

## PLR Black Families Advisory Group Meeting

May 29, 2023

Meeting Link: <https://meet.google.com/zvk-iugp-nga?authuser=0>

Principal - Sean McCarthy

Vice Principals - Navneet Singh and Kristine Lukawecky

Staff Reps - Emefa Quist, Tanesha Forbes-Bunsie, Renesha Spartalis

Secretary - Julia M.

School Council Liason - Angella T.

Present: Sean M., Navneet S., Kristine L., Julia M., Angella T., Emefa Q., Michelle A., Tanesha F.B., Ranesha S., Alexis B.,

Welcome - Sean McCarthy

Land Acknowledgement - Kristine Lukawecky

Meeting Norms - Navneet Singh

Introductions - Everyone

- **Report from PLR Equity Team - Emefa, Tanesha, and Renesha**

- Summer Open House - to share equity and Indigenous work
- June 20th for parents to see products that were created
- TFB Student Senate - 1 student called from PLR for an interview, we will get an update to see if they can represent the region
- What water means to various cultures and work highlighted by HDSB (Tanesha and Ms. Demsters Class)
  - Video highlighting how Indigenous learning can be incorporated into the classroom
  - How cross-curricular learning can be incorporated and happen while we are doing indigenous learning, how students lived experience be honoured/represented
- Emefa and Tanesha will be our Equity Leads next year

- **Guest Speaker - Michelle Aboagye from Power to Girls**

- *Inspiring girls of power one talk at a time*
- Michelle spoke with our Student Group - Black Advocacy and Education and shared her experience [Info in the newsletter]
  - Power to Girls Foundation 10 years based in GTA (MA - Research Coordinator for 1 year), also working on this project
  - Graduated from UofT - POC, BIPOC Communities - how elements show up and impact everyday experiences
  - Masters in Criminology and Legal Studies
  - Ghanaian heritage, oldest of 3 kids, pressure to impress

- Experienced both spectrums of security and insecurity/lack of pride in my blackness
- Navigating what is and what isn't blackness, at university settled and put myself part of BSA at UofT
- Michelle - did not do well the 1st year, community grounded me after the first year - went to POC, my success lay in my black pride, motivated and excited - able to immerse myself in the curriculum
- Michelle - Contributing to something much larger
- Met with Minister of Education - through community work
- Give black girls and femmes 12 - 17 opportunity to uplift their student voices - what's working and not working, what they need to change - towards a provincial experience, recruiting through November...final report will be issued April 2024 approximately on International Women's Day
- Want to empower girls for their educational future
- Michelle has been visiting schools across GTA - having an informal conversations with students and participants to give information before they agree to participate in the Afrocentric Sharing Circle (6 students)
- Research Project, Survey is the bigger goal across the province to get open house recruitment - see what recommendations are so they can be incorporated into the curriculum
- **ACTION:** Kristine will forward the survey flyer with QRCode to the BPAC, permission form will be submitted directly to Michelle there will be a deadline date [External Research Project - student and parent must consent as this process is completely voluntary and can opt in or out at any time.]
- Not research for HDSB but making recommendations to the Provincial Gov't main stakeholder
  - Research not specifically for HDSB, however making recommendations to the Provincial Government, main stakeholder
  - Systemic barriers exist and this research drives this change
  - Culturally responsive pedagogy at PLR
  - Example - regarding the curriculum - is the history and examples included include diverse groups (e.g. black inventors), ensure that it's happening at a systemic level to ensure things are more equitable
  - Many variations between schools and school boards
  - Work that Michelle is doing leads to systemic change
  - Halton has a multi-year plan
  - Implementation needs to be consistent
- Goal is consistency from the top-down
- Sharing what Power to Girls is doing - help with self-esteem and confidence (e.g. hair gel making)
- Summer Camps
- Guest Speakers

- Small group activities
- Site for GTA
- School visits
- Involved in each schools way of understanding their black girls
- Lunchtime talks and workshops
- Invest in self, live intentional, to journal
- Hoping to see that the research will identify these things in a bigger way

**Podcast lead by Student Ambassadors:**

<https://open.spotify.com/show/7uvY9n05Z296PIRaAwfGTX?si=z-max2ccQue5sQyHFRaX7g&nd=1>

**App to support each other, connect on a forum, social connection platform:**

<https://www.instagram.com/mypower.app/>

● **Items from Families for Discussion**

- Parents drive the meeting
- You know your kids better than us
- If there are things that the group wants to discuss and share, we want to hear from you and have parent input
- We don't want the group to be performative - want our thoughts and experiences in the school, and experiences of your children - what can we do to help?
- Continuing to build relationships with parents so that you feel comfortable to share concerns, aspirations, and to open up open and honest dialogue
- Group best when collaborative and we work together

● **Advisory Group - What has worked well? Feedback/Suggestions for next year?**

- Different format for the agenda
- Have a skeleton agenda (less Eurocentric style agenda) - everyone throws out agenda items and reprioritize based on need - give everyone a voice
- Thought provoking questions - good to have that in advance, prefer less formal
- When you build the relationship - have good relationships, parents feel comfortable to reach out
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● **Group Name Follow-up**

- *To revisit*

● **Chair - Is someone interested in taking on this role**

- *To revisit*

- **Day of the week for next year's meetings**
  - Monday works for everyone
- **Family Connections**
  - Families are welcome to stay online to connect with each other once school staff leave the meet
- **Items for Next Meeting**
  - TBD
- **Future Meeting Dates**
  - TBD