

AADAC 21/22 DAC Presentation

Conejo Valley Unified School District
African American Advisory Council

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First AADAC In the History of CVUSD



- **In fall of 2021 the BOE established the first AADAC in the history of our district, with the first meeting taking place in September 2021**
- **Currently made up of 21 parents representing 15 schools**
- **Goal is to have at least 18 schools represented by fall of 2022**
- **The greatest area of underrepresentation is at the elementary level, so that where we hope to focus outreach**

A Goal of Mutual Education & Understanding

- **Establishing AADAC has opened a dialogue between district leadership and Black families about the needs of Black students**
- **AADAC parents are committed to learning from the district about their policies and programs as well as educating the district about what is working for our students and what barriers are holding our kids back**
- **We are advocates and thought partners, brainstorming ideas and sharing data-driven solutions to the achievement gap and other challenges African American students face**

Our hope is that this conversation and collaboration will result in actions that move us toward our AADAC goals, which are:

- **A safer more inclusive learning environment**
- **Greater academic opportunities and outcomes**



Small Population, Significant Challenges

- **Black students make up about 2% of the population of CVUSD**
- **Being a small group often means not having the numbers to amplify our voices or draw attention to our needs**
- **The needs of Black students are as unique as African American history itself**
- **We did not emigrate here but were forced here in chains**
- **An ideology of black inferiority grew out of the need to justify slavery**
- **Those ideological justifications are embedded in American systems, culture, and consciousness**
- **This anti-black bias persists today and associates blackness with laziness, low intellect, and criminality**

ALL of us are affected by these pervasive stereotypes

Anti-Black Bias

The evidence of anti-black bias in CVUSD is seen in the data. Compared to white students, Black students in CVUSD are:

- **suspended at higher rates (1.7% vs .6%)**
- **receive a D or F on a report card at higher rates (HS - 32% vs. 14%)**
- **accessing honors courses at lower rates (e.g. Math 6A 30% vs. 60%)**
- **college and career ready at lower rates (32% vs. 61%)**

Black students are just as capable and intelligent as their peers, and they are not more aggressive. Yet, they are too often viewed through the lens of negative stereotypes at school, and it undermines their academic achievement and social-emotional health.*

Black students are not just fighting to master academic material, they are fighting biases that live in the minds of the society around them and in some of its authority figures.

Our Expectations

- **Understand that AADAC *does not* expect CVUSD to dismantle all racism in society, or solve all of our kids' problems**
- **We as parents know that it is our job to raise and teach our children discipline, confidence, and to be good citizens.**
- **We *do* expect the district to partner with us to make systemic changes, increase accountability and transparency, and remove barriers that hold our kids back in school.**

Some of the BARRIERS that AADAC is discussing with district staff are:

- **The lack of Black teachers, counselors, and staff on CVUSD campuses – role models are a crucial part of child development and confidence (a/o January 2022 there were 8 black teachers of 905, 0 black counselors and psychologists out of 63, and 2 black administrators in CVUSD)**
- **The paucity of black history and voices included in our curriculum – seeing a reflection of self increases engagement**
- **The continued use of the n-word, racial slurs, and microaggressions from students and adults on campuses***
- **The perceived lack of consequences when an adult or child engages in racial harassment**
- **The lack of parent understanding of academic pathways and how students can navigate the system to reach academic goals**

District Efforts & Communication with AADAC

We see and appreciate the district's efforts to acknowledge and chip away at these barriers over the past year. We've had presentations from district staff on:

- **Core Literature changes to increase diversity of texts and Ethnic Studies course progress**
- **Racial harassment, how to report, CVUSD legal responsibility, and investigative steps**

This presentation resulted in CVUSD taking the following actions:

- **Created and distributed anti-bullying posters**
- **Sent reminders to all stakeholders on confidential reporting and CVUSD's commitment to safe learning environments**
- **Human Resources staff demographic data and hiring practices**
- **Math pathways, academic levels, and A-G requirements**
- **LCAP and SPSA and practical ways to give input**

Top Priorities for AADAC

- **“No Tolerance” - Institute a policy that creates accountability and requires anti-bias education in response to racial slurs and harassment. Any investigation into racial harassment should trigger mandatory diversity training for students and/or staff who engage in bullying behavior or microaggressions. We’re an educational institution; let’s educate our community about why these behaviors are harmful, and how we can do better.**
- **Training - Provide comprehensive, mandatory training in anti-bias, anti-racism, and cultural sensitivity for all teachers, counselors, and staff done by outside specialists to protect privacy and encourage openness. (USC, UCLA, CTA all provide this training)**

More AADAC Priorities

- **Recruit Black Teachers - Reach out to college and university education programs (UCLA, USC, HBCUs, etc) to help recruit and hire Black teachers, counselors and administrators. A diverse staff brings life experience, perspective, and skills to our district that we need in order to change the culture and make a real impact on student outcomes. If we continue to use the same recruiting methods with tiny adjustments we will continue to get the same results.**
- **Hire a Black Cultural Liaison or Consultant - A full or part-time employee who who can provide academic and social counseling to Black students that is free of anti-Black bias and low expectations, and who will reach out to families to help them navigate the educational system.**

If we change school climate and prioritize role models and social support for Black students, engagement in school and academics rises, and achievement gaps start to close.

- ★ The formation of AADAC, and the conversations it facilitates are NOT the solution to our serious issues. As conversations take place, a plan of ACTION must take shape and be put into motion. That plan should address the barriers that result in the persistent achievement gap for Black students in our district. **We request a comprehensive plan for Black student achievement that encompasses our priorities and results in improved outcomes for African American students.**

The parents of AADAC are committed to having honest conversations about the needs of our children, the impact of district policies, and the efforts we need to make together to ensure the success of our students. We do this work with the understanding that life, and education, are not a zero-sum games. We would like careful thought and effort put into the improvement of the education of our Black children, while taking nothing away from all of the other children of our district.

Our goal is to see all of the students in our district rise and thrive together.

Why Should AADAC Be Important to You?

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”

-MLK



Questions?