

# WHAT IS CULTURALLY RELEVANT RESPONSIVE AND SUSTAINING PEDAGOGY (CRRSP)

CULTURALLY RELEVANT RESPONSIVE & SUSTAINING PEDAGOGY  
advances educational justice by:



"I want all my students to feel seen in the classroom, to be seen in the curriculum. I want learners to feel empowered to share their voice and identity with pride."

GEDSB TEACHER

# WHY WE NEED CRRSP IN OUR SCHOOLS

Students deserve a quality public education that honors their cultures, backgrounds, and communities. Their education should connect academic learning to their lives, strengths, needs and abilities outside of school. We need culturally responsive, relevant, and sustaining pedagogy to transform schooling that impacts students' lives every day.

1

## CRRSP works.

- CRRSP has been shown to **increase grade point averages, student engagement, self-image, critical thinking skills, and graduation rates, and decrease dropout rates and suspensions.**<sup>1</sup>
- K-12 students who participated in Tucson's Mexican American Studies program and San Francisco's Ethnic Studies program were **more likely to be engaged in literature and history lessons, pass state standardized tests, graduate, and increase their attendance and GPAs.**<sup>2</sup>

2

## Students excel in school when they see themselves reflected in the classroom and have strong, authentic relationships with their teachers.

- Studies show that **White teachers have lower expectations for students of color.** They are significantly less likely to expect Black students to finish high school and college.<sup>3</sup>
- Educators' ongoing critical reflection of their professional practice is crucial to positive student outcomes. **Educators need to be thinking critically about who is being omitted from curriculum design, classroom culture, extracurricular programming and other learning opportunities.**<sup>4</sup>

3

## The public school curriculum does not reflect the diversity and needs of students.

- Across commonly-used booklists in schools 83% of the books are written by White authors. The majority of the books found to portray people of color in inferior, stereotypical, and destructive ways.<sup>5</sup>
  - **The Ontario College of Teachers encourages teachers to hone their capacity for honest self-reflection** (see *A Self-Reflective Professional Learning Tool*) and critical thinking about anti-Black racism.<sup>6</sup>

### About the Dreams Delayed: Addressing Systemic Anti-Black Racism and Discrimination in Ontario's Public Education System

It is a call to duty-holders at all levels to take immediate and decisive steps to address the discrimination Black students and educators experience and foster a more inclusive education system. This Action Plan provides a blueprint for change and places human rights at the core. It holds all duty-holders accountable for their legal obligation under the Ontario Human Rights Code. It sets out actions that must guide duty-holders across the education system to create a learning environment in which Black students can learn and reach their fullest potential.

<https://www3.ohrc.on.ca/sites/default/files/Dreams%20Delayed%20-Addressing%20Systemic%20Anti-Black%20Racism%20and%20Discrimination%20in%20Ontario%E2%80%99s%20Public%20Education%20System.pdf>

1. Some examples of studies are: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.3102/0034654315582066>; <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/cdev.12995>; <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs1162-005-2966-1>.  
2. <http://news.stanford.edu/2016/01/12/ethnic-studies-benefits-011216/>  
3. [http://research.upjohn.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1248&context=up\\_workingpapers](http://research.upjohn.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1248&context=up_workingpapers)  
4. <https://cdn-ca.agility.io/f2c1d1f3/pa/pdf/pa-anti-black-racism-en.pdf>  
5. <http://www.nyccej.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Diverse-City-White-Curriculum.pdf>  
6. <https://sc.oct.ca/-/media/PDF/A%20Self%20Reflective%20Professional%20Learning%20Tool/EN/SPE%20Self-Reflection%20Brochure%20EN%20ACCESSIBLE%20WEB.pdf>