



**African Canadian Heritage Month
In the
Toronto Catholic District School Board**

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS Black History Month has its origins in the 1915 work of Dr. Carter G. Woodson that resulted in the development of a week in 1926;

WHEREAS the Canadian contribution has its genesis as a weekly celebration as organized by the Canadian Negro Women's Association during the 1950's that evolved as a monthly event in 1979 in the form of a proclamation by the City of Toronto;

WHEREAS in 1993, the Province of Ontario recognized the significance of the Month, as did the Federal Government in 1995, based on the efforts of our former TCDSB Principal and Member of Parliament, Dr. Jean Augustine, that has become part of our national consciousness;

WHEREAS African Canadian Heritage Month is a time to honour and celebrate the achievements of people of African heritage and acknowledge their contributions to the social, political economic and cultural life of our community, since it provides an opportunity to learn about the experiences of Black Canadians and the vital role they played throughout our shared history;

WHEREAS the history of Canadians of African descent and the struggle against slavery, racism and inequality have been central to the history of Toronto when, in 1793, Governor John Graves Simcoe passed the Abolition Act to prohibit the importation of slaves;

WHEREAS with the passing of this law, Upper Canada became the first colony in the British Empire to move towards the abolition of slavery and established Toronto's importance as a hub in the "underground railroad";

WHEREAS in the Toronto Catholic District School Board, African Canadian Heritage Month reminds us to continue to address the causes and effects of racism and discrimination against people of African descent and take steps to continue to build and strengthen inclusive communities within our schools;

WHEREAS the TCDSB recognizes that our strengths arise from a diverse population with a common set of Christian beliefs and Gospel values in keeping with our system priorities. The TCDSB envisions students who are educated to their full potential by integrating these Catholic and Christian beliefs into the total learning experience. We envision students who apply these values to life's opportunities, challenges and choices and who display positive self-esteem and self-respect while demonstrating compassion and caring for others. The TCDSB, through the commitment of our staff, empowers our students to continue to take a leadership role aimed at eliminating all forms of discrimination and marginalization.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Angela Gauthier, Associate Director, on behalf of the Toronto Catholic District School Board, do hereby proclaim February 2010 as "African Canadian Heritage Month" in the Toronto Catholic District School Board.