



Anti-Black Racism and Black Excellence Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Durham Catholic District School Board – North and South Board rooms at CEC

November 20, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

Attendance:

ABR & BE Advisory Committee Members: N. Emanuel (Chair), L. Chevers, T. Razac Huggins, N. Cyrus, K. Gaines, L. Akinyemi, J. Oritse, A. Voisin

Board Staff: G. Winn, K. Akomolafe, K. Stevenson M. Prabu

Online Attendees: Alexa Rodney, Shauna Bookal, Bibi Singh, Jemiyotan Onyejiaka, Sophia Williams, Tracy Forde, Trevor Aitcheson

1. Call to Order

The ABR and BE committee meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m.

2. Opening Prayers and Courtesies

N. Cyrus said the opening prayer, followed by L. Chevers offering the Land Acknowledgement and the Ancestral Acknowledgement.

3. Welcome

K. Akomolafe welcomed the committee members to the meeting.

4. Adoption of Minutes

“THAT the Anti-Black Racism and Black Excellence Advisory Committee approve the minutes of the meeting held on September 18, 2025.”

Motion moved by L. Chevers and seconded by N. Cyrus. Carried.

5. DCDSB System Update

The committee was provided with system updates with the committee. The Black Excellence Newsletter scheduled for release on November 21 contains the updates. This includes updates on the Black Student Excellence Awards and Celebrating Black Excellence programming, including career panels designed to inspire and empower students.

Career Panel Update

On whether this was the first time the event had been held, it clarified that while the event took place last year, it was delivered in a shorter format due to limited funding. With increased funding this year, the session has been expanded to include additional time as well as resources to support busing and release time. It was further explained that the frequency of future panels will depend on available funding, with the possibility that the event may be offered every other year.

Luminary Award – DCDSB community partner, InterGenerational Hub honoured the Board's three Coach/Advocate for Black Students with the Luminary Award.

Black Leaders of St. Mary (BLOSM) trip to Ontario Tech University

The Black Leaders of St. Mary (BLOSM) group visited Ontario Tech University to explore pathways into the field of education. Approximately 40 students attended the tour alongside their BLOSM staff leader, CABS worker Michael Mayers, and were provided with an informative tour of the education building. University staff shared details about the Bachelor of Arts in Education program, which offers an accelerated 18-month completion option designed to support students pursuing a career in teaching. The visit was further supported by representatives from the local OECTA teachers' union, as well as the Director of Education, Superintendent of Education, and Human Rights and Equity Advisor who attended to encourage and champion the initiative. There was strong interest in expanding similar opportunities across the system to engage additional student groups in exploring careers in education.

Next Steps - K. Akomolafe and K. Stevenson will follow up M. Meyers regarding next actions.

6. Review of the Black Student Excellence Award

The Black Student Excellence Awards ceremony was hailed as exceptional, student-centered, with a warm and celebratory atmosphere. The strong collaboration and teamwork between the Board and the ABR & BE contributed to the event's success.

It was suggested that securing additional sponsorships and beginning planning earlier in the year should be considered for future events.

7. Discussion on the OHRC Dreams Delayed Report

The committee agreed to establish a subcommittee to review the *Dreams Delayed* report, understand the Board's ongoing actions, and identify priority areas related to Anti-Black Racism. Some members present, including the Vice-Chair Chevers, Alexa Rodney, and Tracy Forde, expressed interest in joining the subcommittee.

It was agreed that the sub-committee would remain small (suggested five members) to begin with. The subcommittee will provide feedback to the committee in the course of its work.

Action Items

A call-out will be made to members to join the sub-committee. K. Akomolafe will support the Chair in preparing and issuing the call-out.

A motion to create the subcommittee was moved and carried..

8. Equity Invitational Learning

The committee discussed upcoming sessions for the Equity Invitational Series.

Session 1 (January 13 at PFC) – Prospective speakers are being considered, with a confirmation expected before the Christmas break. The session will focus on student success through the lens of the *Dreams Delayed* report. Dr. Laura Mae Lindo was identified as one of the prospective keynote speakers. She will be offered both the annuary and March dates to enable her decide her availability.

Session 2 (March 25 at PFC) - No speaker has been selected yet. A list of potential names is being reviewed. It was suggested that in the event of budget constraints, one session could feature an external speaker while the other could be facilitated in-house, such as through a roundtable discussion.

9. Business Arising

Targeted employment opportunities was proposed as an agenda item for discussion at a future meeting.

10. Closing prayer

Meeting Adjourned at 8:12 p.m.