

Delegation to the OCDSB Board of Trustees Meeting
April 28, 2020 - 7:30pm

On behalf of the Organizations listed below, I am making this delegation to the board of trustees seeking more information **on outcomes of the Identity Based Data Collection initiative that was part of the OCDSB's School Survey conducted at the end of 2019. As well, I will be presenting on the safety of Black and racialized students within the OCDSB.**

1. Data collection initiative and family/community engagement in addressing the results:

Over the past year, the OCDSB has made great efforts to engage the African, Caribbean and Black (ACB), racialized, indigenous and other diversity and equity seeking groups in the lead up to last year's identity based data collection initiative. We participated in focus groups, design of questions and methodologies and helped promote the school survey within our communities. It has been almost 6 months since the end of the survey and we have not heard of its results. We recognize that the current COVID-19 pandemic may have certainly delayed action on the results, but it is our view that this work should be made a priority. The analysis and strategy development phase is a critical next step and the integrity in that process will have an impact on the trust our communities place in the OCDSB. We applaud the collaborative effort placed in the data collection phase and expect that the same spirit of engagement will flow into the analysis of the results. We fully understand that engagement might look different in this phase (ie virtual) but we are eager to see the needle move forward and are fully ready to support the process. This is all in keeping with the OCDSB's adoption of the UN Decade for People of African Descent and the commitment made in that proclamation to collect data and to engage our Black children and their families.

2. Safety of Black and racialized students within the OCDSB

For parents of children and youth of African descent in the OCDSB schools, their physical, emotional and spiritual well being is paramount. We recognize that since the changes at the top of the leadership of OCDSB's administrative leadership, structural and other changes have been made that have positively impacted our children and fostered improved relations with families. That being said, persistent challenges exist from curriculum that does not reflect our children's lived experiences, to streaming to racial bullying - sometimes even by those in positions to make decisions affecting our children's education. The information gleaned from the school survey again will help address the ongoing, systemic issues our children continue to face in OCDSB schools. We call on the OCDSB to engage us on these issues to ensure that our children's post COVID-19 integration back into classrooms heralds a renewed commitment to serve all our children in a way that ensures they become the best that they can be.

Organizations:

613/819 Black Hub

African Canadian Association of Ottawa

African Diaspora Action Team

Black Agenda Noir

Black Ottawa Business

Justice for Abdirahman Abdi Coalition

Somali Centre for Family Services

South Sudanese Community Association of Canada