

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW REPORT HIGHLIGHTS GAPS IN BLACK REPRESENTATION IN THE K-12 CURRICULA ACROSS CANADA

TORONTO, August 31, 2023 - A recent study from the Canadian Commission for UNESCO (CCUNESCO), conducted by Turner Consulting Group, shines a light on the need for consistent inclusion of Black Canadians and Black history in elementary and secondary school curricula across Canada.

The report, **Black Canadians and Public Education: A scan of elementary and secondary social studies curricula**, summarizes findings from a review of how Black Canadians are represented in Canadian public school curricula. The study identified gaps and revealed opportunities for education ministries, school boards and school districts to develop a more fulsome and reflective curriculum that will positively benefit all students.

Research, undertaken by Turner Consulting Group for this report, found that there is an inconsistent approach to Black representation and to how Black History is taught in the classrooms. As each province and territory oversee their own individual educational curricula, there is no shared mandate or expectation for teaching Black Canadian history. Most importantly, each province or territory did not use the opportunity to explore the local Black Canadians of significance and the important contributions they have made to their local communities and the country.

“When we took a look at curricular documents across Canada, we found that the rich history of Black people in Canada is not explored. Where Black people are included in the curriculum, individuals are peppered throughout without any understanding of the larger history of Black people in this country and their contributions to building and shaping Canada. This paints an incomplete picture of Canadian history.” *Tana Turner, President & CEO, Turner Consulting Group.*

One theme identified by this research is that there is a focus on Black experiences from the United States, including the plight of slavery and the fight by African Americans for civil rights. The documents that were scanned for this report rarely acknowledged the experiences of Black people in Canada. The concern is that this will leave many Canadian students and teachers to be uninformed about the experiences and contributions of Black Canadians who have shaped our collective history.

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CCUNESCO and Turner Consulting Group are eager to see how this report will support the equity and inclusion work that is already taking place within Ministries of Education, school districts and classrooms across the country. This publication supports CCUNESCO's priority in fighting racism and its work in advancing the objectives of the **International Decade for People of African Descent proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in 2015-2024**.

"CCUNESCO is proud to contribute to the ongoing conversation of promoting inclusion and equity in Canada's education systems. We hope that this report will be received as a positive addition to existing research and conversation into the inclusion of Black History in Canadian classrooms with the goal of improving diversity and equity in all facets of education."

Yves-Gérard Méhou-Loko, Secretary General, Canadian Commission for UNESCO

While education is a provincial and territorial jurisdiction, the recommendations found in **Black Canadians and Public Education: A scan of elementary and secondary social studies curricula** are relevant to all regions of the country. This report scanned curricula for English-speaking school boards and institutions. CCUNESCO is planning a second phase of this project that will explore Black representation in French school curricula in Canada.

Black Canadians and Public Education: A scan of elementary and secondary social studies curricula is available in English and French at: en.ccunesco.ca/resources

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About the Canadian Commission for UNESCO

The Canadian Commission for UNESCO (CCUNESCO) serves as a bridge between Canadians and the vital work of UNESCO—the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Through its networks and partners, the Commission promotes UNESCO values, priorities and programs in Canada and brings the voices of Canadian experts to the international stage. Its activities are guided by the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other UNESCO priorities. CCUNESCO operates under the authority of the Canada Council for the Arts.

www.ccunesco.ca

About Turner Consulting Group

The Turner Consulting Group, located in Toronto, supports a range of clients to foster a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace. The firm also works with school boards to support the teaching of Black history and addressing anti-Black racism.

www.turnerconsultinggroup.ca



About DAYO Media & Communications

DAYO Media & Communications (DM&C) is an award-winning Toronto-based team of media and communications experts. Since 1999, DM&C has steered the development of multimedia and publicity campaigns, communications strategies, television shows and media literacy workshops for organizations in Canada, the United States and the Caribbean. Creating content by connecting the intersection of journalism and communications, DM&C is committed to causes that challenge us to talk, think and act.

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