



EXPERIENCES OF ENGLISH-SPEAKING YOUTH AT THE INTERSECTIONS OF BLACKNESS AND DISABILITY IN SCHOOLS

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VULNERABLE POPULATIONS



Students (designated with special needs)

- Lower than average academic performance
- Lower than average high school graduation rates
- Tendency toward vocational training pathways
- Persistently higher dropout rates

MEES, 2017; MEQ, 2003; MEQ, 1999; Rousseau et al., 2008; Tremblay, 2017

Black Students

- Lower than average academic performance
- Lower than average high school graduation rates
- Underrepresentation in advanced academic courses leading to postsecondary education
- Overrepresentation in general adult education
- **Overrepresentation in special education**

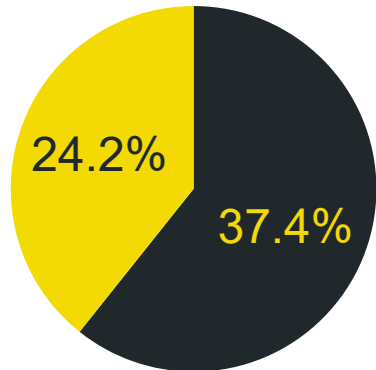


BLACK STUDENTS DESIGNATED WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



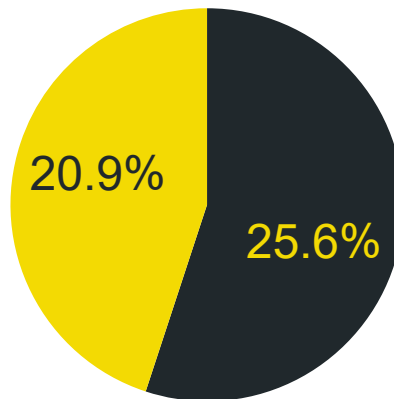
1998-2000 Cohort

French Sector



■ Black students
■ Total population

English Sector



■ Black students
■ Total population

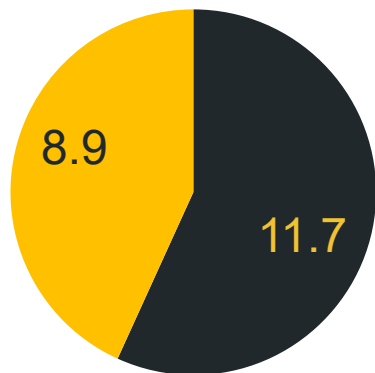


BLACK STUDENTS PLACED IN SPECIAL CLASSES/SCHOOLS



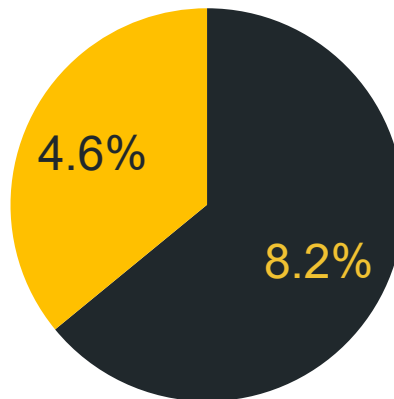
1994-1996 Cohort

French Sector



■ Black students
■ Total population

English Sector

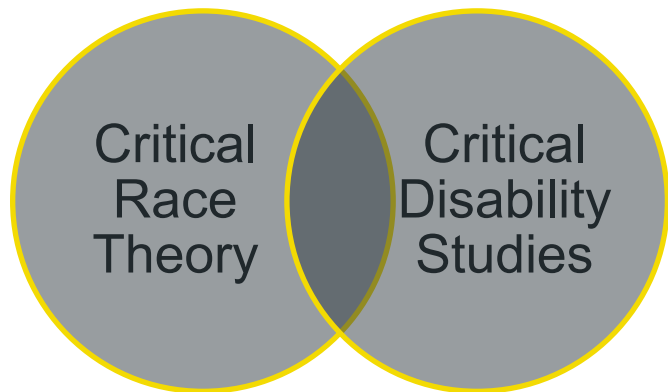


■ Black students
■ Total population



THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: DISABILITY CRITICAL RACE STUDIES

DisCrit



- Co-construction of disability and race
- Everydayness of ableism and racism
- Reconceptualization of educational systems from economic-policy based to ecology-based
- Recognition of shifting boundaries:
 - normal and abnormal
 - ability and disability
- Questions how race contributes to positioning within these boundaries

THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF RACISM AND ABLEISM: SOME EXAMPLES IN QUEBEC

Le 28 septembre 2005

Propos racistes du «Doc Mailloux» : qu'en pensez-vous?

exprimez-vous sur le sujet | consultez les commentaires du public





Sur les ondes de CKAC mercredi matin, le psychiatre Pierre Mailloux a réitéré ses affirmations faites lors de l'émission *Tout le monde en parle* dimanche soir, à la télévision de Radio-Canada.

Le controversé personnage avait alors dit que les Noirs et les Amérindiens avaient un quotient intellectuel inférieur à la moyenne.


LE DEVOIR thèmes
Enseigner dans le champ miné de l'arbitraire


A armes inégales | Pour des masques plus respectueux de l'environnement | Plaidoyer pour les cégepiens


Il y a pourtant ici une confusion évidente. En réaction au traitement réservé à leur collègue, plus d'une trentaine de professeurs de l'Université d'Ottawa ont rappelé dans une lettre l'importance de distinguer le racisme sur le campus, qu'il faut évidemment dénoncer, et le rôle de l'enseignement universitaire, qui consiste à nourrir la réflexion et à développer l'esprit critique. Les étudiants et le doyen n'ont pas été en mesure de faire ces distinctions et de poser un jugement raisonnable sur l'incident, en prenant acte du contexte d'enseignement et de l'intention de la professeure.


C'te prof là... j'ai gradué en 1998 aux début de [redacted] a H-B, une fois je l'ai entendu dire à un prof au sujet d'une autre prof ([redacted]) une haitienne qui en plus d'être enseignante était comédienne) a cette race là c'est un sous-peuple... je ne comprends pas qu'il aie oeuvré dans cette école multiculturelle aussi longtemps


2 min J'aime Répondre 1 

 **Béliers solidaires**
October 29, 2020

6 

Like Comment

 Sandra Niankeu
WOW..
Like Reply · 12w

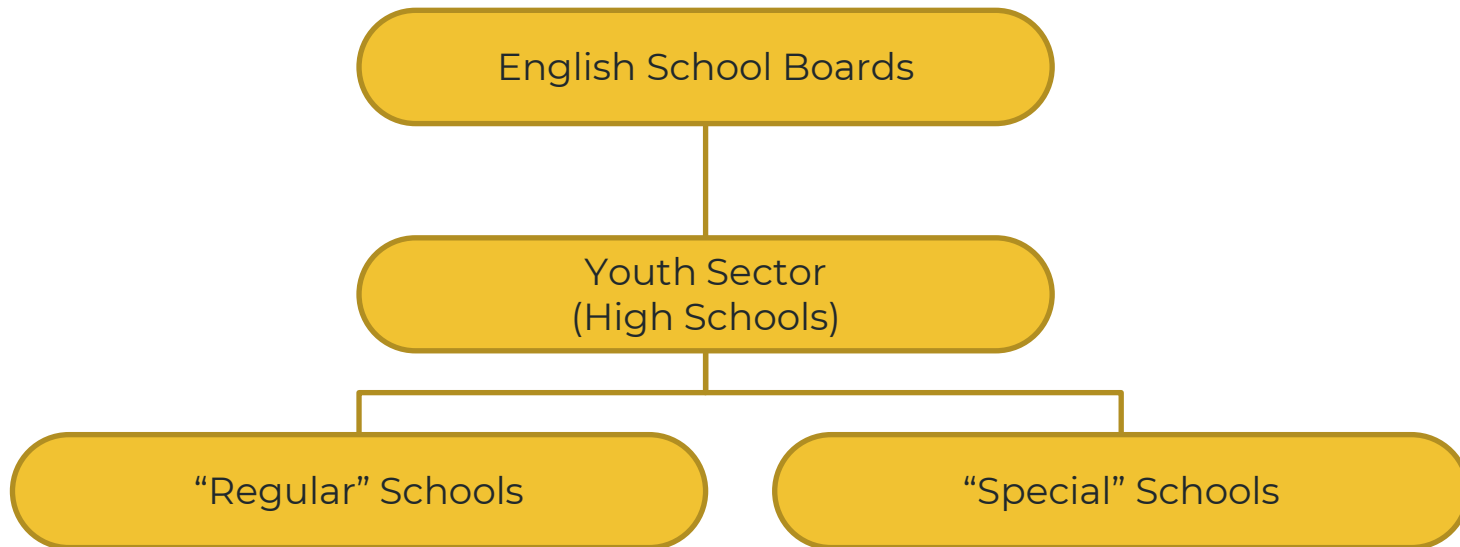
 Write a comment...

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To describe special education placement processes from student experiences
2. To describe special education placement processes from institutional dimensions
3. To analyze student experiences in interaction with institutional dimensions
4. To explore systemic and structural barriers in student experiences

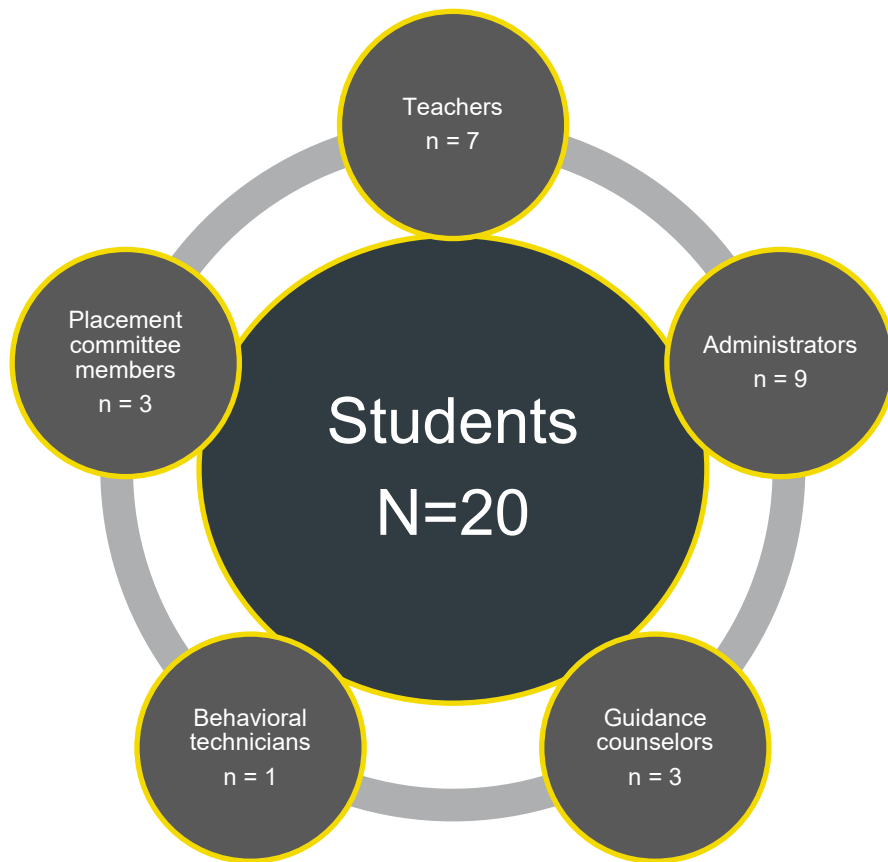


CONTEXT OF THE STUDY





PARTICIPANTS



GENERAL PORTRAIT OF STUDENT-PARTICIPANTS



Total number of participants

N= 20

Gender

M = 12

F= 8

Age

14 – 18 years

Grade level

Sec 2 = 2

Sec 4 = 11

Sec 5 = 7

Mother tongue

English = 18

French = 1

N/A = 1

Countries of origin

Canada, Ethiopia, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Senegal, Somalia, St-Kitts, St-Lucia, St-Vincent, Trinidad & Tobago

Immigration generational status

1st = 2

2nd = 7

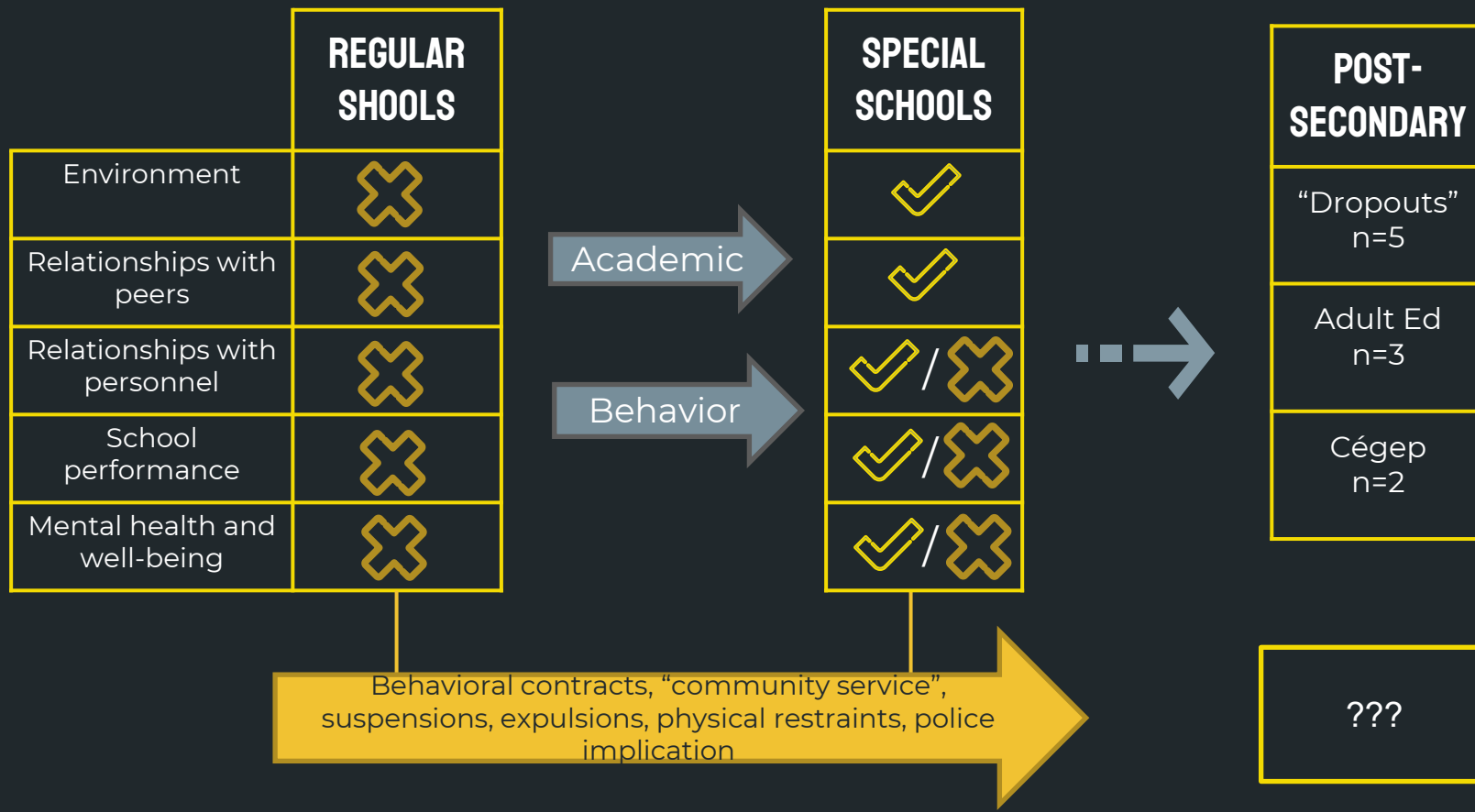
3rd + = 11

Special school placement

Elementary = 4

Secondary = 16

KEY FINDINGS: SUMMARY OF THE PLACEMENT PROCESS





SPECIAL NEEDS – EXPLOITED

The work was elementary type but like on paper you were still in like sec 1 or 2 [...] I was assigned to do the [vocational] program, like **I was assigned to do the workshop and cooking classes. That was it. No, like math problems, nothing.** Hmm mm yeah, just like basically putting away boxes, that kind of stuff [...] **Basically we were kinda like slaves in that class...** because we were forced to like clean up. I remember this one time we had swimming lessons and after that I didn't want to, like me and my friends didn't want to go to the pool because the pool wasn't clean, so we **were kinda forced to clean the whole gym, wash the benches, like clean the basement,** like all those kind of stuff.

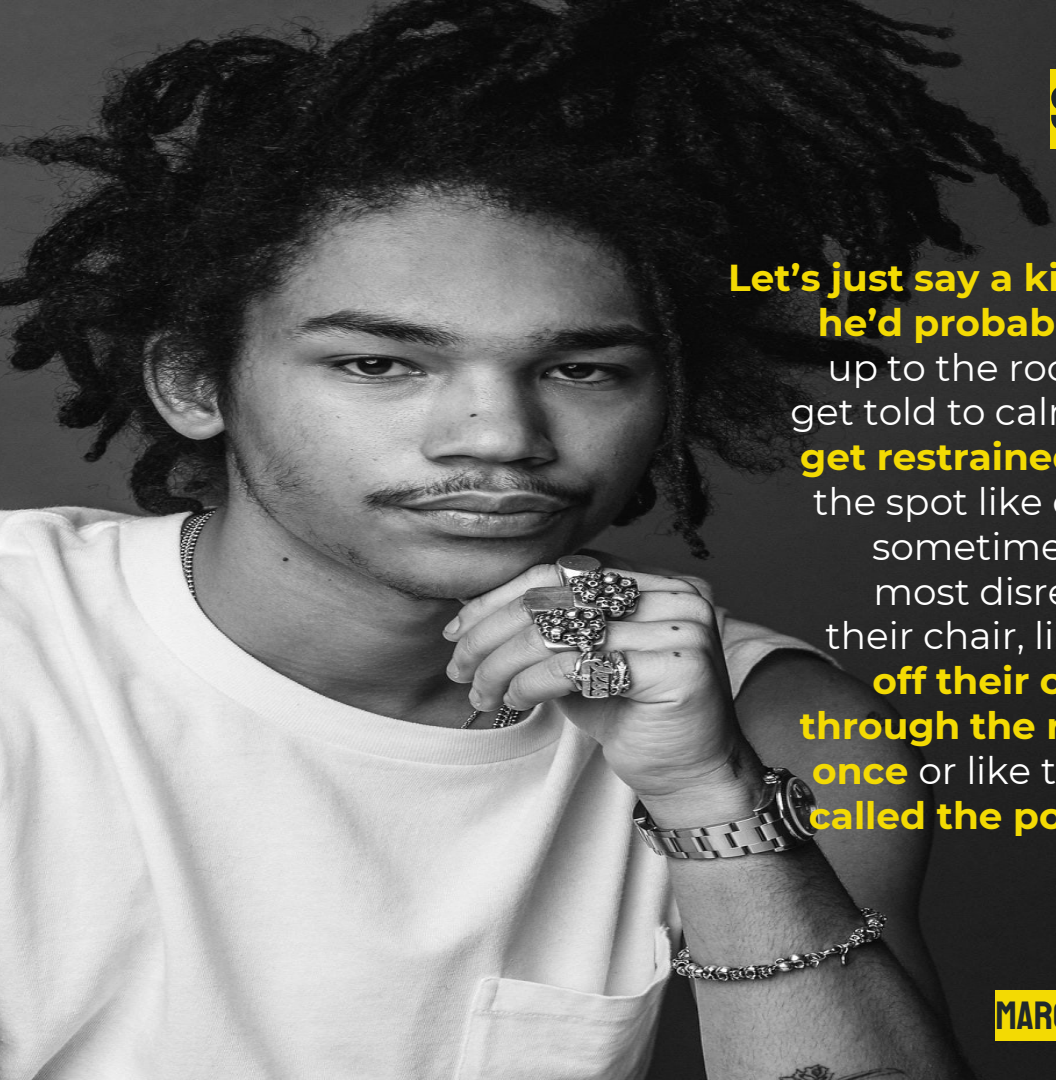
KENDRICK , GRADE 10, DIAGNOSIS INFO N/A

SPECIAL NEEDS – EXCLUDED

It hurts me that like **I actually did the right thing for the first time and they expelled me** like, I actually asked to have a meeting [...] I'm talking about how my mom's sick...how I have to work so hard to give her money, so the roof can be on top of our head...Like I'm trying so hard not to cry but it's coming out. I'm trying to be strong and they're just like there staring at me...Like **they're not feeling no pain because they don't know what I've been through to feel that pain**, especially being 17 years old to feel that pain and a White man, come call me a beggar! I'm crying out to them and I'm like telling them my pain and [the principal] just looks at me, he's like “I appreciate it Amiyana, but you're not coming back to this school” [...] Yeah, **they expelled me because I was on a contract and they gave me way too many chances, which clearly they didn't give me any.**

AMIYNA, GRADE II, DIAGNOSIS INFO N/A





SPECIAL NEEDS – CRIMINALIZED

Let's just say a kid gets mad, if it's a **White kid** whatever uhh he'd probably like **get followed**, or whatever, get pushed up to the room, **if it's a Black kid** or whatever, he'd either get told to calm down, if he doesn't calm down, **he's gonna get restrained** in the room or like restrained right there on the spot like everything...getting dragged out of there, like sometimes kids would get dragged out the class in the most disrespectful way ever. Got literally dragged off of their chair, like **teachers would come and just pull them off their chair** and just grab them, **and like drag them through the room out the class [...]** That happened to me **once** or like twice **and I got mad to the point where they called the police** and then my mom had to come pick me up cuz like **that makes no sense, come on!**

MARCUS, GRADE 10, ADHD DIAGNOSIS



DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION



Placement Process

- **Continuous and invisible** to students
- Maintains dysfunctional educational ecologies
- Enacted to **displace** students who do not meet expected academic and behavioral norms
- Euphemism for punitive discipline
- Placement leads to special needs rather than special needs leading to placement

Impact on Students

- School detachment, disengagement
- Negative effects on mental health and well-being (depression, anxiety)
- Distrust of White school personnel and seeking out Black personnel
- Exacerbation of “behavioral problems”
- Academic vulnerability and insecurities about postsecondary possibilities

Outcomes and Implications

- Special schools fail to prioritize safe, caring, nurturing, relationships and environments over punitive and violent discipline
- The invisible placement process prevents students from accessing services and supports they are entitled to by law
- Dire necessity of including racism, ableism, and anti-blackness in school and teacher education curricula

THANK-YOU

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