



Black Legal Action Centre

Suite 221 – 720 Spadina Avenue • Toronto • Ontario • M5S

Statement to our Community on the State of Education in Ontario

Statement By:

THE BLACK LEGAL ACTION CENTRE (BLAC)

May 23, 2019

The Black Legal Action Centre (BLAC) is a not-for-profit corporation incorporated under the laws of Ontario. BLAC provides legal representation to low and no-income people on matters related to housing and shelter, income maintenance, social assistance, human rights, health, employment, and education. BLAC engages in test case litigation, law reform, and community development. BLAC also provides summary legal advice, brief services, and public legal education.

BLAC opened its doors to the public in March of 2019. In the short time we have been open, we have become acutely aware through work with our community, and affirmed through recent media reports, that our children are, in many instances, not safe in Ontario's schools. We believe that many school boards and school administrators are failing to meet their legal obligation to ensure the well-being, achievement and safety of **all** children in their care.

In particular, we are concerned by the apparent failure of school administrators to properly address the bullying of Black children. We believe that the impact of this failure is to negate the worth of our children and their bodies and that it is the result of anti-Black racism. As parents and all those who care for children, we all expect – and trust – that our children will be safe when they go to school. However, for the Black community, this trust is being violated. This violation, and the corresponding negative message it sends to our children about their worth in our society, is something no child should experience. It is our position that the excessive disciplinary measures employed against our children, the dismissive treatment of their parents in their efforts to protect their children, and the criminalization of both, are examples of anti-Black racism.

BLAC's vision is a society where anti-Black racism is named and meaningfully addressed and our mandate is to challenge individual and systemic anti-Black racism across Ontario. In furtherance of this mandate, we encourage you to contact us if you believe that you or your child have been the target of anti-Black racism.

1-877-736-9406