

Parent Advocacy Preparing for Success

OCDSB Parent Conference
Nov 4, 2023



PARENTS 4 DIVERSITY

equity empathy accountability

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Land Acknowledgment



We would like to begin by acknowledging that we have gathered in the unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinabeg peoples whose land we are fortunate and grateful to learn, live and work within. We are committed to continue learning, embodying and providing decolonized resources and support in this Land, as well as working in allyship with the Algonquin Anishinabeg peoples.



OUR 3 PILLARS

Equity



Empathy



Accountability





OUR MISSION

Parents for Diversity is a collective of parents committed to achieving inclusive and non-discriminatory learning environments that allow children to fulfill their true potential in this world. We advocate for schools and families to promote diversity and inclusion and to take meaningful steps to address and eradicate discrimination and bias.

OUR VISION

The Vision of Parents for Diversity is that within their learning environment, each child feels that they belong, are valued for who they are, and that they have equal access to rigorous, meaningful and joyful learning.



POSITIVE PARTICIPATION



This workshop is designed as a moment of learning, exchange and sharing, so we are committed to:

- Respect everyone's speaking time
- Remain cordial and appropriate at all times
- Maintain a space free from prejudices, derogatory judgments and generalizations
- Reaffirm the importance of respecting the rights of parents and students, and the importance of the fight against discrimination



PRESENTATION CONTENT



- I. Systemic racism at school
- I. Effective Advocacy Techniques
- I. Activity
- I. 4 steps for successful schools meetings



Systemic Racism At School



What reality?

- Inappropriate and / or excessive discipline
- Impersonal environment
- Gaslighting
- Microaggressions
- View of behavior as pathological
- Standardization of sources and / or use of non-diverse and problematic learning content and tools
- Lack of diversity among school staff and teaching tools
- Passivity in the face of the seriousness of discriminatory acts
- Among others



Racism At School



IMPACT AND RED FLAGS

- School demotivation
- Feeling of non-belonging
- Feeling of loneliness or isolation
- Poor self-esteem or adoption of negative stereotypes
- Anxiety, stress, emotional distress, hypersensitivity
- Disproportionate or lagging reaction due to overflow



Racism At School



“Black children experience anti-Black racism throughout Ontario’s education system. They need the support and advocacy of their parents if they are to not simply survive the system and graduate, but graduate with the confidence and emotional health with which they entered the school system.”

TURNER CONSULTING GROUP INC. Research and Policy Brief No 1 / 2019



Advocacy Techniques



1. Write it down.
2. Find out who is responsible.
3. Set a deadline.
4. Ask for references.



Advocacy Techniques



- What is the problem?
- What are some possible solutions to this problem?
- What agency or individual has the power to solve this problem?
- What is the chain-of-command in the agency that has power over this problem?
- What should be the parent's first step in advocating in this situation?



In Action



School Meetings



SCHOOL MEETINGS



School meetings make it possible to:

- Create a connection with school staff
- Question teaching methods
- Manage issues in a meaningful way



4 STEPS FOR SUCCESS



1. Personal Preparation
2. Meeting preparation
3. During the meeting
4. After the meeting

→ The goal is to feel more comfortable and in control of the situation and your emotions

1. PERSONAL PREPARATION



Pre-existing relationship with school



We all have a different view of school and it's important to ask ourselves:

- How would you define your own school experience?
- How do I relate to authority?
- What helped me when I was in school?
- Same for your child



2. MEETING PREPARATION



- What to expect
- Different types of meetings
- Your expectations



WHAT TO EXPECT



A discussion with designated school staff, more often your child's teacher, around a topic shared in advance.

→ *Meetings may be virtual. If you have any difficulty with this format, let your school know.*



WHAT TYPE OF MEETING?



- Informative VS Specific issue
- Request for clarifications or information
- Setting up of support (IEP, IPRC, etc)
- Discipline



YOUR EXPECTATIONS



- What's the purpose of the meeting?
 - What kind of information do you need?
 - What would a successful meeting look like to you?
- *Each meeting is an opportunity to create a bond which translate to more security and understanding*



3. DURING THE MEETING



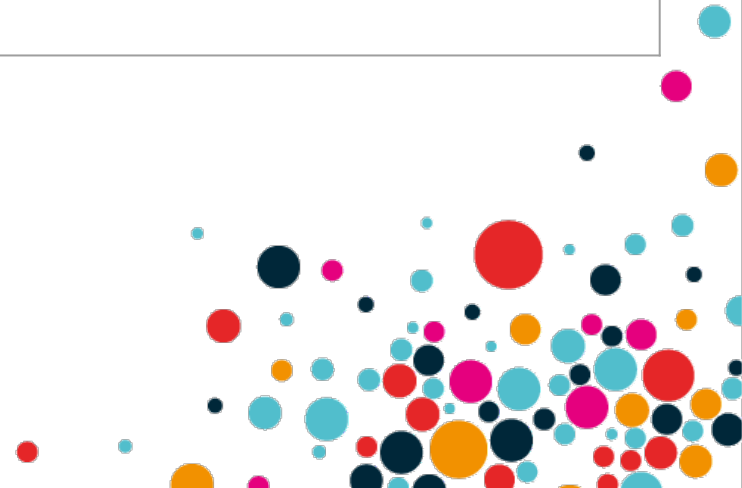
- DOS AND DON'TS
- MEETING RECORDS
- KNOW YOUR BOUNDARIES



DOS AND DON'TS



DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Active listening● Respect● Prepare in advance● Ask questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Expect school to know your child like you do.● Expect validation from the system.● Doubt your role of best advocate for your child



MEETING RECORDS



- It is extremely important to document all of your interactions with the school. During a meeting several options are possible:
 - Take notes yourself in the format of your choice
 - Ask a third party to come and take notes for you (P4D)
 - Ask a staff member present to send you a summary of the meeting's highlights and ensure that the content is accurate
 - Email school yourself with highlights of the meeting

KNOW YOUR BOUNDARIES



You have the right to expect teachers to:

- Know and understand their roles and responsibilities
- Make themselves available according to your availability, within reason
- Apply the principles of progressive discipline
- Have a understanding, even basic, of the impact discriminations on students
- Recognize your child's strengths and weaknesses
- Treat you with respect and diligence at all times



4. AFTER THE MEETINGS



- Follow-ups and accountability
- Impasses and escalation
- Practical Fact Sheets and resources



FOLLOW-UPS AND ACCOUNTABILITY



It is crucial to follow up after each meeting:

- To continue building a positive relationship with the school
- To ensure that commitments made are kept



IMPASSES AND ESCALATION



- **Internal process**

School administration, superintendent of your region, education director, trustees

- **External process**

Community organizations, Ontario College of Teachers, Ministry of Education

- **Legal procedures**

Last resort

FACT SHEETS



- [Understanding the school System](#) - People for Education
- [The Education System in Ontario](#) - Settlement.org
- [The Engaged Parent](#) - York Faculty of Education
- ➔ [P4D Resource Sheet](#)



Upcoming Events



BLACK YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

Join us for a free hybrid event.

Panelists will examine the trends related to mental health experiences of Black youth and discuss how to best support them at home and through local resources.

16 NOV
6:30 PM



Nov 16



Parent to Parent Training

For Parents/Guardians of Black children

Train to become a Peer Parent Advocate and support other parents like you to navigate the school system!

- ✓ In-person Session November 18 10am- 2pm
- ✓ Central location in Ottawa
- ✓ Lunch and Refreshments Provided

SIGN ME UP

More information :
parent.support@parentsfordiversity.com

Nov 18



CONTACT

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   Parents for Diversity