QWYN MACLACHLAN

4. ARE WE DOING ANTI-RACISM?

A Critical Look at the Ontario Ministry of Education's Anti-Racism Policy and Social Studies Curriculum

ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the new Ontario Social Studies, History and Geography (SSHG) curriculum document, released to considerable praise in 2013. MacLachlan undertakes a textual analysis of the document through an anti-racism lens. The lack of an anti-racism framework at the Ontario Ministry of Education level will be explored through the analysis of its anti-racism and Ethnocultural Equity in School Boards (AREESB) Guidelines, as well as its revised Equity and Inclusivity Education in Ontario Schools (EIEOS). There will be an investigation into the compliance of the SSHG curriculum in relation to the EIEOS document, suggesting the re-vamped policy does not accurately address racism within an educational context. The aim is to expose the SSHG curriculum as a document that excludes the voices of those who continue to experience discrimination, particularly as it pertains to racialized bodies. The assertion is that the new EIEOS neglect its anti-racist origins. While all three documents attempt to inspire teachers to create "equitable" classrooms, the language throughout reinforces the dominant narrative; the EIEOS document only moves further away from addressing and working within an anti-racist framework.

Keywords: Ontario, Social Studies, History, Geography, curriculum, ethnocultural, equity, school boards, anti-racism

> *The social studies, history, geography, and Canadian and world studies programs will enable students to become responsible, active citizens within the diverse communities to which they belong. As well as becoming critically thoughtful and informed citizens who value an inclusive society, students will have the skills they need to solve problems and communicate ideas and decisions about significant developments, events, and issues.* (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 6)

INTRODUCTION

Ontario's new Social Studies, History and Geography (SSHG) curriculum document was released in 2013, to be implemented the following school year. It was thought

A. Abdulle & A. N. Obeyesekere (Eds.), New Framings on Anti-Racism and Resistance: Volume 1 – Anti-Racism and Transgressive Pedagogies, 57–68.

to be a progressive approach to the Social Studies curriculum content, mainly in its two strands: Heritage and Identity, and People and Environments. The two policies developed that would have likely had the greatest impact on the content of the SSHG are the Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity in School Boards (AREESB) Guidelines, created by the Ontario Ministry of Education (1993), and the revised Equity and Inclusivity Education in Ontario Schools (EIEOS) Guidelines (2014) developed by the Ministry to replace it over two decades later (a shorter Equity *Strategy* was released in 2009, but the full guideline document was not released until 2014). The AREESB (1993) was written to address the policies, procedures and practices within the school system that it states, "are racist in their impact, if not their intent," (p. 5). It clearly acknowledged that, "Ontario's school system has been and continues to be mainly European in perspective," (p. 5) and demonstrated intent and dedication to change. The EIEOS (2014) acknowledges the continued pervasive nature of racial prejudice and states, "educators, administrators, and school staff must maintain their focus on racism and disability to address these issues," (p. 12). However, it also acknowledges the intersections within which many students are located, and shifts focus to the grounds of discrimination as a whole outlined in the human rights code.

A textual analysis of these documents will explore the lack of antiracism framework present in both the structure of the new SSHG Curriculum document and its curriculum expectations. I am concerned with exposing the SSHG Curriculum document as one, which excludes the voices of those who continue to experience discrimination, particularly as it pertains to racialized bodies in today's society. I assert that the EIEOS abnegates its antiracist origins in its attempt to address multiple discriminatory factors at once. While all three documents attempt to inspire teachers to create "equitable" classrooms, the language throughout reinforces the dominant structural narrative.

Many educators were excited about the new SSHG Curriculum document, believing it would more accurately reflect the "diverse" needs of their students. As a teacher candidate in 2013, I was told by an course instructor, that this document was a welcomed upgrade from the "outdated" 2004 edition. One of the main additions was the inclusion of First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Histories from Kindergarten through to Grade Eight. As Social Studies is the Elementary equivalent of History and Geography, it was surprising that this was not already the case. The same instructor asked the class to write Social Studies units for our upcoming practicums. That semester I had a Grade Five class, and the following semester I had Grade Two. While it was not yet mandatory to use the revised version, I was eager to see what additions within the SSHG Curriculum I would be working with.

As a young girl, I was both painfully aware and incredibly oblivious of my own Blackness and its implications in the larger societal context. I struggled to understand why there *must* be a distinction between "acting" Black and visibly being Black. My visibility in majority White public alternative schools was strictly optical, as was my existence in Black social contexts. As a first generation Canadian I questioned,

the many places my ancestors have lived, been born and raised, which if any could I claim Indigeneity to? Where is my place on First Nations soil?

I was interested to see if there were moments within the document that acknowledged the presence and experiences of Blackness in Canada. As a student, I did not learn about the existence of Black settlements in Canada until I was well into High School. Even then, it was only once a Black teacher came to the school (she was only there a year) that any educator of mine was willing and prepared to provide any substantial information about the Black Canadian experience. The absence of Black representation in my schools, and the subject matter being taught, made me question my Canadianness, irrespective of my Canadian identity. The lack of visibility in the education system with regards to both teachers and lessons, effectively led me to understand Blackness as not belonging to Canada in the way Whiteness did. I was even further removed from an understanding of my place in a colonial system that continues to deny its violent history with Canada's First Nations Peoples. As I wrote the Grades Two and Five Social Studies units, nothing stood out to me as particularly "new" information. However, I did note that both Grades' curriculum expectations for the units I was to plan; People Of The World, and Government Structures, did not call for teaching aspects of antiracism in any sense.

THE POLICY

The Ontario Ministry of Education created the AREESB Guidelines in 1993. This was in response to an amendment made to the Education Act in 1992, which called for antiracism policies in all School Boards across Ontario. The EIEOS Guidelines developed in 2014 (revised from the 2009 document entitled Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy) were created to replace the 1993 document. These policies are crucial not only with regards to development and implementation throughout School Boards, but also within the Ontario Ministry of Education itself. The key difference between both documents is the focus on antiracism. The mandate for the AREESB states, "this policy document is intended to assist schools and school boards in ensuring that the principles of antiracism and ethnocultural equity are observed everywhere in Ontario's school system," (1993, p. 3). Though the renewed goals of the EIEOS state, "These guidelines are designed to help Ontario school boards review and/or continue to develop, implement, and monitor equity and inclusive education policies that support student achievement and well-being," (2014, p. 8) the focus has shifted to all prohibited grounds of discrimination.

Beyond an initial look at both documents' mission statements, it is clear that the EIEOS is missing the critical approach to institutionalized racism that existed in the AREESB. This is partially because the documents serve different purposes. The AREESB was meant to bring racist attitudes and policies to the attention of the education community. Antiracism as a cause had yet to be addressed in this particular proactive manor. The document sought to aid teachers in equipping students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to live in an increasingly diverse

world, appreciate diversity, and reject discriminatory behaviours and attitudes as they pertain to racism (1993, p. 5). On the other hand, the EIEOS states, "Several boards have expanded these antiracism and ethnocultural policies into more inclusive equity policies that address a broader range of discriminatory factors," (2014, p. 61). I find it hard to believe anyone could argue racism has been eradicated. However, what the EIEOS implies is that a policy specifically addressing systemic racism is no longer necessary. This line of reasoning inadvertently dilutes the urgency for continued antiracist practice, but not because of its assertion that other oppressions are also valid. The intersections of oppression are integral to the work of the antiracist educator. The shortfalls of the EIEOS go beyond intersections. The document includes a resource entitled *Racism Hurts* developed by the Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario and the Human Rights Commission. The poster used to advertise this resource is the story of a young girl whose "brown" skin drew "unwanted attention." The poster reads:

> Parveen was proud of her name and worked hard to fit in with her classmates. She was happy with herself just the way she was, but her name and brown skin drew unwanted attention. This made her unhappy. Sometimes she cried.
> Did her name or the colour of her skin make her different? Would changing her name help? She soon realized that even if she did change her name, she would never be able to change her brown skin. (2014, 78)

The assumptions one is led to make are multiple. Most notable, is that the reader is led to believe that if Pavreen could change the colour of her skin, she would. It also assumes those who are giving her "unwanted attention" do not have brown skin. These assumptions, whether or not intentional, reinforce Whiteness as a dominant presence worthy of striving for. It targets Whiteness as the aggressor without further problematizing its power and privilege. The inclusion of this resource gives the impression that the Ontario Ministry of Education acknowledges the racism enacted in educational institutions. However, I question whether policy makers are aware that our current system is filled with documents as this example shows, which specifically pander to a White audience, perpetuating the systemic racism inherent in educational institutions.

The EIEOS uses the statement, "we've come a long way" in its introduction, as if to imply that there is less work to be done in the field of antiracism. Statements like these perpetuate the narrative of the post-racial world. They suggest that documents like the AREESB have brought about such "significant" change with regards to antiracism specifically, that they are no longer necessary. If examples like Pavreen are any indication, this is absolutely not the case. The AREESB states:

> Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity policies go beyond a broad focus on multiculturalism and race relations… inequities in the treatment of members of some cultures and races that have occurred as a result of inequities of power and privilege have often tended to be ignored. (1993, p. 7)

This language acknowledges the silencing of racialized bodies in dominant settings. The acknowledgement of power and privilege as it pertains to antiracism education is crucial. It has, however, become very clear that, despite an open acknowledgement of structures of power and privilege affecting racial hierarchies, Whiteness does not like to acknowledge its own dominance. While the AREESB mentions White-Eurocentric curriculum, there is no acknowledgement of a power structure benefitting Whiteness in either the EIEOS or the SSHG Curriculum.

One of my biggest concerns with the policy guidelines continues to be that the Ontario Ministry of Education did not create a fully enforceable policy for schools, but a strategic policy framework for School Boards. Each School Board within Ontario operating under the Education Act must *create* a policy based on the guidelines that each individual School Board must monitor and enforce. A shift in language introduces the EIEOS in 2014, with surprisingly little change in the way of developing practical solutions to racist practices to be implemented in educational institutions. Enforcement is still the responsibility of the individual School Boards. This leads to a lack of accountability on behalf of the Ontario Ministry of Education when it comes to utilizing an antiracist framework in the development of curriculum documents mandated for Ontario. As George Dei (2014) notes, "institutions are quick to discuss the need for reflexivity among teachers with regard to their teaching practice, the same cannot be said for policy, which tends to reside discursively in a "no person's land" of bureaucratic obfuscation" (p. 17). The absence of a policy holding the Ministry of Education accountable exemplifies this statement, as the AREESB and the EIEOS both call for changes from teachers and principals.

Developing guidelines and *mandating* a policy instead of *creating an enforceable* policy presents us with multiple issues and consequences. First, it removes responsibility from the policy creators. It ensures there is something to point to if a complaint arises. This takes away from the School Boards responsibility and dedication to antiracism. Second, it removes necessity from policy creators to implement the policy in their own documents, as is evidenced by the SSHG curriculum document. The AREESB states a commitment to antiracism curriculum. The EIEOS (2014) shifts the focus from antiracism and ethnoculturalism to equity and inclusivity. It states, "While racism continues to be a major focus, the strategy recognizes that Ontario's publicly funded schools must increase their efforts to develop an approach that will respond to the full range of needs within the education community," (p. 13). The language of equity is embedded in the EIEOS document, but it is approached as if a focus on racism causes the continued oppression of others. Without penalties in place for improper implementation or failure to implement, antiracism policies can go undeveloped and unutilized.

The justification continues to be the importance of all equity and diversity over the maintenance of one policy specifically dedicated to antiracism. After a brief look, it would seem not all Ontario School Boards appear to have online access to their antiracism policies. I assert that creating guidelines instead of a policy gives School Boards the opportunity to "deal with racism" however they see fit. It also

means School Boards that do not reflect the "diversity" referred to by the Ministry of Education can act as if they do not have a problem because they do not see/encounter it on a daily basis. There do not appear to be any penalties for failing to include specifically antiracist framework in an equity policy. Removing specifically antiracist language and framework through the overhaul of the AREESB, while using the discourse of equity and inclusion when referring to diversity, did little to move antiracism forward. If anything, it had the opposite effect.

THE IMPORTANCE OF AN ANTIRACIST FRAMEWORK IN THE CLASSROOM

Our educational institutions have been created and maintained through colonial power. George Dei and Marie McDermott state, "colonial education, which has permeated our individual and collective consciences, as informed by Euro-Enlightenment paradigms, has classified and ordered our world by way of race, class, gender, sexuality, religion, and ability," (Dei & McDermott, 2014, p. 3). Within an institutional capacity, Eurocentrism continues to dictate what students learn at both conscious and unconscious levels. Many of the books I owned as a child reflected the diversity of society, while the books I encountered at school continued to center Whiteness. Characters I could embody in the stories I read were nourishment to my imagination and creativity.

Jennifer Simpson (2003) notes, "marking whiteness can be part of the process of addressing and undoing racist practices in higher education" (p. 175). I believe the same to be true in an elementary context. The saliency of systemic privilege and disenfranchisement begins at birth. By the time students enter Kindergarten classrooms, their conceptions of difference have already been highly influenced by their social interactions. This is to say that we need to be developing instructional pedagogies that refrain from ignoring the experiences of racialized peoples, and gives opportunities to our youngest students already affected by systemic racism. The EIEOS attempts to address direct racism, but has trouble identifying indirect structural racist practices.

Antiracism policies are developed for numerous reasons. They do not necessarily arise from a sudden capacity for understanding the importance of antiracist work. Those in charge of creating and instituting the policies predominantly inhabit Whiteness. Antiracism work involves an acknowledgement of embodied experience, which is only possible when one is aware embodied experience exists. For a racialized body, the embodiment of racist experiences may be common sense, but for dominant White bodies, the experiences of racialized people as those of embodiment are not necessarily heard or validated. The stories of racism as experienced by racialized people can be construed as invalid by Whiteness.

Antiracism acknowledges colonization and challenges hegemonic power. It validates the experiences of colonized/racialized peoples. As Dei (2014) acknowledges, "for the colonized, anti-racism research can be a healing and regenerative process," (p. 21). As an antiracist educator, I have come to understand

my capacity for antiracist education through my research and practice, as well as the importance of naming Whiteness with regards to an antiracism framework. In our society, to consider race has often been to consider Blackness and marginality. Because of the ”unmarked” nature of the White body and the hyper visibility of the Black body, discussions of race have often focused on Blackness as the problem without considering Whiteness as both the problem and the problematizer. As Simpson (2003) states, “marking whiteness requires that teachers make visible patterns of behavior that are based on the assumption of white superiority,” (p. 157). Here Simpson is referring to the post-secondary classroom. However, it is just as important to mark Whiteness in elementary settings. This is not to “target” White students, but to make *as* visible, the white body.

Dei (2000) writes that the concept of not “seeing race” can permeate the classroom, which, “masks and denies the existence of racism and provides an excuse for complacency or the outright dismantling of anti-racism programs and initiatives” (p. 26). He notes that antiracism work can only begin once individuals are made aware of their positions of power, privilege and disadvantage (p. 25). These are ideas we need to introduce to young children as early as they begin to recognize difference. Recognizing the racial balance of power does not “teach racism.” Race is “taught” though social relationships and interactions from birth. Dei’s understanding of racial experiences help to give racialized bodies a voice in settings where they often feel silenced, and to insist dominant bodies are aware of these voices and experiences. Though the EIEOS puts forth a concerted effort to challenge racist attitudes, behaviours and practices, it is not until the institutions creating these policies address the racism inherent in the system that we can bring about change.

THE CURRICULUM

The most recent version of the SSHG curriculum was released in 2013. The document is divided into multiple sections, which include, Introduction, The Program, Assessment and Evaluation, Considerations for Program Planning, and Curriculum Expectations for individual grades as well as Appendices and a Glossary. The vision statement of the SSHG Curriculum Document points to the goal of responsible active citizens in diverse communities valuing an inclusive society (see p. 1). Is this possible without an understanding of colonization, and its influence on the creation of the education system we know today? In other words, can antiracism be achieved in a system that does not acknowledge its contributions to racist practices?

The curriculum documents created by the Ontario Ministry of Education are visibly lacking in critical antiracist framework. Any teacher not familiar with antiracist education is no more equipped to inquire with their students about antiracism than they were prior to referencing the document. Without taking the time to name racism as a product of a colonial project that continues today, antiracism work is not being done. A look at the SSHG document demonstrates the absence of critical antiracism within mandated curriculum. As the SSHG document focuses on the diversity of

society and teaching students to appreciate and value the diverse communities they belong to, it should necessitate operation within an antiracist framework. Within the 216-paged document, the word race is used a total of three times. Racism is mentioned a total of four times- three times in the Grade 3 expectations, and once in the Grade 6, and all of them refer to racism as a historic practice. This updated document was re-written in 2013 to replace the 2004 curriculum document. Notable updates include imbedding Aboriginal history in all grades and providing less detailed content so students have more flexibility in developing the relevance of the content for their community.

Grades 3 and 6 are the groups in which racism is described *as* racism in the SSHG Curriculum document. There are mentions of discrimination in Grades 7 and 8, but they are generally used as a substitute for racism as exemplified by expressions such as, "*discrimination facing Black Loyalists*," (2013, p. 138). The language used thoroughly impacts the way the subject is taught by teachers and received by students. The language of discrimination in this context glues discriminatory behaviour to its historic reality and the history of colonialism that created the circumstances. The racism discussed largely surrounds the lived experiences of both Black and First Nations peoples and focuses on how they must have felt, or how they might have reacted to their experiences. An acknowledgement of the impact of colonization, or even the power the White settler continues to hold within society, is missing in its entirety.

In one of the unit strands in Grade 3, some of the suggested questions for students include, "What are some of the ways in which First Nations people and European settlers cooperated with each other?" and, "How did settlers in Nova Scotia view the arrival of Black Loyalists?" (p. 89). The first question implies a relatively amicable relationship maintained by both parties. There is no further mention of conflict between the two communities in Grade 3. The latter question dismisses the presence of First Peoples in Nova Scotia entirely. To question how White settlers viewed the arrival of Black former slaves who were promised provisions and land (and received neither) without situating the question in its context and completely ignoring the views of First Nations people is problematic at best. These types of questions do not help to bring race to the forefront. They serve to minimize racial/colonial experiences and emphasize biases.

Urrieta and Riedel's (2006) chapter on the teaching of pre-service teachers in Social Studies, though it relates to the US, speaks to another kind of problem we experience in Canada, the denial of a colonial past and present. In their study, Urrieta taught a course on diversity while Riedel observed and recorded behaviours of primarily White pre-service secondary Social Studies Teachers. They found many of the participants refused to critically engage with the content, and instead displayed feelings of avoidance, anger, and what they refer to as *convenient amnesia*. The SSHG curriculum exemplifies the resistance Urrieta experienced and Riedel witnessed from many of the educators in their study. The language used specifically relates to Whiteness as it participates in the education system. It describes diversity

from the perspective of Whiteness and uses examples that pertain to a dominant body coming into contact with a racialized one.

Racialized bodies are constantly coming into contact with systems of oppression that view them as "other." To say that *all* students need to develop an "understanding of the diversity within local, national, and global communities" (SSHG, 2013, p. 7) dismisses the relationship racialized students are already forced to have with their social environments in ways that have already begun to develop their understanding of "diversity." Everyday encounters with stereotyped images of racialized bodies on social media are examples of narratives racialized students come into contact with on a regular basis. The language of *all* students speaks to the idea of equality and not equity. A system that unfairly biases Whiteness needs to acknowledge the disparity between White and racialized peoples, and work to bring racialized students to the forefront; not instead of the dominant, but alongside them. Reflecting on their findings, Urrieta and Reidel (2006) write,

> To advance not only in the study of race and ethnicity in education, but most important, to expose and work toward dismantling White supremacy, all teacher education courses should make the critical examination of multicultural and social justice issues the foundation of the course, and not relegate these issues to one day on the syllabus (p. 297)

While this refers to the training of Social Studies teachers, it is crucial to the success of these teachers in their future classrooms. If we consider the intention of the SSHG Curriculum document and its dedication to people and cultures around the world, it becomes clear that antiracism must be at its center as an integral component of the document.

The importance of discomfort in conversations about race within public schools is multifaceted. The uncomfortable feeling disrupts teachers' and students' sense of self and world. Non-racialized teachers need to be made aware of realities they do not experience as it pertains to systemic racism. From an antiracist perspective, and with an acknowledgement that it is within a White system of oppression that the SSHG document was created, it is important for teachers to also reflect on their own power and privilege within society, and how it affects their teaching. This process as it relates to antiracism is not a comfortable one. It includes acknowledging existence in an oppressive education system that has yet to create policies and curriculum that actively address *all* students.

The absence of a specifically antiracist framework within the curriculum as it pertains to the world today deprives young people of useful tools to combat the supremacy of Whiteness they experience on a daily basis (with or without their knowledge). Referring to racism as "a thing of the past" delegitimizes the experiences of racialized bodies, and further intensifies the notion of a post-racial society. It continues to silence racialized bodies in the same way that tailoring the topics to student "interests" and "readiness," but not to their lived experiences does. The SSHG (2013) document further suggests teachers motivate students to

work through these themes with "the end in mind" (p. 36). This notion of "the end" as a reference to "finishing" the work of antiracism, equity, inclusivity, or social justice, is incredibly misleading and quite frankly, irresponsible. There is no end to an understanding of the social relationships and power structures within society. We will always be constructing our sense of self and world on the basis of social structures. To give students the impression that at the end of a "unit" they will have learned everything there is to learn about settlers in Ontario, or else that anything they did not learn is irrelevant, is a direct product of the colonial project at work within the school system.

Dei and McDermott (2014) mention that it is important for racialized bodies to tell their stories, and challenge those who wish to relegate our experiences to those of past transgressions toward us. The newest SSHG curriculum document perpetuates the idea that racism is *in the past*. If the curriculum document itself is perpetuating a post-racial ideology, it becomes that much harder to bring stories of oppression to the forefront. The systems of power that institutionalize racist practices continue to be in power. The AREESB document was essential in forcing these power structures to recognize their colonial roots, but the revision has moved us away from a specifically antiracist focus, which has had disadvantageous effects to the project of antiracism in education.

CONCLUSION

An analysis of the SSHG curriculum document through an antiracism lens reveals the need for a more comprehensive antiracism-specific strategy. The EIEOS, while attempting to build on the AREESB, have inadvertently diminished the realities and experiences of racialized bodies within the education system by reducing antiracism-specific mandates. We should be looking to develop policies that seek to add to those already available. The revision of the AREESB Guidelines removes the urgency for antiracist reform within school boards. With regards to the SSHG curriculum document, the revision of the AREESB removes the necessity for antiracist-specific practice, and allows the language of diversity to dismiss racism as a past aggression and not a systemic form of institutionalized oppression. The additives to the document should not go unnoticed. To have been teaching any semblance of Canadian History without the presence of Canada's First Peoples is akin to re-performing the violent erasure of First Nations Peoples.

Within the documents discussed throughout this chapter, a missing link in the connection between policy and practice remains. The Ontario Ministry of Education is presented as an equitable institution by implementing a policy framework without instituting systemic reform, by writing the policy themselves. Combined with the shift in language from antiracism to equity, it leaves me questioning the dedication of the Ontario Ministry of Education to the eradication of systemic racism. There is no outright *denial* of race within these documents, but the EIEOS's acknowledgement that racism exists is no longer partnered with an acknowledgement that it was

enacted through colonial projects, or a framework for its eradication. Dei (2000) writes, "Rather than move beyond race, what we ought to move beyond is a 'denial of race as a social issue, in a society with a profoundly racist history and where institutional racism still exists'" (p. 30). The AREESB as a guiding framework for policy development was much closer to acknowledging the realities of racism both in our institutions and our society than the EIEOS.

The Ontario Ministry of Education should create a policy addressing oppression directly. A revision of the equity strategy should include specific entry points for various intersections of oppression. The structure necessary for antiracism education to inform the curriculum will not be the same structure that is required to address gender disparities. But of course, it is important to keep in mind that intersections are ever present within the colonial discourse. While the SSHG (2013) document states, "anti-discrimination education continues to be an important and integral component of the strategy" (p. 45), lumping the entire scope of diversity into one call to action does not serve the multiplicity of diverse communities we have in society. Creating more specific strategies for the vast differences within marginality will more directly serve the affected communities. It will serve to validate experiences on political levels and it will necessitate a conversation about those experiences on provincial scales.

Teachers should be vulnerable. It is impossible to do antiracism work without an understanding and feeling of discomfort. Part of this call to action is including positionality in teaching contexts. Teachers should bring their students to understand their own privileges and recognize all the intersections in the classroom. A teacher should be able to demonstrate this with their students as well. In a profession populated by predominantly White educators, influencing increasingly diverse students, it is important that racialized students know that their voices are valid in more ways than one. Not only as a student in that classroom, but as a racialized person in society.

There are of course limitations to textual analysis. Understanding the document's intended purpose and audience helps to deconstruct the content and language, but without taking into account all that informs it, it is hard to develop an understanding of its influencers. While the AREESB no longer govern antiracist policies within Ontario School Boards, they recognized racist policies and practices existing within the education system. The revision and release of the EIEOS has effectively removed specifically antiracist policy guidelines, pointing to a possible shift within the system to a belief in a post-racial society. Racialized bodies must continue to tell stories of their experiences in order to expose systemic practices of racism within institutions such as education. A system that is not doing antiracist work is inherently doing the opposite.

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