

# Closing the Opportunity Gap for Racialized and Under-Resourced Communities Through the Community School Initiative

## ▶ Live online discussion summary

On December 16, 2021, participants joined panelists Dr. Ardavan Eizadirad, Devon Jones, Brice Baartman, and Sally Abudiab in a live discussion to further explore issues raised in their December [webinar](#). This summary highlights participants' discussions on the following three questions.

### 1 How can we close the achievement or opportunity gap for racialized students and those living in under-resourced communities?

#### A | Centre BIPOC Narratives

Black, Indigenous, and racialized student narratives must be integrated into and amplified by curriculum in order for all students to see themselves and their experiences reflected in classrooms.

#### B | Diversify Education Staff

Schools ought to prioritize the hiring of diverse educators who possess both the ability to connect with students and the desire to de-center eurocentric education practices.

#### C | Introduce Equitable Assessments

Educators should recognize students' unique achievements in more equitable ways (e.g., acknowledging overall student improvement vs letter grades).

#### D | Implement Wrap-Around Models to Education

Teachers must engage with students and their families to gain a broader view of the child's learning experience (e.g., systemic factors that affect learning, such as poverty) and implement support plans for those in need.

#### E | Create coaching and mentorship opportunities outside formal classrooms

Racialized students need trusted adults they can build relationships with outside of the classroom via extra-curricular activities (e.g., coaches, tutors, mentors)

### 2 What are some strategies to make remote and hybrid learning more accessible and inclusive for everyone?

Curriculum flexibility

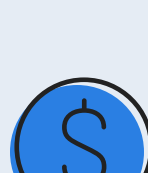
Relationship building

Digital literacy education

School-issued laptops

Promotion of safer space

### 3 How can we make partnerships between the public, non-profit sector, and the private sector more reciprocal, feasible, and sustainable to advance equity and social justice?



Provide funding with no strings attached to prioritize community needs



Eliminate one-size-fits-all policies and move towards equitable relationships



Identify creative solutions to redistribute resources



Work with community stakeholders to bridge gaps

## The Community School Initiative

The Community School Initiative is a partnership between the Youth Association for Academics, Athletics, and Character Education (YAAACE) and Spirit of Math offering extra-curricular supplementary programs outside of school hours. The goal of the program is to close the opportunity gap for racialized and under-resourced communities. The program offers the Spirit of Math curriculum to students in grades two to eight supported by parents, coaches, and Ontario Certified Teachers (OCT).

Community school initiative: <https://www.communityschoolinitiative.com>  
Spirit of math: <https://spiritofmath.com>  
YAAACE: <https://yaaace.com>



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