

ETFO celebrates Black excellence while committing to ongoing work of equity, justice

For Immediate Release – January 30, 2026

Toronto, ON – Black History Month offers a powerful moment to honour the strength, brilliance, and lasting contributions of Black Canadians. Black history is not separate from Canada's story; it is central to it, shaping the nation's past, enriching its present, and inspiring its future. This month, and every day, the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) affirms the importance of celebrating Black excellence while committing to the ongoing work of equity and justice.

As we work to build a more just society, we must continue to acknowledge and confront the enduring legacies of colonization with resolve. It is our collective duty to dismantle anti-Black racism in all its forms, while elevating and celebrating the brilliance, resilience, and excellence of Black communities. ETFO recognizes that we are not exempt from harm still occurring at local and provincial levels, but stands steadfast in its uncompromising commitment to eradicating anti-Black racism. This includes dismantling it within education, ETFO, and beyond, ensuring justice, equity, and Black excellence are not aspirations, but realities.

Although efforts have been made to address anti-Black racism embedded within organizational and institutional structures, policies, and programs, Black people continue to experience disproportionate discrimination in education, healthcare, housing, and other vital areas of life. The harm is profound for Black students, members, and families who are denied equitable opportunities and forced to navigate barriers that erode dignity and well-being. For those with intersecting identities across gender, sexuality, class, ability, and more, these injustices compound, creating layers of oppression that are sadly normalized and demand urgent dismantling.

ETFO focuses on implementing systemic changes to confront anti-Black racism, and to create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for its Black members. To support these efforts, the Federation has developed a range of resources accessible on etfo.ca. These resources include a [365 resource](#) for educators to incorporate the experiences of Black Canadians into their classrooms year-round, as well as [Black History Month resources](#), including [posters](#). This year's poster, titled "We Didn't Cross the Waters Alone," was created by multidisciplinary artist Destinie Adelakun and intentionally features traditional West African folklore, imagery, and concepts with curriculum-based African Canadian history and the importance of looking to the future. #FutureGriot is a hashtag that captures the reality that all Black students will ascend from their present experience of being learners to one day being the keepers of future history.

ETFO is also awarding two [Black Educator Bursaries](#) to Black individuals entering their first year of a faculty of education in Ontario. More information is available at etfo.ca/awards.

-30-

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