

Annual Plan

Starts With One (SWO) Canada
Education Justice Coalition



January-December 2021

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Message from the Organizers

Dear Education Justice Coalition Members,

Thank you for joining us once again for a year full of advocacy work in 2021! Leena, Yasmine and I are so grateful to all of you for continuing to volunteer your time to create space to have difficult conversations surrounding education equity and education justice in Canadian schools.

This year, we'll be focusing on executing two campaigns. The first will be an awareness campaign regarding the systemic, and systematized issue of anti-Black racism in Canadian schools. Yasmine has kindly gathered research which historicizes the issue of anti-Black racism in Canadian schools, and has had the brilliant idea of running a webinar series to educate incoming teachers at the end of the summer. We're very excited for the months to come.

As for the decolonizing Ontario schools and curriculum campaign, Leena has compiled a series of amazing resources with regards to decolonizing education from a personal level to a school level. It is our hopes that, as a coalition, we'll be able to create resources that will not only guide educators through decolonizing their teaching practices and curriculum, but inspire them and motivate them to do so on a personal level.

As usual, we'll be hosting bi-weekly research meetings and we'll always be in touch with you if you have any questions, comments or suggestions for improvement. The Education Justice Coalition remains a grassroots initiative and we are committed to making sure that everyone who is a part of the coalition feels included and empowered.

Thank you again for joining us - It means more than you know. I hope you have a wonderful year ahead with us on this team: We're certainly looking forward to it!

In solidarity,

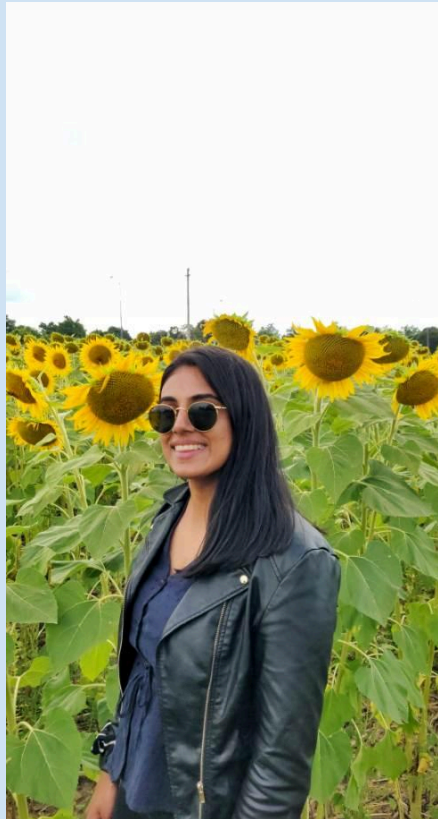
Jan, on behalf of Leena & Yasmine

**Education Justice Coalition
Starts With One Canada**

Organizers

Co-Directors

Leena Chudasama, Director



Academic & Career Background: My values for healing and community care for children and youth have led me to the work I do today. As a trauma-informed Child and Youth Care practitioner and OCT certified educator, I aim to create spaces for BIPOC children and youth that are child-centred and justice-oriented with a holistic approach.

Favourite Quotation: My favourite quote for the longest time has been by one of bell hooks who I hope to continue to embed her ideologies into my practices. "For me forgiveness and compassion are always linked: how do we hold people accountable for wrongdoing and yet at the same time remain in touch with their humanity enough to believe in their capacity to be transformed?" bell hooks

Personal Connection to Education Equity Work: I hope to bring interconnected critical commitments to my work including decolonization, equity, culturally relevant and anti-racism linking both critical research and frontline work to ensure community and individual needs are met.

Guilty pleasure snack: For the longest time my guilty pleasure snack has been instant ramen noodles!

My best friend would describe me as: a grandma. Huge fan

of old comfy sweaters, I get cold really easily and prefer my bedtime to be 9PM.

Yasmine Raymond-Wilson, Director



Hi everyone, I'm Yasmine! I am so excited to be a co-director for the Education Justice Coalition!

Academic & career background: I am a student at York University, where I completed my undergrad in Sociology and am in my final year of teacher's college. My career goal is to become a Director of a school board one day so I can enforce equitable and inclusive educational practices throughout my board.

Favourite quotation: My favourite quote is “The Flower That Blooms In Adversity Is The Most Rare And Beautiful Of All” (Mulan, 1998).

Passion for Education Equity: I became passionate about equity work through my Sociology background and through reflecting on my experiences as a racialized student and observing areas of marginalization as an educator.

Favourite colour: My favourite colours are blue, pink and purple (in that order).

My best friend would describe me as: “earnest and hilarious”.

Members

Jay Bali

Profile in progress.

Lydia Estreed

Profile in progress.

Amritha Shan

Profile in progress.

Renee Vettivelu

Renee is a recent engineering graduate from Ryerson University and is passionate about education justice for all people. As a member of SWO, she is hoping to lobby for increased educational access, safety for all students, and eliminate structural discrimination. She is also a member of Tamil Archive Project and Climate Justice TO.



Researchers & Creators

Renee Baker



Hey I'm Renee! I am in my 5th year at York University studying French Studies and Education. During my spare time, I enjoy reading books/articles and writing posts for my blog. In the future, I aspire to be an educator and whatever else comes my way!

Nicole Agyenim Boateng

Profile in progress.

Francesca Davison

Profile in progress.

Aliana Niezova



Aliana is a student going into her last year of high school in Toronto. She got involved with SWO because the education system affects her and her peers currently, and will continue to impact them in the future. Reflecting on her own experience has pushed her to want to learn more about issues in Canadian curriculum and school environments, and participating in the work this team does has been a great way to do so.

Raghav Patel

I am passionate about local politics, and developing policy based solutions to problems like the discrimination in our education system. As an adult that went through the PDSB, I can only now fully appreciate the extent of the anti black racism in our schools, and the other ways students

are systemically disparaged because of their minority identities. Previously, I have campaigned for female students' right to equal athletic opportunities as their male counterparts, because of an experience one of my younger family members had to face. I am proud to be a part of the SWO, and work towards an education system that is truly inclusive, and provides all students with the support and opportunities they deserve and need to excel.



Muska Sadat

Profile in progress.

Sadia Sheikh

Profile in progress.

Eshita Rastogi



Eshita is a first year business student who joined the Education Justice Coalition to advocate for a more inclusive curriculum and school environment for all students. Outside of the Coalition, she loves to paint and skate with her friends.

Brittany Rooney

Profile in progress.

This Way Up Collective (TWU)



A big hello from us here at This Way Up Collective! We're a grassroots youth-led collective of folx that have been or are currently in the shelter system.

We run two programs that support street-involved people on a weekly basis. Our group was founded during the Black Lives Matter movement - at first there were four of us that simply wanted to help. We fed protesters and met amazing people and organizations like Starts With One along the way. Our behind-the-scenes work and personal experiences have opened our eyes to so much, and when we were invited to join the Education Justice Coalition we couldn't refuse! We are big believers in education, justice and advocacy work, and systemic racism in schools has always been a subject we're all very passionate about. Through our work with the Education Justice Coalition, we hope to bring awareness to a variety of issues that plague the Ontario school system. As Nelson Mandela once said, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

Executive Team Representative

Jan Lim



Current career path/academic background: Graduating in 2021 with a major in Physiology, and minors in Anthropology and Contemporary Asian Studies - Headed off to UBC for her medical anthropology masters in September 2021! I'm really passionate about social sciences and see myself pursuing a career as a medical anthropologist, physician, or teacher!

Favourite quotation This is so difficult ... Currently it's:

"Pooh!" whispered Piglet.

"Yes, Piglet?" said Pooh.

"Oh, nothing." said Piglet.

"I was just making sure of you."

Favourite part of being a SWO member: There is a deep sense of community to the work that we do. I'm honoured to be a part of the education justice coalition and I thank you all for continuing to join us.

Guilty pleasure snack: Fried chicken :)

2021 Campaign Outline

Historicizing and Raising Awareness for Anti-Black Racism in Canadian Schools

Description & Objectives

The following campaign will focus on **historicizing, contextualizing and raising awareness** for the presence and prevalence of anti-Black racism in Canadian schools.

As many people in this coalition are aware of, anti-Black racism in Canadian schools is often an under-addressed issue, specifically with regards to its historical context and systemic nature.

We hope that this multifaceted campaign brings new topics of conversation to the table and complicates dominant narratives surrounding race and education.

Objectives:

1. **Compile research** which historicizes the issue of anti-Black racism in Canadian schools (e.g. segregation, immigration issues,
2. **Record and host a series of interviews** on IGTV and YouTube sharing lived experiences of Black students, BIPOC educators and more, with regards to the issue of anti-Black racism in Canadian schools and how they address the issue.
3. **To host a meaningful webinar series** for incoming teachers (teachers college candidates) in August 2021 or September 2021 about anti-Black racism in Canadian schools, using the research and interviews acquired from the Research Meetings and Interview-Based Campaign.

List of Initiatives

1. **Research Meetings Bi-Weekly - February-March 2021**
 - a. Focus on historicizing the presence of anti-Black racism in Canadian schools and its systemic/systematic character, as well as a focus on the ongoing developments to address the issue now;
2. **Interview-Based Campaign - March-April 2021**
 - a. Interviewing teachers and guest speakers to share their lived experiences and teaching advice online!
 - b. This campaign focuses on real-life examples of how to discuss race in the classroom, of lived experiences as Black students/educators, of building cultural awareness in schools.
 - c. Upload on I

3. Webinar Series - August 2021

- a. Hosting a series of free webinars for incoming teachers candidates on Zoom!

Decolonizing & Diversifying the Curriculum Advocacy Work

Description & Objectives

The following campaign focuses on how we can decolonize **teaching practices and curriculum in Ontario**.

We acknowledge that “decolonizing” and “decolonization” are words that are associated with a series of initiatives these days - **However, what makes a teacher personally motivated to adopt decolonization frameworks in their classroom?** More broadly, what motivates individuals to adopt decolonization frameworks in their lives?

In response to these questions, the EJC organizing team has decided to focus on first creating **personal resources** for teachers to use to guide them through their personal and professional decolonization journeys. We will also be conducting **research meetings and completing knowledge translation work** with regards to decolonizing curriculum and teaching. Finally, we plan on continuing activism work and do a **comparative study** between BC and Ontario curricula.

Objectives

1. **Develop a personal resource** to guide educators through incorporating decolonization frameworks in the classroom.
2. **Mobilizing knowledge** with regards to the need for, and methods of, decolonization frameworks in schools.
3. **Conducting advocacy and activism work** with a focus on comparing BC and Ontario curriculums to motivate and inspire policy change.

List of Initiatives

1. **Personal Resource Development - March-April 2021**
 - a. Creating a personal resource for teachers/new educators/school administrators to guide themselves through beginning decolonization work in schools.
 - b. Question Ideas
 - i. What values do you hold? What values do you share in your classroom or promote amongst your students?
 1. How do you evaluate your students?

- ii. What knowledge do you believe is important? What types of knowledge do you share in your classroom, or encourage your students to consume?
- iii. How do you approach students who may have generational trauma? Do you create safe spaces for them?
- iv. How do you hold yourself accountable for the impact you have on your students?

2. Knowledge Translation of the Personal Resource: Instagram, Twitter, Blog Posts, Webpage - June-July 2021

- a. Instagram Post(s)
- b. Journal Entry - Template
 - i. Questions that make them think about self decolonization
 - ii. How will people practice that work? Connect with this work?
- c. Webinar, podcast series for people who practice decolonization in the curriculum
 - i. Linking this back to the support that teachers need
 - ii. What support do teachers need in this journey?
 - iii. Practicing critical pedagogy, trauma-informed teaching in a school context
→ people aren't practicing this right now: How does teaching look for them? Is there emotional labour that teachers are putting in right now?
 - 1. **Goal: have the resource which is presentable before school starts**

3. Comparative Study between the Ontario and British Columbia History/Social Studies Curriculum - October-December 2021

- a. Advocacy Work (following research creation)
- a. BC versus Ontario curriculum
 - i. Pinpointing the things that the Ontario one needs, and the changes that are needed
 - 1. How has the Ontario curriculum been conducted in schools?