

# THE CENTRE FOR BLACK STUDENT EXCELLENCE

The Centre for Black Student Excellence Newsletter | April 2023

## Centre for Black Student Excellence

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We invite you to explore our new online presence at [www.yrdsb.ca/blackexcellence](http://www.yrdsb.ca/blackexcellence) to:

- Access videos, resources and information about community partners.
- Learn more about our work to dismantle anti-Black racism, guided by our strategy.
- Celebrate Black excellence through video, feature stories, podcasts and more.
- Find out about programs available to Black students and families.
- Check out our new community newsletter.
- And much more.

## YRDSB Upcoming Events

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**Celebrating Black Excellence Campaign:** YRDSB will be celebrating Black History Month with Celebrating Black Excellence - Black Voices. Staff, students and community members who identify as Black are invited to make submissions. [Submit Here!](#)

### **Exploring Internet Usage and Its Impact on Mental Health for Black Youth**

March 29th, 2023, 6:30 PM

Join us for an evening of community, conversation and knowledge exchange. The York Region District School Board, in collaboration with The Alliance of Educators for Black Students is hosting **Moving Forward Hand in Hand:** parent/caregiver workshops supporting students of African Caribbean Canadian Heritage.

Please [register](#) by March 26th, 2023!

## YRDSB Programs

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### **Black Excellence Program**

The vision of the Black Excellence Program, (BEP), is to advance the achievement, wellbeing and sense of belonging of Black students in YRDSB schools through responsive programming that affirms their identity, builds on their strengths, and enhances their access to academic opportunities after high school. Students will have opportunities to learn from each other, experts from diverse fields, and mentors who will uplift, inspire and encourage them.

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The Center for Black Student Excellence is pleased to announce that in the 2022-2023 school year, the program will be extended to 100 students from YRDSB secondary schools who self-identify as Black or African descended.

Please share information about the Black Excellence Program with your school community and encourage your students to sign-up for this Black-affirming experience using the [BEP Registration Form](#).

## **Ascending Sisters Pilot Project**

In alignment with the Dismantling Anti-Black Racism Strategy, Ascending Sisters serves as a mentorship program that connects Black girls and Black non-binary students with self-identified Black YRDSB staff (e.g., teachers, educational assistants, Child and Youth workers, support professionals, administrators). Cisgender girls, transgender girls and non binary students from grades 7-10 in selected pilot schools are all welcome to participate.

Through targeted wellness, health and mentorship opportunities, students will be provided with the opportunity to develop a stronger sense of self, promote healing, increase ability to advocate, communicate effectively and further enhance their leadership skills.

Please contact the Black Excellence Planning Team at [ascendingsisters@yrdsb.ca](mailto:ascendingsisters@yrdsb.ca) if you have further questions.

## **Rise Brothers**

Rise Brothers is committed to supporting Black males—elementary & secondary students—from grades 7 to 12. Through school contacts, participating schools will be asked to recommend Black male students who fit the following new criteria:

- Black male-identified
- Presently achieving level 2 or below (elementary) or credit deficient (secondary)
- Have experienced attendance challenges
- Have a problematic school discipline history

Please take a look at our promotional [video](#), which outlines the program's vision and goals.

Please contact the Black Excellence Planning Team at [Blackexcellence@yrdsb.ca](mailto:Blackexcellence@yrdsb.ca) if you have further questions.

# THE CENTRE FOR BLACK STUDENT EXCELLENCE

## Partners

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**The Alliance of Educators for Black Students (AEBS)** is committed to promoting well-being and excellence in achievement for students of African/ Caribbean heritage. You can follow them on Twitter [@AEBSyrdsb](#)

**Learn more about Black community agencies that provide supports in your area:**

[Aurora Black Community \(ABC\)](#)

[ANCHOR \(Formerly Vaughan African Canadian Association \(VACA\)\)](#)

[BYR \(Black York Region Youth\)](#)

[Markham African Caribbean Canadian Association \(MACCA\)](#)

[Newmarket African Caribbean Canadian Association \(NACCA\)](#)

[Parents of Black Children](#)

[The Black Foundation of Community Networks \(BFCN\)](#)

[York Region Alliance of African Canadian Communities \(YRAACC\)](#)

## Upcoming Community Events

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### Advancing Black Excellence in STEAM

DPCDSB Graduation Coaches for Black Students program in collaboration with The University of Toronto present, BLACK EXCELLENCE S.T.E.A.M. DAY!

The University of Toronto, Mississauga, is offering an evening of S.T.E.A.M. workshops to Black secondary students in Dufferin-Peel CDSB.

This workshop provides students, and their families, with an opportunity to explore the University campus, participate in interactive workshops and conduct STEAM experiments with the Forensic Science program, UTM's Black Student Association and the Let's Talk Science program. Students will also leave with great UTM swag!

[Register Here!](#)

### NACCA Scholarships

[NACCA scholarships](#) are awarded to students who are entering their first year of full time post-secondary studies and demonstrate academic excellence and a commitment to community service in order to break down barriers and build inclusive spaces.

**All scholarship applications are due by March 31, 2023.**

# THE CENTRE FOR BLACK STUDENT EXCELLENCE

## Youth School Success Initiative Registration Open

[Youth School Success Initiative \(YSSI\)](#) is an ethno-specific collaborative made up of 7 York and Toronto-based agencies working together to empower the educational and holistic success of black youth in York and Toronto regions. YSSI will deliver a wrap-around program that best meets the needs of identified Black youth in the York Region and Toronto District School Boards.

## Help Address Anti-Black Racism in Vaughan

If you identify as a Black citizen living in Vaughan, bring your voice to the table. You can help identify and address anti-Black racism by providing input to improve City programs, policies, procedures and services. Details of surveys and focus groups are available on the [City of Vaughan website](#).

## SHINE Podcast

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### Listen to the [SHINE Podcast](#)

SHINE is a YRDSB podcast that features voices from the Black community. It introduces conversations that inspire and challenge. Guests share their lived experiences, advice, industry expertise and more. SHINE is a production of Tune In YRDSB. [Tune In YRDSB](#) is the first podcast of its kind in Ontario, featuring a wide range of topics related to education. Tune In YRDSB is available on all major podcast platforms.



To request support from a member of the Centre for Black Student Excellence team please email [BlackStudentExcellence@yrdsb.ca](mailto:BlackStudentExcellence@yrdsb.ca)