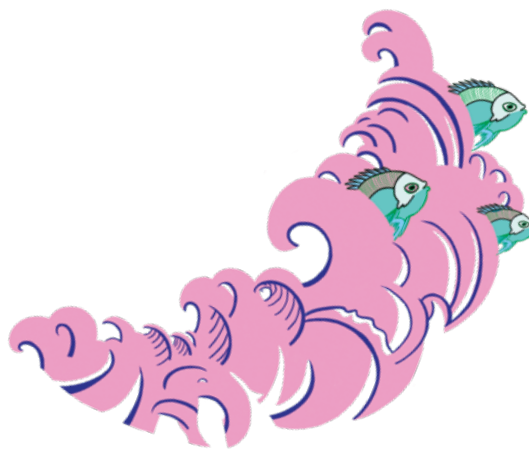
Education that is based on the principles of acceptance and inclusion of all students. Students see themselves reflected in their curriculum, their physical surroundings, and the broader environment, in which diversity is honoured and all individuals are respected. (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009)

**>> Intersectionality, n.**

The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage; a theoretical approach based on such a premise. (Oxford Dictionary)

**>> Lateral violence, n.**

Displaced violence directed against one's peers rather than adversaries. This construct is one way of explaining minority-on-minority violence in developed nations. It is a cycle of abuse and its roots lie in factors such as: colonisation, oppression, intergenerational trauma and the ongoing experiences of racism and discrimination.



**>> Microaggression, n.**

Repeated comments or actions that subtly and often unconsciously express prejudiced attitudes toward a member or members of a marginalized group. Adapted from [merriam-webster.com/dictionary/microaggression](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/microaggression)

**>> Oppression, n.**

Systemic social inequity reinforced by social institutions that is also embedded within individual consciousness. Results from institutional and systemic discrimination and personal prejudice limiting and restricting opportunities and resources. Oppression works to benefit dominant or privileged groups and disempowers or subordinates others.

**>> Power, n.**

The ability of a group to affect and influence others, the course of events or the allocation of resources.

**>> Prejudice, n.**

A negative opinion or feeling formed beforehand without knowledge, thought or reason.

**>> Privilege, n.**

Unearned access to resources, opportunities, benefits, advantages and rewards that are available only to some groups and denied to others as a result of social membership.

**>> Solidarity, n.**

May require us to give up power and take risk within social hierarchies. An intentionality to address system oppression in education, housing, healthcare, and capital resources.

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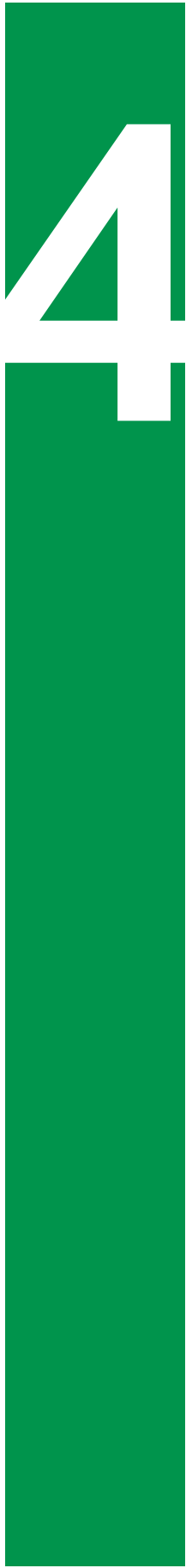
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# Section Four

## Where To Next?

### Resources

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# Section Four

## Where to Next?

### Resources



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## Community Organizations

The following list of community organizations is not comprehensive. It provides possible partnerships for addressing anti-Asian racism and teaching Asian cultures and histories.

### Cultural Organizations and Groups

#### Fu-Gen Theatre


This Asian Canadian Theatre company supports Asian North American artists and tells stories about Asian Canadian experiences.

 [fu-gen.org](http://fu-gen.org)


 [info@fu-gen.org](mailto:info@fu-gen.org)

#### Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre

The JCCC teaches students about Japanese Canadian history and culture (such as tea ceremony, kimono, martial arts, language, children's games).

 [jccc.on.ca](http://jccc.on.ca)

 [jccc@jccc.on.ca](mailto:jccc@jccc.on.ca)

 416-441-2345

#### Raging Asian Women Taiko Drummers

This Taiko drumming performance by East and Southeast Asian women, non-binary and genderqueer people shows the historical and creative contexts of this art form.

 [facebook.com/RAWTaiko/about](https://facebook.com/RAWTaiko/about)

 [info@ragingasianwomen.ca](mailto:info@ragingasianwomen.ca)



## Section Four | Where to Next? Resources


### Reel Asian International Film Festival


Reel Asian offers free programs to Toronto schools. Asian Canadian filmmakers share their work with students.


 [reelasian.com](http://reelasian.com)

### Sikh Heritage Museum of Canada

The Sikh Heritage Museum of Canada preserves and promotes Sikh history and culture. They offer exhibits, programs and lessons.

 [shmc.ca](http://shmc.ca)

 [info@shmc.ca](mailto:info@shmc.ca)


 416-587-5498

## Political Organizations and Groups

### The Asian Canadian Labour Alliance (ACLA)


This is a grassroots collective of community and labour activists. They work within the Labour movement and within Asian communities to raise the profile for Asian Canadian labour issues. Encourage and support Asian Canadian workers to participate more fully in the Labour movement.


 [aclaontario.ca](http://aclaontario.ca)


 ACLA Ontario Chapter  
[info@aclaontario.ca](mailto:info@aclaontario.ca)

### Asian Community AIDS Services (ACAS)

This community-based organization offers support services and resources related to safer sex education and serves East and Southeast Asian LGBTQ communities.

 [acas.org](http://acas.org)

 [info@acas.org](mailto:info@acas.org)


 416-963-4300

### Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services (BCS)

The BCS is a non-profit community organization in the Toronto area. They provide information, skills development and referral to diverse communities in the GTA.




 [bangladeshi.ca](http://bangladeshi.ca)

 [info@bangladeshi.ca](mailto:info@bangladeshi.ca)

 416-699-4484


### Chinese Canadian National Council (CCNC)

The CCNC educates and advocates for equity and social justice, particularly for Chinese Canadians.

-  [ccncsj.ca](http://ccncsj.ca)
-  [national@ccncsj.ca](mailto:national@ccncsj.ca)
-  647-613-0435


### The Committee of Progressive Pakistani Canadians (CPPC)

The CPPC is a non-profit organization made up of Canadians of Pakistani origins committed to ideals of democracy, pluralism and peace.

-  [pakistanicanadians.ca](http://pakistanicanadians.ca)
-  [info@pakistanicanadians.ca](mailto:info@pakistanicanadians.ca)



### Federation of Asian Canadian Lawyers

The FACL Ontario is a diverse coalition of Asian Canadian legal professionals working to promote equity, justice and opportunity for Asian Canadian legal professionals and the wider community. They publish Hate & Discrimination Guides in the following languages: English, Chinese (Traditional), Chinese (Simplified), Korean, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Japanese.

-  [on.facl.ca/hate-discrimination-guides](http://on.facl.ca/hate-discrimination-guides)


### Project 1907

This is a grassroots organization that supports diasporic Asian communities by providing resources, events and programming.

-  [project1907.org](http://project1907.org)
-  [project1907.org/contact](mailto:project1907.org/contact)




### PROTECH (Pandemic Rapid-response Optimization to Enhance Community-Resilience and Health)

This is a community action research project funded by Ryerson University that aims to reduce the negative psychosocial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Chinese Canadians and other affected groups and promotes community resilience.

-  [projectprotech.ca](http://projectprotech.ca)
-  1-888-210-6606

### South Asian Womens' Rights Organization (SAWRO)

This organization focuses on addressing gender inequality and poverty within South Asian communities and providing support for South Asian girls and women to be active participants in Canadian society.

-  [sawro.org](http://sawro.org)
-  [sawro.office@gmail.com](mailto:sawro.office@gmail.com)
-  416-686-0701



## ETFO Resources and Policies

>> [ETFO | Social Justice Begins With Me](#)

Social Justice Begins With Me is an anti-bias literature-based curriculum resource kit for the Early Years to Grade 8. This year-round resource is organized using ten monthly themes, including Self-Esteem, Sharing Our Lives, Building Supportive Communities, Rights of the Child, Caring Hands, Untie the Knots of Prejudice and Local and Global Citizenship.

>> [Re-Think, Re-Connect, Re-Imagine](#) is a booklet of K-8 lesson plans as well as a teacher's resource for professional development with respect to white privilege. A variety of engaging lessons are organized by four themes: Myself, My Classroom, My School and My Community. More resources on white privilege are available [here](#).

>> [Asian and South Asian Heritage Month - May](#) includes posters, definitions and resources as well as a reminder for educators to recognize that Asian Canadian history is part of Canadian history and integrated throughout the school year.

>> [Respond and Rebuild: The ETFO Guide to Culturally Relevant and Responsive](#)

[Pedagogy](#) offers tools and resources for educators to better support students with diverse lived experiences through a process of connecting the self, to the classroom and to our communities more broadly.

>> [Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy in The Early Years: It's Never Too](#)

[Early!](#) In this ETFO Voice article, Sangeeta McAuley provides an in-depth overview of Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy, as well as practical strategies for how to examine power and privilege with early learners through Grade 8.

>> [Confronting Racism in the Classroom](#)

This ETFO Voice article by Kalpana Makan provides a brief analysis on anti-racism education as well as concrete anti-racist teaching strategies.

>> [Walking and Talking Treaties: The Power of Students' Inquiry in Deepening the Social Studies Curriculum](#)

This ETFO Voice article by Emily Chan features a year-long student inquiry project that integrates Indigenous education, Chinese Canadian history and the history of colonization in Canada with grades 4-6 students.

>> [ETFO 365 Black Canadian Curriculum](#) provides educators with historically factual information to support the learning of issues concerning race and discrimination, while ensuring safe learning environments for students to discuss these topics in a respectful and reflective manner, while also exploring the realities of Black Canadians. These resources, which support Black Canadian history in Ontario schools on a daily basis, include: a [calendar](#); primary, junior and intermediate lesson plans; a workshop for staff; and a poster.

>> [ETFO | Black History Month - February](#) provides the 2020 poster for Black History Month, as well as links for previous years' posters.

>> [ETFO Action on Anti-Black Racism](#) is a pamphlet for educators with ETFO's equity statements and specific strategies that ETFO is undertaking to address anti-Black racism in schools and communities across Ontario. Further resources are available [here](#).

>> The [ETFO First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Resources](#) website, [etfofnmi.ca](#), includes curriculum resources on Cultural Appreciation vs Appropriation, Land-Based Learning and an Introduction to Treaties.

>> [ETFO Equity Workshops](#) are professional development workshops available for ETFO members booked through their locals, to learn about many equity issues, including CRRP, Understanding Anti-Black Racism in Ontario Education, Re-Thinking White Privilege, Busting Myths and Misconceptions about Indigenous Peoples and 2SLGBTQ+ Awareness in Primary Classrooms.

>> [ETFO's policy statements](#) include: [Equity and Social Justice](#), Anti-Racism and Ethnocultural Equity and Discrimination.

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## TDSB Resources and Policies



**>> The TDSB Equity Foundation Statement**

Reporting Discrimination: Students and staff experience or become aware of anti-Asian racism, or any type of racist or discriminatory behaviour in your school or workplace should report it to your supervisor or contact the Human Rights Office of the Board at 416-397-3622. For more information about Human Rights at the TDSB please contact the Human Rights Office. TDSB students can also report incidents of racism, discrimination and hate through the Student Safety Line.

**>> Workplace Violence Prevention**

**>> Workplace Harassment Prevention**

**>> Respectful Learning And Working Environment**

**>> Bullying Prevention and Intervention** To establish a framework to enable, support and maintain a positive school climate.

**>> Reporting and Responding to Racism and Hate Incidents Involving or Impacting Students in Schools**

Procedure PR728 details steps and processes for responding to racism incidents, hate/bias incidents and hate crimes involving students in TDSB schools/learning environments. This includes incidents that take place at a school or school-related activity, and incidents involving a TDSB student, parent/guardian, staff person or TDSB community member that impacts the school/learning environment.

**>> Protecting and Promoting Human Rights and Addressing Discrimination and Other Inequities**

The TDSB is committed to creating, maintaining and promoting a school system that is free from discrimination and harassment, where our community – students, staff, families and community partners – feel welcome, and are included and respected. The Expected Practices for Understanding, Addressing and Preventing Discrimination (accessible version) for school administrators and staff helps

ensure we fulfill our professional, moral and legal obligations to create equitable, safe, respectful, and inclusive spaces for all students, parents and staff.

Staff can access support through the [Employee and Family Assistance Program](#) and resources on the [Mental Health and Well-being Webpage](#).

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## Other Educational Resources

### >> Canada's History: Classroom Resources

[The Canadian Encyclopedia](#): entries on Cambodian or Khmer Canadians, Chinese Canadians, Filipino Canadians, Japanese Canadians, Korean Canadians, Malaysian Canadians, Sikhism in Canada, Sinhalese Canadians, South Asian Canadians, South East Asians, Tamil Refugees, Vietnamese Canadians, Chinese Canadian activist Jean Lumb

### >> [Canadian Human Rights Tribunal](#)

[Simulation](#): Highschool Lesson Plan.

Students learn about the harsh treatment of Canadian immigrants and the selective nature of Canadian immigration policies during the first half of the twentieth century by researching one of the following events:

- the *Chinese Exclusion Act*
- the Komagata Maru incident
- the SS. St Louis affair
- the internment of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War

### >> Canadian Sikh Heritage:

A website that provides educational information on Sikh history and experiences. [canadiansikhheritage.ca](http://canadiansikhheritage.ca)

### >> [History of South Asians in Canada:](#)

[Timeline](#) University of the Fraser Valley South Asian Studies Institute. This resource provides an overview of immigration trends in Canada – focusing on our South Asian communities.

### >> [Japanese Canadian History](#): Resources for teaching the Japanese internment (1942-1949) and the redress in 1988 to Grade 5 and Grade 11 students.

### >> [National Association of Japanese Canadians](#)

Passages to Canada: short videos and stories of people coming to live in Canada [passagestocanada.com/videos](http://passagestocanada.com/videos)

## Section Four | Where to Next? Resources

### >> **Teaching Tolerance:** [Speaking Up Against Racism Around the New Coronavirus](#)

This educational website provides free resources to educators and administrators, counselors and other practitioner who work with children from Kindergarten through high school. Equity-based curriculum materials can supplement and enhance learning spaces in order to deepen opportunities for civic and inclusive discussions.

### >> [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(UNDRIP\)](#)

The declaration includes articles affirming the right of Indigenous Peoples to create their own education systems, receive restitution for stolen lands and participate in all decision-making that affects their interests.

## Videos

>> [Asian Americans](#): PBS, 2020. A five-hour film series on the history of identity, contributions and challenges experienced by Asian Americans.

>> **Heritage Minutes. Historica Canada.** These one minute segments dramatically portray Canadian history, folklore and myths.

- [“Boat People” refugees](#) A family escapes persecution in Vietnam, traveling by boat to a Malaysian refugee camp before finding a new home in Montreal (1980).
- [Nitro](#) A young Chinese worker volunteers to set a dangerous nitroglycerine charge at a CP

construction site in British Columbia in the 1880s.

- [Vancouver Asahi](#) In 1942, after Canada declared war on Japan, 22,000 Japanese Canadians were interned in the interior of BC, including the Asahi players.

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