

# OUR EDUCATION FRAMEWORK

## Focus Area

### Students and Youth are Powerful Decision Makers

Youth have the lived experience to be authentic contributors and agents of change in their educational experiences—and in all other aspects of their lives. We believe in their skills, inputs, and ideas, and seek to normalize youth power.

**Institutions and organizations who make decisions for students and youth (e.g. districts, youth-serving nonprofits, political bodies) should provide them the agency to be decision makers in multi-generational spaces. This includes prioritizing the voices and experiences of Black and Brown youth across multiple facets of identity in conversations, initiatives, and policymaking that impact their lives to support their educational success.**

## Focus Area

### Creating Liberatory Systems That Impact Youth

Oppressive practices in formal learning settings cause great psychological and physical damage to Black and Brown communities, especially youth. We must name and work toward dismantling the systems that continue to perpetuate racism and other forms of oppression— and rebuild open, inclusive, transparent, and affirming practices within learning spaces and communities.

**School systems need to examine oppressive practices that harm students and communities and implement proven practices that create equity—including but not limited to recruiting racially diverse teachers who hold other identities and implementing culturally responsive teaching strategies.**

## Focus Area:

### Black and Brown Power

*Building on Systems of Empowerment That Impact Youth*

Moving the needle on institutional racist and oppressive practices requires the power-building, organizing, and movement of Durham's Black and Brown community, which make up the majority of students in its public education system.

**We are asking for Durham's Black and Brown communities to join forces to build their collective power to advocate for policies and programs that support positive educational experiences for youth—including more school funding, culturally-relevant teaching, critical race theory, language access and appreciation, and equitable distribution of resources (funds and others).**

## Focus Area

### Youth's Healing and Wellness is a Human Right

Schools influence youth experiences beyond formal education—providing opportunities that affect their overall health such as meals, exercise, artistic expression, social opportunities, and mental health services. Yet these services are often distributed unequally or not at all.

**We are challenging school systems (both traditional and charters) to provide the basic, quality health supports required to help Black and Brown students heal from trauma and lack of resources, so they can focus on academics and social/emotional growth.**

## Focus Area

### Our Healing

*Creating Safe, Welcoming, Culturally Affirming Learning Spaces in the Community*

To support our students and youth, Durham's Black and Brown community needs to further build out our own healing spaces. Collectively, our community should rally around providing safe and welcoming spaces that honor youth and uphold practices that help us heal from trauma.

**We will create a space for people who identify as Black and Brown to look inward on how oppressive practices have caused harm to our own bodies—so that we can prevent passing down this harm to future generations.**

For more information please visit:  
<https://protectingourdignity.org/>

