

African Cross-Cultural Community Education and Engagement Bill 2022

A Bill for an Act to address the inherent structural and systematic racism faced by Young-African Australians within the Victorian Education System. The Bill was written to address the reality that despite frameworks established under the *Equal Opportunities Act 2010 (Vic)*, there remains a lack of cultural knowledge and understanding from education providers, leading to African- Australian student's disengagement and lack of specific support.

Through the establishment of the Young African-Australian Community Ambassadors (YAACA), the Bill seeks to ensure that African Communities are supported to achieve their potential beyond systematic and racial barriers. In producing these outcomes, YAACA will lead a state-wide cultural education reform resulting in demographic-specific education and opportunities for all African identifying Victorian Students.

A Bill for an Act relating to African Cross-Cultural Community Education and Engagement to be enacted by the YMCA Victoria Youth Parliament;

PART I—Preliminary

Clause 1 Purpose

The main purposes of this Act are—

- (a) To ensure adequate cultural teacher education across all schools in Victoria;
- (b) To increase student support targeted at students who identify as being African-Australian/CALD;
- (c) To increase family and community support of African-Australian/CALD communities.

Clause 2 Commencement

This Bill shall commence upon receiving assent from the Youth Governor of Victoria.

Clause 3 Definitions

In this Bill—

- (a) **YAACA** means Young African-Australian Community Ambassadors;
- (b) **CALD** means Culturally and Linguistically Diverse within a broader umbrella of the African-Australian community;
- (c) **Teacher training** means providing an understanding of cultural norms, language and terminology, and acts of implicit and explicit racism;
- (d) **Support** means increased contact with the community, community services, and represented guidance and assistance;
- (e) **White privilege** means inherent advantages possessed by a white person based on their race in a society characterised by racial inequality and injustice;
- (f) **Implicit racism** means a negative feeling and/or belief held unconsciously about a group or individual;
- (g) **Overt racial discrimination** means an explicit display of spoken prejudices and learned biases;
- (h) **Systematic racism** means embedded structural discrimination practices that have limited an individual's rights and/or opportunities;
- (i) **Assumptions** means accepted misrepresentations of African Australians and communities.

PART II—Establishment

Clause 4 Establishment of the YAACA

- 4.1 An Advisory Board Shall be established to be known as the 'Young African-Australian Community Ambassadors'.
- 4.2 The YAACA membership shall consist of;
 - (a) Community Leaders;
 - (b) Education Policy Officers;
 - (c) Local Community Residents;
 - (d) Social and Youth Workers;
 - (e) Wellbeing Office;

- (f) Youth Student Advocates;
 - (g) Parents and Guardians.
- 4.3 The role of the YAACA is as follows;
- (a) Collaborate with established members to instil confidence in the community and their ability to express their individuality;
 - (b) Construct regulations and establish cultural expectations and norms;
 - (c) Develop and disseminate awareness of African-Australian/CALD challenges and concerns;
 - (d) Empower vulnerable African Australians/CALD to advocate for improvements in their communities;
 - (e) Establish Teacher Training programs across Victoria, in conjunction with the Department of Education (DoE).

Clause 5 Teacher Training Program

- 5.1 Teacher training programs shall be established in educational facilities across Victoria;
- (a) The YAACA, in conjunction with the DoE shall;
 - (i) Establish a series of testable 2-hour training modules.
- 5.2 The Training modules shall include;
- (a) Definitions on the following;
 - (i) Assumptions;
 - (ii) Implicit racism;
 - (iii) Overt racial discrimination;
 - (iv) Systematic racism;
 - (v) White privilege;
 - (vi) Cultural sensitivity.
 - (b) Cultural Traditions and Customs;
 - (c) Communication and Conflict Resolution.
- 5.3 To determine program efficiency and effectiveness;
- (a) Teachers are assessed on the modules monthly;
 - (b) Reported decrease in acts of racism and discrimination.

Clause 6 Student Support

- 6.1 To enable student support in education facilities YAACA shall;
- (a) Advocate for a greater number of African Support professionals available across all Victorian educational facilities;
 - (b) Strengthen relations between students and school facilities by;
 - (i) Encouraging classroom engagement alternatives;
 - (ii) Implementing programs for African- Australians, and CALD;
 - (iii) Aiding educational facilities in planning and administering cultural events, to promote inclusivity and diversity.
- 6.2 To promote education equity;
- (a) The YAACA shall ensure the increased equity in education options through;
 - (i) Producing resources for clarity in education outcomes;
 - (ii) Encouraging all students to undertake higher academic classes.

Clause 7 Family and Community Support

- 7.1 The YAACA shall utilise African Community Services support to achieve the following objectives;
- (a) Facilitate workshops;
 - (b) Organise cultural events;
 - (c) Assistance with language barriers and communication.
- 7.2 To help create family engagement the YAACA shall;
- (a) Further engage students beyond the classroom by:
 - (i) Building a sense of belonging and community;
 - (ii) Establishing cultural expectations throughout education facilities.

Clause 8 Evaluation

- 8.1 The Program shall be reviewed annually to assess its practicality and success. The Review shall cover;
- (a) Recorded effect on student and parent and/or guardian;
 - (b) Teacher cultural knowledge and understanding;
 - (c) Practicality and efficiency of YAACA;
 - (d) Financial expenses.