PART I

Introduction and Foundation of Professional School Counseling

CHAPTER 1

School Counselors as Antiracist and Social Justice Advocates

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this chapter, students will be able to:

- Explain the history of anti-racism in educational settings.
- Evaluate the impact racism has on Black children's academic, personal/social, and career success.
- Create and understand the role of school counselors in leading and working from an antiracist framework.
- Apply responsibilities and actions of school counselors to address racism and bias in schools.

STUDENT VOICE

Student "S" provided the following testimonial about their experience with a school counselor:

"Things have definitely shifted over the past year. As a Black student in a predominantly White, rural environment a lot of things have changed. The way we view and interact with each other, the way we joke and play, and even how our parents allow us to socialize outside of school, all due to political or racial differences. I have not seen many acts of blatant racism at my school, but this year a White, hybrid student brought a Black doll with a noose around its head to school and carried it around the halls. This student faced little to no consequences, and I have even seen him roaming the halls a few times since I went back to school. This made racism more real for me, as I had never seen it firsthand."

INTRODUCTION: HISTORY OF ANTI-BLACK RACISM IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

The educational system that exists today has a long and rich history regarding the education of Black students. Many historians, researchers, and Black individuals would say that the system was built on a racist foundation. It is a system not designed to see Black children succeed. Subsequently, Black children have been met with various challenges throughout their educational lives, resulting in negative consequences and outcomes that continue to permeate their way of life and how they are viewed in society today. The obstacles found in education are a direct result of racism and have brought about racialized trauma for many students and families. However, despite the challenges, Black children have survived the racial trauma generated by opportunity gaps. Educators who work specifically with this demographic must be aware of the historical context of the effects that racism has had on Black students' performance (National Child Traumatic Stress Network, Justice Consortium, Schools Committee, and Culture Consortium, 2017). According to Bettina Love, author of *We Want to Do More Than Survive*, "Education is one of the primary tools used to maintain White supremacy and anti-immigrant hate. Teachers entering the field of education must know this history, acknowledge this history, and understand why it matters in the present-day context of education, White rage, and dark suffering" (2019, p. 23). This quote, although intended for teachers, applies to school counselors as well. To effectively work with Black students, school counselors must be critically conscious and have cultural humility (Francis & Mason, 2022) as well as be culturally competent, sustaining, and responsive (Grothaus et al., 2020; Holcomb-McCoy, 2022). *Cultural competence* is defined as having the awareness, knowledge, and skills to work with diverse populations effectively (Matthews et al., 2018; Sue et al., 2019; Tummala-Narra et al., 2017). The American School Counselor Association ([ASCA], 2022) suggests that cultural competence is an ethical responsibility of school counselors (ASCA, 2022, B.3.i). Cultural competence is displayed by implementing culturally responsive school counseling programs. The ASCA's position on cultural diversity is that "school counselors demonstrate cultural responsiveness by collaborating with stakeholders to create a school and community climate that embraces cultural diversity and helps to promote academic, career, and social/emotional success for all students" (ASCA, 2015, para. 1). School counselors may lack cultural responsiveness due to their own biases and prejudices (West-Olatunji et al., 2011). Self-awareness is an imperative foundation of the multicultural and social justice framework used by counselors when working with diverse clients. To begin to do the work of dismantling systemic racism within their schools, school counselors must first understand the historical context of racism in education and then explore thoughts and emotions that surface surrounding that knowledge. Understanding the historical context allows blame to be placed on the system for education-related barriers rather than on the students, which has been a recurring issue. School counselors are tasked with identifying and addressing barriers that consistently perpetuate racial divides and hinder student success (Hines et al., 2020; Leibowitz-Nelson et al., 2020). Cultural competence is a minimum requirement for ethical school counseling as school counselors should also work toward becoming antiracist. Antiracist school counseling occurs when school counselors go beyond identifying barriers facing marginalized students to working to eradicate racist systems (ASCA, 2021a; Holcomb-McCoy, 2022; Stickl Haugen et al., 2021). School counselors are ethically obligated as antiracists to serve all students. This chapter discusses the impact of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement on school counseling as it pertains to Black students. School counselors must have the ability to use transferable skills when working with other marginalized populations as these concepts and strategies pertain to all students from all marginalized communities.

Historical Racism

Systemic racism in education can be traced back to the 1800s when segregation maintained separate educational experiences based on skin color. This separation extended beyond the classroom, to communities religious institutions, places of employment, and throughout society. Separation was enforced through policies, procedures, and laws (e.g., *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 1986) that maintained a "separate but equal" doctrine of racial segregation. This landmark case (*Plessy v. Ferguson*, 1986) permitted states to segregate based on race, including, but not limited to, restaurants, water fountains, transportation, and schools. Although the separate but equal doctrine (e.g., *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 1986) focused on transportation, it ultimately ended up creating an educational system of segregated schools where Black students were forced into education systems that lacked sufficient facilities and resources. Despite the legal intentions of equality, these facilities desperately failed (Figure 1.1). According to Love (2019, p. 28), separate but equal was a "tactic to maintain White superiority."

Brown v. Board of Education

In 1954, *Brown v. Board of Education* overturned the separate but equal doctrine. The Supreme Court ruled that this precept was unconstitutional and the Court legally required schools' integration. There were many benefits to this legislation; perhaps the most notable is the potential for Black students to gain access to resources and improved education (American Psychological Association [APA], 2012; McNeill & Rowley, 2019). The results of this case were thought to improve educational opportunities for Black students; however, many note the consequences of integration.

Although *Brown v. Board of Education* was intended to better educational outcomes for Black students, many would argue that the results were not as positive as initially thought. Love shares that "Black schools were proud institutions that provided Black communities with cohesion and leadership" (2019, p. 28). After the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling, there was ambiguity in interpreting the legislation and enacting it, thus allowing school districts to delay integration (McNeill & Rowley, 2019). Many systems refused to integrate or made it extremely difficult for Black students to enroll and attend. The most familiar stories are those of The Little Rock Nine and Ruby Bridges. In Little Rock, Arkansas in 1957, nine Black students were denied entrance to Central High School. Their admittance into the building required the assistance of over 1,000 army troops. Despite the federal aid, they were still met with routine verbal and physical abuse.
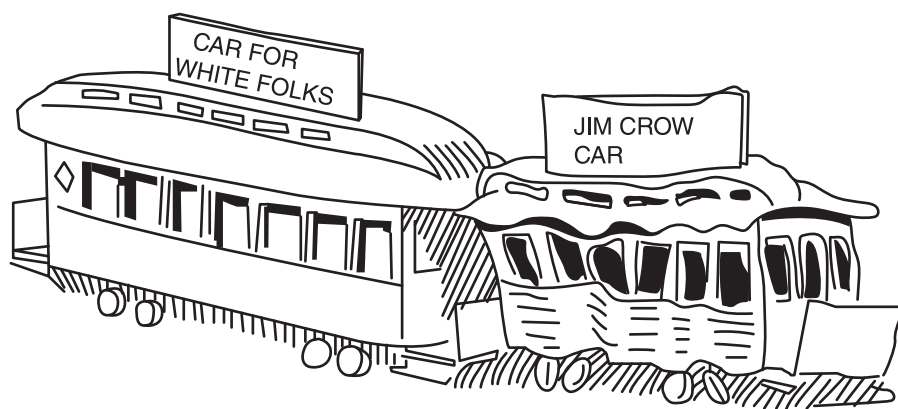

FIGURE 1.1 Separate but not equal.

Source: 1904 caricature of White"and Jim Crow rail cars by John T. McCutcheon. (Image: John T. McCutcheon/Public domain.)

In 1960, 5 years after *Brown v. Board*, New Orleans, Louisiana, began its desegregation plan, which was met with significant opposition and attempts to thwart efforts. For example, the state required an entrance exam for admission to the state's historically White institutions. Due to the lack of preparation provided to Black students, only six Black children passed, one being Ruby Bridges. At 6 years old, Bridges was the first Black student to integrate into a White elementary school. Due to the violent protesters, she was escorted to school by U.S. Marshalls and was met with racial slurs, derogatory chants, and more (Michals, 2015). White parents unenrolled their students and White teachers refused to teach in protest of the integration law. As a result, for the entire school year, Ruby sat in a classroom by herself with one teacher from Massachusetts who agreed to be her instructor.

Another consequence of desegregation was the treatment of Black students in integrated schools. As schools merged, Black teachers were not accepted into the White schools, resulting in Black students being taught by mostly White faculty. In turn, there was a decline in the number of qualified Black educators. Some Black community members believe that there would not have been a push to integrate if there had been equality within the segregated systems. However, in an attempt to push back on integration, segregation and inequities continued in what is known as "White flight," which resulted in unequal learning institutions that continue today (Love, 2019; McNeill & Rowley, 2019). Despite the movement toward the progress of fully integrated schools and better educational opportunities for Black students, responses such as White flight confirm that racism still exists and permeates educational institutions. Whether overt or covert, authors term it as *new racism* (Kohli et al., 2017).

Racism Today

Racism and bias can harm and impede students from reaching their full potential (Gershenson & Papageorge, 2018; Leath et al., 2019; Trent et al., 2019). *New racism* is defined as the replacement of "overt and blatant discriminatory policies and practices of the past with covert and more subtle beliefs and behaviors, reflecting the persistent and pervasive nature of racism" (Kohli et al., 2017, pp. 184–185). The American Academy of Pediatrics ([AAP], 2019) has reported that racism has been associated with birth disparities (mortality rate and birth weight) and mental health issues in youth. Exposure to stress hormones as a result of chronic stress due to racism results in inflammatory reactions leading to chronic disease (Trent et al., 2019). Additionally, the impact of racism and bias in PK–12 education is associated with (a) gaps in achievement, opportunity, and attainment; (b) disproportionate rates of discipline and suspension for students of color; (c) lower attendance rates; (d) self-destructive behavior such as acting out, withdrawal, and nonparticipation in class activities; (e) gatekeeping of underrepresented students for access to and placement in rigorous curricula such as Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate; and (f) lower participation of underrepresented groups in higher education (ASCA, 2020). The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) report, *Condition of Education 2020*, confirms that systemic racism is seen through various school policies, procedures, and initiatives that have negatively impacted Black students. Biased educators, whitewashed curriculum, and programmatic representation failures (e.g., overrepresentation in special education services and underrepresentation in gifted programs) point to the struggle of Black students in public education (Hussar et al., 2020). Additionally, Cai (2020) offered the following highlights from a report by the National School Boards Association:

- The poverty rate is still the highest for Black students.
- A lack of internet access at home has become a barrier to learning or Black students.
- A high percentage of Black students attend high-poverty schools.
- More Black students with disabilities receive services for emotional disturbances.

- The disproportion between Black students and Black teachers has not improved.
- The achievement gap between Black and White students has not been closed.
- School dropout rate remains high among Black students.
- Graduation rates and college enrollment rates remain low for Black students.

ACHIEVEMENT AND OPPORTUNITY GAPS

One concept that focuses on systemic racism is the achievement/opportunity gaps between White students and students of color. Achievement gaps are educational disparities identified between racial and ethnic minorities and their White peers. Many social and justice advocates prefer the term *opportunity gaps* as it better captures the reasons behind the disparity (Hall Mark, 2013). Achievement gaps imply that there is something inherently wrong with the student, whereas opportunity gaps put the onus on the system that results in the disparity (Pitre, 2014). Opportunity gaps reflect the barriers that Black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) students encounter, resulting in a lack of opportunities (Flores, 2018; Wiener, 2007). As stated by The Glossary of Education Reform, the conceptualization of achievement versus opportunity is that "*opportunity gap* refers to inputs—the unequal or inequitable distribution of resources and opportunities—whereas *achievement gap* refers to outputs—the unequal or inequitable distribution of educational results and benefits"' (Great Schools Partnership, n.d.).

Underrepresentation

As of the 2017–2018 data, reported by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), there remain stark differences in advanced academic programs between BIPOC and White students (U.S. Department of Education [U.S. DOE], n.d.). Table 1.1 compares data related to advanced placement, gifted identification, International Baccalaureate programs, and advanced math placements (Table 1.1).

Standardized Testing

Standardized testing has long been viewed as biased against BIPOC students and further perpetuates an academic, college, and career readiness divide, resulting in social and economic consequences. According to the National Education Association "standardized tests have been instruments of racism and a biased system" (Rosales & Walker, 2021, para. 4) by compromising equity efforts and educational quality (National Center for Fair and Open Testing, n.d.).

One well-known test, the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), has been the center of significant controversy regarding not only accessibility to testing but also inaccurate assessment of BIPOC students' college readiness. The College Board in 2019 reported that of the high school graduates who took the current SAT during high school, 12% of that population was Black, as opposed to 43% White, with 20% of the Black students and

TABLE 1.1   Underrepresentation by Race/Ethnicity

RACE/ETHNICITY	ADVANCED PLACEMENT	GIFTED	INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE	ADVANCED MATH
Black	9.3%	8.2%	14.4%	13.3%
White	52.4%	58.4%	43.7%	52.9%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Civil Rights Data Collection, 2017–18. http://ocrdata.ed.gov.

57% of White students meeting both English and math benchmarks. According to several studies, evidence supports the lack of validity of using these scores for college admission decisions for Black students (Freedle, 2003; Santelices & Wilson, 2010).

Lack of Access

There remain heavily racial/ethnic minority–populated schools in the educational system for which the evidence supports the challenges such as lack of "highly qualified" diverse educators, lack of representation of BIPOC educators, lack of resources, and lack of culturally responsive curriculum. The teacher shortage is a genuine concern in PK–12, primarily for high-poverty schools that typically have a higher concentration of BIPOC students. According to The Condition of Education 2020 (Hussar et al., 2020), in 2017–2018, only 7% of public-school teachers and 11% of public-school principals were Black. Yet, more than 15% of Black students attended public schools. In 2019, the Economic Policy Institute reported the difference in teacher qualifications in low-poverty versus high-poverty schools and found that teachers in high-poverty schools had fewer certifications, less experience, and less comprehensive education as compared to low-poverty schools (García & Weiss, 2019). Unfortunately, 45% of Black students attended high-poverty schools, compared with 8% of White students (Hussar et al., 2020). Although these statistics, along with the increasing teacher shortage, are cause for concern, the definition of *highly qualified* is not as alarming as it may seem. Cultural competency has become an integral part of the educational curriculum taught to preservice teachers and counselors. Therefore, you may find that students graduating may have more exposure to and knowledge about working with diverse student bodies. If so, the concern isn't necessarily the lack of "highly qualified," but rather the lack of diverse teachers overall. The barrier for new educators is the experience within their first few years of teaching and the burnout that results. These teachers often find themselves in underfunded and underperforming schools with the pressure of high expectations in terms of student outcomes. Often teachers of color may have entered the teaching profession through alternate routes and, according to the U.S. Department of Education, find themselves working in poorer districts with higher numbers of students of color (U.S. Department of Education [U.S. DOE], 2016).

In addition to the lack of diverse teachers, you also find a shortage of diverse school counselors. According to data from 2019, of the degrees awarded in School Counseling and Guidance Services, 57.5% were awarded to White graduates as compared to 16.7% to Hispanic graduates and 12.6% to Black graduates. The counseling profession overall continues to be dominated by a White female presence with stark differences in racial-ethnic employment rates (DATA USA, n.d.).

An additional concern is not only the lack of counselors but also the limited access to school counselors (American Civil Liberties Union [ACLU], n.d.; National Office for School Counselor Advocacy, 2012; The Education Trust [Ed Trust], 2019). Although there is a critical shortage of mental health professionals in schools, data indicate that the deficiency increases for heavily minority-populated and low-poverty schools. Data collected by organizations, such as the ASCA, Reachhigher, and The Education Trust confirm the high ratios between school counselors and students. Across the nation, there are at least 38 states where BIPOC students have less access to school counselors and counseling services (Ed Trust, 2019). Comprehensive school counseling programs have benefited students by improving attendance, decreasing disciplinary incidents, and increasing graduation rates. However, lowering ratios is currently an advocacy initiative for ASCA and many state school counseling associations.

Lastly, and maybe most importantly, racist views and beliefs from educators expected to serve *all* children contribute to the disparity in achievement (APA, 2012). There are numerous accounts of racist acts against BIPOC children. These instances highlight the

negative consequences that impact the ability of BIPOC students to be successful in the classroom. When students are already faced with other existing barriers, teacher perception, engagement, and strategies compound those effects. This results in students becoming disengaged, developing a dislike for schools, demonstrating a lack of academic progress, and exhibiting behavioral issues (Leath et al., 2019).

Overrepresentation

Impacted by self-segregated or forced segregated school communities, failed *Brown vs. Board of Education* integration initiatives, and systemic racism, BIPOC students are underrepresented academically in advanced level courses and gifted identification and overrepresented in areas such as special education (Farkas, 2020; Gentry et al., 2019; Grindal et al., 2019; Morgan, 2020; National Association for Gifted Children, n.d.). This is an excerpt from the Committee on Minority Representation in Special Education et al. (2002),

> Schooling independently contributes to the incidence of special needs or giftedness among students in different racial/ethnic groups through the opportunities it provides. Schools with higher concentrations of low-income, minority children are less likely to have experienced, well-trained teachers. (p. 4)

As a result, you find that BIPOC students, specifically, are stereotypically labeled with disabilities, which may impact future academic and career opportunities. Research suggests that in school systems where there are predominately White teachers and students, the majority of Black students are in special education (Ladner & Hammons, 2001). According to the *42nd Annual Report to Congress*, which was published in 2021, approximately 12.4% of the Black population was serviced under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) versus 8% of the White population (U.S. DOE, 2021b).

Overrepresentation is also evident as related to disciplinary actions and school suspensions. Many studies highlight the disproportionate use of harsher disciplinary procedures for BIPOC students. For example, OCR reported that "in 2017–18, Black students received one or more in-school suspensions (31.4%) and one or more out-of-school suspensions (38.2%) at rates that were more than twice their share of total student enrollment (15.1%)" (U.S. DOEDOE, 2021a, p. 16). Suspensions impact attendance and class time, depriving students of valuable learning opportunities. According to OCR data, Black students lost 103 days per 100 students enrolled, 82 more days than the 21 days their White peers lost due to out-of-school suspensions, perpetuating the negative cycle resulting from systemic racism (Losen & Martinez, 2020). Therefore, educators should consider and address the trauma that results from historical and current racist school environments.

RACIALIZED TRAUMA

Racial trauma is the mental and emotional impact of racism (Mental Health America, n.d.; Williams et al., 2019). Black students face racism both in society and in the educational system. The consequences are salient, impacting self-concept, health and well-being, and life trajectories (Svetaz et al., 2018). In schools, racism is evident in physical violence, constant alienation, discrimination, and microaggressions (Henderson & Lunsford, 2016). Research acknowledges a link between racism and posttraumatic stress symptoms and suggests that racial trauma leads to cognitive, emotional, and behavioral challenges that negatively impact academic performance (Comas-Díaz et al., 2019; Jernigan-Noesi & Peeples, 2019). Exhibit 1.1 highlights inadequate responses to trauma that educators should recognize. As a result of systemic racism, these responses help feed what is called the school-to-prison pipeline.

EXHIBIT 1.1 Responses to Trauma

- **Increase aggression**—Street gangs, domestic violence, defiant behavior, and appearing tough and impenetrable are ways of coping with danger by attempting to control our physical and social environment
- **Increase vigilance and suspicion**—Suspicion of social institutions (schools, agencies, government), avoiding eye contact, only trusting persons within our social and family relationship networks
- **Increase sensitivity to threat**—Defensive postures, avoiding new situations, heightened sensitivity to being disrespected and shamed, and avoid taking risks
- **Increase psychological and physiological symptoms**—Unresolved traumas increase chronic stress and decrease immune system functioning, shift brains to limbic system dominance, increase risks for depression and anxiety disorders, and disrupt child development and quality of emotional attachment in family and social relationships
- **Increase alcohol and drug usage**—Drugs and alcohol are initially useful (real and perceived) in managing the pain and danger of unresolved traumas but become their own disease processes when dependency occurs
- **Narrowing sense of time**—Persons living in a chronic state of danger do not develop a sense of future, do not have long-term goals, and frequently view dying as an expected outcome

Source: Smith, W. H. (2010). *The impact of racial trauma on African Americans* (p. 5). African American Men and Boys Advisory Board. The Heinz Endowments. https://www.heinz.org/userfiles/impactofracialtraumaonafricanamericans.pdf. Reprinted with permission.

School-to-Prison Pipeline

The school-to-prison pipeline is the process by which students are pushed out of educational systems into the correctional system (ACLU, n.d.; Elias, 2013; Heitzeg, 2009). This process results from disciplinary policies and procedures used in school systems that connect students to law enforcement officials at an early age. Zero-tolerance policies and the use of police officers in schools have exacerbated this issue for BIPOC students (Dutil, 2020). These policies are harsh punishments used for any infraction, regardless of severity. With a police presence in schools, offenses that were historically dealt with inside the school are now referred to law enforcement, which begins the criminalization of youth. It is estimated that as of 2015–2016, over 1.7 million students were found to be in schools with law enforcement presence but without school counselors (Whitaker et al., 2019). Federal data confirms the negative impact that these procedures have on Black students. According to data collected by the U.S. DOE 2015–2016 Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC), "Black students had an arrest rate of 28 per 10,000, which was three times that of White students" (Whitaker et al., 2019, p. 24). These arrests support the increased incarceration rate of BIPOC youth. School divisions have chosen more punitive measures rather than supportive measures that could be implemented through school counseling professionals (Welfare et al., 2021).

BLACK LIVES MATTER MOVEMENT

In response to tense political climates, police murders of Black citizens, and other incidents of racial tension, the Black community rallied together in support of many advocacy

efforts to improve outcomes for Black people. One such effort was the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement. The BLM movement was started by Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi in 2013 in response to the acquittal of George Zimmerman, the individual tried for the murder of Trayvon Martin, a young Black male in Florida. Initially, the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter was a platform used to bring awareness to racism across the country (blacklivesmatter.com, n.d.). It has later become a worldwide movement with many BLM chapters in various localities across the United States.

Black Lives Matter at School is a supportive presence in the educational world. Although the Black Lives Matter and Black Lives Matter at School organizations are not affiliatedr, they both work toward the common goal of supporting the Black community. According to organizers, "The Black Lives Matter at School Movement is the story of resistance to racist curriculums, educational practices, and policies" (Jones & Hagopian, 2020, p. 1). It is a national coalition organizing for racial justice in education. The movement began in 2016 in Seattle with a single protest at John Muir Elementary School, which included faculty wearing BLM t-shirts. This statement was met with resistance from White supremacists in the form of a bomb threat. This one day of action and the response fueled further events that turned into a week of reaction and now a national movement (Jones & Hagopian, 2020).

The first week of February became the Black Lives Matter at School Week (Jones & Hagopian, 2020), which is a week of action dedicated to advocating for the following goals:

- End zero-tolerance discipline in school, and implement restorative justice.
- Hire more Black teachers.
- Mandate Black history and ethnic studies in PK–12 curriculum.
- Fund counselors not police officers.

This week is promoted with classroom lessons, community events, and organized rallies that support schools' engagement in "critical reflection, honest conversation, and impactful action" (NEA, 2022, para. 1) regarding the education of Black students. Black Lives Matter at School, similar to the BLM movement, has been catapulted in its recognition and efforts due to continuous adult and child murders at the hands of law enforcement. Consequently, you have "#sayhername" and "#saytheirnames" social media campaigns that recognize and raise awareness of these Black victims. Movements such as BLM and Black Lives Matter at School are intentional about identifying, honoring, and speaking the names of the Black victims so that the reason behind the advocacy efforts is not lost. The educational system is not exempt from the racial tension behind these movements. Black Lives Matter at School "incites new urgency and radical possibilities for advancing abolitionist practice and uprooting institutional racism" (blacklivesmatteratschool.com).

As a part of the week of action, teachers are provided with a free curriculum that includes various lessons that they can use in their classrooms. According to the organization, these resources are provided at no cost, and sharing is encouraged. The resources are used to "challenge racism and oppression and provide students with the vocabulary and tools needed to take action" (Black Lives Matter At School, n.d.). Lesson topics include intersectional Black identities, institutional racism, African diasporic histories and philosophies, and contributions and struggles of Black people to the nation and the world. Exhibit 1.2 includes the 13 guiding principles used as teaching points during the week.

Despite the goals of social justice advocacy and antiracism, the Black Lives Matter at School movement has been met with significant criticism and opposition. A quick search of BLM at schools provides numerous examples of administrators, college professors, and parents who criticize the effort, citing that it causes "fear and anger" in students. Districts such as Washoe County School District banned BLM topics from classrooms,

EXHIBIT 1.2 Thirteen Guiding Principles

1. **Restorative Justice**
   We are committed to collectively, lovingly, and courageously working vigorously for freedom and justice for Black people and, by extension, all people. As we forge our path, we intentionally build and nurture a beloved community that is bonded together through a beautiful struggle that is restorative, not depleting.

2. **Empathy**
   We are committed to practicing empathy; we engage comrades with the intent to learn about and connect with their contexts.

3. **Loving Engagement**
   We are committed to embodying and practicing justice, liberation, and peace in our engagements with one another.

4. **Diversity**
   We are committed to acknowledging, respecting, and celebrating difference(s) and commonalities.

5. **Globalism**
   We see ourselves as part of the global Black family, and we are aware of the different ways we are impacted or privileged as Black folk who exist in different parts of the world.

6. **Queer Affirming**
   We are committed to fostering a queer-affirming network. When we gather, we do so with the intention of freeing ourselves from the tight grip of heteronormative thinking or, rather, the belief that all in the world are heterosexual unless s/he or they disclose otherwise.

7. **Trans Affirming**
   We are committed to embracing and making space for trans siblings to participate and lead. We are committed to being self-reflexive and doing the work required to dismantle cis-gender privilege and uplift Black trans folk, especially Black trans women who continue to be disproportionately impacted by trans-antagonistic violence.

8. **Collective Value**
   We are guided by the fact all Black lives matter, regardless of actual or perceived sexual identity, gender identity, gender expression, economic status, ability, disability, religious beliefs or disbeliefs, immigration status or location.

9. **Intergenerational**
   We are committed to fostering an intergenerational and communal network free from ageism. We believe that all people, regardless of age, show up with capacity to lead and learn.

10. **Black Families**
    We are committed to making our spaces family friendly and enable parents to fully participate with their children. We are committed to dismantling the patriarchal practice that requires mothers to work "double shifts" that require them to mother in private even as they participate in justice work.

11. **Black Villages**
    We are committed to disrupting the Western-prescribed nuclear family structure requirement by supporting each other as extended families and "villages" that collectively care for one another, and especially "our" children to the degree that mothers, parents and children are comfortable.

(continued)

EXHIBIT 1.2 Thirteen Guiding Principles (*continued*)	

12. **Unapologetically Black**

    We are unapologetically Black in our positioning. In affirming that Black Lives Matter, we need not qualify our position. To love and desire freedom and justice for ourselves is a necessary prerequisite for wanting the same for others.

13. **Black Women**

    We are committed to building a Black women affirming space free from sexism, misogyny, and male-centeredness.

Source: Jones, D., & Hagopian, J. (2020). *Black lives matter at school: An uprising for education justice* (pp. 12 and 13). Haymarket Books. Reprinted with permission.

insisting that the issues were political and improper for school. However, organizers continue to advocate for an educational system where antiracist pedagogy is evident and systemic racism is eradicated. Yet, the question remains, "Will Black lives ever truly matter in the education system?" Hagopian, coauthor of Black Lives Matter at School: *An Uprising for Educational Justice*, answers with "whether we will someday see a school system worthy of Black students lies in the hearts of educators, students, parents, and antiracist organizers everywhere who tire of inequality and rise up to strike the blow for freedom" (p. 24).

ROLE OF THE SCHOOL COUNSELOR IN ANTIRACISM WORK

The ASCA in its Antiracist Practices Position Statement suggests that school counselors should be culturally competent, antiracist, and implement comprehensive school counseling programs that include advocacy efforts to change racist policies, procedures, practices, guidelines, and laws that create and maintain barriers to student success (ASCA, 2021a). They further assert that the school counselor's role is to improve outcomes for *all* students by implementing a comprehensive school counseling program. A comprehensive school counseling program, if implemented correctly, is vital to a student's academic, personal and social, and career development leading to the ability to become contributing members of society (ASCA, 2019). In this fight for social justice, school counselors should lead and collaborate with other educational professionals to advocate for minoritized students working toward systemic change. School counselors can lead the charge by ensuring that in addition to discussions about reimagining schools, academic processes, and in-class experiences, educators can also begin dismantling inequities and systemic policies and procedures that have negatively affected BIPOC students (Rutledge, 2020). According to Atkins and Oglesby (2018, Introduction, para. 4), "If you are not actively seeking to interrupt racism, you are contributing to its perpetuation." Therefore, the call to action for school counselors is for antiracist work that results in the changing of antiracist policies and ideas (ASCA, 2020). Unfortunately, many school counselors continue to operate their comprehensive school counseling programs in ways that harm BIPOC students. As stated earlier, for school counselors to do the work of dismantling systemic racism within schools, school counselors must explore their thoughts and emotions, and advocate to eliminate system barriers for BIPOC students. While that is not an easy task, school counselors can start by engaging in multiculturally competent and socially just school counseling practices.

Multicultural and Social Justice School Counseling

School counselors' privilege, authority, power, and identity can influence the counseling relationships with the students that they serve. A White school counselor may create a systemic hierarchy in counseling with BIPOC students, and the counselor's authority and power are increased because they are adults. To increase school counselors' multicultural sensitivity in working with students and their caregivers, this section uses the Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies (MSJCC) Model (Ratts et al., 2015) (see electronic resources) to offer school counselors a framework to use to implement multicultural and social justice competencies into their comprehensive school counseling program, practices, and interventions. According to the authors, the model illustrates the complex connection between the constructs and competencies of the framework (Ratts et al., 2015). The model depicts four quadrants that are used to identify the intersections of identities in the counseling relationship while also examining issues of power, privilege, and oppression and how they impact the counseling relationship. In the center of the model are four developmental domains that guide a school counselor to multicultural and social justice competence. They are (1) counselor self-awareness, (2) client worldview, (3) counseling relationship, and (4) counseling and advocacy interventions. Lastly, surrounding the model are aspirational competencies that guide the process. It is believed that one's attitudes and beliefs will increase their knowledge and thus improve their skills, and lastly call them to action. The following sections will provide an overview of each domain of the MSJCC model and practical ways school counselors can engage in their development to be more multiculturally competent and socially just.

Counselor Self-Awareness

In the first domain, MSJCC calls for school counselors to develop self-awareness so that they are able to understand their attitudes and beliefs, develop knowledge and skills, and act based on their beliefs and worldview. This level of self-awareness often results in discomfort and even defensiveness for some school counselors who are resistant to or unfamiliar with advocacy work. Awareness involves understanding one's own view as well as the worldview of the student, which may differ from one's own. From a multicultural view, school counselors' awareness of the cultural differences between the student and counselor is often highlighted more than their cultural similarities (Bryan et al., 2004). Although having similar cultural identities can help school counselors understand subtle and unique cultural perspectives, similarities can also camouflage counselors' biases, stereotypes, and assumptions (Hird et al., 2004). School counselors' unconscious biases and stereotypes may discount the obstacles the student is facing. For example, a school counselor might assume that a Black male student who is failing a class did something to cause his low academic performance versus a personal, familial, community, or systemic barrier that may be impeding the student's academic performance.

To proactively fight against implicit biases and stereotypes, school counselors must actively and continually engage the outlined the ASCA Mindsets for school counselors. They are as follows:

- Every student can learn, and every student can succeed.
- Every student should have access to and opportunity for a high-quality education.
- Every student should graduate from high school prepared for postsecondary opportunities.
- Every student should have access to a comprehensive school counseling program.
- Comprehensive school counseling programs promote and enhance student academic, career, and social/emotional outcomes.

Student Worldviews

The ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors standards "promote academic achievement, college and career readiness and social/emotional learning, which have the long-term effect of preventing and overcoming racism and bias" (ASCA, 2020, p. 3). To encourage a socially just mindset in students so that they are able to address and deal with racism and bias, school counselors can use the ASCA Mindsets and Behaviors to prepare students to (a) be able to combat racism and bias they may witness and (b) overcome racism, bias, and oppression they may experience. To do so, school counselors need to

- encourage the student's belief in development of the whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/emotional, and physical well-being;
- encourage the student's self-confidence in their ability to succeed; and
- encourage the student's sense of belonging in the school environment.

School Counseling Relationship

While the self-awareness of school counselors is imperative for understanding and identifying "one's cultural values, beliefs, and biases" (Ratts et al., 2016), the insight can also help the school counselor to understand their student's worldview and what barriers may be preventing them from academic, social-emotional, and career success. This understanding of their students will also aid in supporting the student's identity development. By school counselors recognizing and attending to the "shared and unshared identities; privileged and marginalized statuses; values, beliefs and biases; and culture" (Ratts et al., 2016, para. 9) between them and their students, they will assist students to engage in a positive counseling relationship. In schools, students see school counselors as authority figures. Because of the traditional cultural values and respect for hierarchical relationships within schools, students and school counselors may not engage in an equal counseling relationship between the student and counselor. In addition, high schoolers may want to be exercising their ability to make their own decisions and may base their thoughts and emotions on what they want or what their peers say rather than what their counselors say. Because school counselors and students perceive the positive therapeutic alliance differently (Bachelor, 2013), school counselors unconsciously harm the student and counseling relationship if they are not aware of these relational dynamics. For example, a student may be called in to see the school counselor about a schedule change. The student, Black female, might come to the school counselor's office with a great deal of anxiety or distrust based on racial biases and African Americans' history of oppression in the United States. If the school counselor doesn't understand the sociopolitical events and their impact on the student, they may misinterpret the student's anxiety and mistrust as rude or disrespectful behavior toward adults.

School Counseling and Advocacy Interventions

One of the roles of school counselors is to be advocates. School counselor advocacy is to "work with and/or on behalf of their clients/students who [a]re struggling with systemic barriers" (Toporek & Daniels, 2018, p. 1). When school counselors aim to dismantle harmful systems, they must be equipped to look through a trauma-informed lens and specifically consider race-based trauma to determine its impact on mental health and academic success of BIPOC students. To assist counselors with evaluating and implementing culturally relevant and ethical advocacy, the American Counseling Association (ACA)

developed the ACA Advocacy Competencies (Lewis et al., 2003). The ACA Advocacy Competencies outline the skills, knowledge, and behavior used to identify and address student barriers (Toporek & Daniels, 2018). The ACA Advocacy Competencies model (see web resources) consists of levels of client/student involvement, advocacy intervention, and the intersection of six advocacy domains (Client/Student Empowerment, Client/Student Advocacy, Community Collaboration, Systems Advocacy, Public Information, Social/Political Advocacy). Additionally, according to the ASCA National Model, school counselors are recognized as leaders in reform efforts as they advocate for student academic success (ASCA, 2019). The National Model states,

> school counselors' advocacy efforts are aimed at a) eliminating barriers impeding students' development; b) creating opportunities to learn for all students; c) ensuring access to a quality school curriculum; d) collaborating with others within and outside the school to help students meet their needs, and e) promoting positive, systemic change in schools (Trusty & Brown, 2005, p. 259).

School counselors' advocacy for BIPOC and other marginalized students requires school counselors to lead, collaborate, and create systemic change. School counselors often advocate for students and their families, underrepresented student groups, campus practices, district policy evaluation, enhanced community resources, legislative changes, and the school counseling profession (Trusty & Brown, 2005). For example, school counselors can be instrumental in advocating for the educational attainment of many students, especially Black males. The underachievement of Black males historically has been a recurring theme in the literature (Education Trust, 2003; The College Board, 2010). School counselors can focus their counseling efforts on working individually and in groups with Black males, work with teachers to support the academic needs of the student, advocate for community resources and interventions to support Black males who may experience home and food insecurities, and work with school administration to examine policies and procedures that may be systemic barriers to Black male academic achievement. With the right attitude and beliefs, knowledge and skills, school counselors are able to deploy appropriate interventions and better advocate for their students.

ABOLITIONIST EDUCATION AND SCHOOL COUNSELING

The efforts to address racism and bias in schools have a long-standing history in education, but in light of the events in 2021, national attention has been given to schools and districts to examine their support and promotion of diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI), and access. In 2021, the ASCA released the 2020 State of the Profession (ASCA, 2021b). It was reported that one-third (36%) of school counselors stated that their schools or districts required DEI training for all school faculty. Unfortunately, it also reported that one third of the schools and districts took no action to address DEI or access. Furthermore, school counselors reported that only about 42% of them monitor student behavior to identify racist behavior or speech, and only 22% of school counselors have identified and advocated to revise or remove policies that disproportionately affect students of color. Finally, 30% of the school counselors responded that incorporating antiracism practices/pedagogy/curriculum was a challenge, and 25% said it was a challenge to address school/district policies that result in institutional discrimination. Despite the ASCA Ethical Standards and the National Model explicitly stating it is the school counselor's role to advocate for change and support *all* students, school counselors have unfortunately helped to perpetuate systems of oppression in PK–12 education. There are instances where school counselors have tracked BIPOC students in lower academic coursework, offered poor postsecondary career planning, and set lower expectations for students of color.

Because the school counseling profession needs to move beyond just recognizing these issues, it is important for school counselors to monitor and expand personal multicultural and social justice advocacy awareness, knowledge, and skills to be effective, culturally competent school counselors. School counselors need to engage in abolitionist education and school counseling by understanding how prejudice, privilege, and various forms of oppression based on ethnicity, racial identity, age, economic status, abilities/disabilities, language, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity expression, family type, religious/spiritual identity, appearance, and living situations (e.g., foster care, homelessness, incarceration) affect students and stakeholders.

According to Love (2019), education reform needs to happen in the United States in order for Black students to succeed. Abolitionist education and teaching "comes from a critical race lens and applies methods like protest, boycotting, and calling out other teachers who are racist, homophobic, or Islamophobic" (Stoltzfus, 2019, para. 4). Abolitionist school counselors will know how to talk about racism and homophobia in their counseling sessions and classroom lessons. In addition, school counselors will be called to action and organize marches and boycotts to stand up against systemic racism. In conjunction with the ASCA ethical standards, this means school counselors are ethically obligated to have a grasp of the historical context of oppression. They cannot understand how prejudice, privilege, and oppression based on these various identities impact the mental health and well-being of students if they do not know what happened historically and why that matters. Adhering to this standard requires school counselors to inform and educate themselves on accurate history that is not whitewashed so that they can equip themselves with the most beneficial response to give students who, for example, may say things like "build that wall." In that case, school counselors should help walk that student through a critical thought process and perspective broadening by asking, "But who was on this land first? Does it belong to us/you?" They are not imposing beliefs on them, but rather are guiding them to open their minds and see things through a different lens, as well as teaching them real, true history they might not otherwise be exposed to, which is what school counselors should be doing as educators and which is ultimately good for their mental health as well. Additionally, building a coalition is important for school counselors responding to resistance to antiracism efforts. It's impossible to sustain this work alone. Consult and collaborate with other counselors doing this work and plan together. White counselors, learn what it means to leverage your privilege. The leadership required of us as White counselors may look like passing on opportunities offered to us to have BIPOC to lead instead. To demonstrate how school counselors can lead abolitionist education, we have provided an example of a core curriculum lesson below.

VOICES FROM THE FIELD

Name: Jennifer Susko (she/her)

Where You Practice: Georgia

Professional Job Title: School Counselor

Bio: Jennifer Susko has been a school counselor for 10 years at the high school and elementary levels. She uses culturally relevant teaching and critical race theory as lenses to design comprehensive, data-driven school counseling programs that include antibias, antiracist activities and interventions to increase equity in schools. Jennifer believes that the work to end racial injustice is integral to the work we do as ethical school counselors.

My antiracism story began with Rodney King's brutal, televised police beating. I was in fourth grade when I saw the riots in LA on the news. I knew then that I had an enduring love for my Black friends, the Black people I studied about from freedom and liberation movements, and those I knew from sports and entertainment deeply. I knew about racism, but it was not until I saw the community in Los Angeles rise up like they did that I felt the intense heartache of how current racism still was. Feeling a strong call to action but not knowing exactly what I was talking about, I wrote a letter to Georgia's governor to fix this injustice.

While I am grateful to have started learning antiracism young, the unfortunate part is that I did not have the BLM movement or others helping my school counselors guide my learning. As such, I got a lot wrong over the years because I had to be self-taught. No educators were helping me understand the complex issues of race and racism. From what I see today, the BLM movement has encouraged and motivated more school counselors to develop themselves professionally in antiracism to adhere to our ethics. This is vital for all students so that they are supported through positive racial identity development and so that they learn the language and tools necessary to dismantle White supremacy and stand up against racism. For Black students, though, antiracist school counselors can assist with navigation of racist educational environments and ensuring student safety and mental health as the school counselors work simultaneously to effect changes that abolish the systemic barriers that result in the racist setting.

Ever since BLM began, I have drawn connections from the movement to our ethical standards as school counselors so that I can show the link between my practice and some of the movement principles. The ASCA standard B3b says we are to ". . . stay up to date on current research and to maintain professional competence in current school counseling issues and topics." Sometimes we focus on staying on top of the research that interests us. But the movement helped illuminate how that is not all we have to do in terms of staying up to date. We know that students will have strong emotions surrounding issues like contentious elections and racism in our current landscape. We know kids will be significantly impacted by it, which makes it a current school counseling issue and topic. We need to maintain professional competence in handling it. But if we don't know how to maintain or create an inclusive, safe climate for students of all identities in our school, particularly when talking with them about racism, then we must prioritize our time to read up on how to do that competently at the same level as other important issues and topics we already grasp completely. The inclusive environment piece is vital to Black student well-being and is addressed in ASCA standard: A10a. "School counselors: a. Strive to contribute to a safe, respectful, nondiscriminatory school environment in which all members of the school community demonstrate respect and civility."

With BLM bringing antiracism to the forefront of students' awareness, I strive to know the best practices for helping students dialogue about and process feelings around racism. This is a life skill, and if we are going to help them achieve their maximum potential, it is our responsibility to teach them how to engage in their system of government and talk about current issues like BLM diplomatically and in a way that's least harmful for them, since it will come up in their daily lives. If we feel weak in this area, then we must get up to date by diving into learning the hard history of anti-Black racism that we don't know and researching the dynamics and impact of power, privilege, and oppression to guide our practice as ethical professionals.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Black children have been met with various challenges throughout their educational lives, resulting in negative consequences and outcomes that continue to permeate their way of life and how they are viewed in society today. The obstacles found in education are a direct result of racism and have brought about racialized trauma for many students and families. For school counselors to begin to do the work of dismantling systemic racism within their schools, they must first understand the historical context of racism in education and then explore thoughts and emotions that surface surrounding that knowledge. The BLM movement brought a much needed and heightened awareness to how we all should play a role in antiracism. School counselors can start the work of dismantling systemic racism by engaging in multiculturally competent and socially just school counseling practices. School counselors need to engage in abolitionist education and school counseling by understanding how prejudice, privilege, and various forms of oppression based on ethnicity, racial identity, age, economic status, abilities/disabilities, language, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity expression, family type, religious/spiritual identity, appearance and living situations (e.g., foster care, homelessness, incarceration) affect students and stakeholders.

CASE STUDY

Imagine that you are working as a school counselor in an elementary school. Over the summer, you are called into your principal's office to discuss a phone call she received from the father of a student who will be on your caseload next school year. The father saw some of your social media posts indicating that you are an antiracist school counselor. He has also read some articles and texts on Critical Race Theory. Since he is ardently opposed to any discussion of race or racism in schools and finds your posts offensive, he tells the principal he does not want his daughter working with you in an individual setting under any circumstances. Your principal tells you that she will document this in your human resource file as an example of your performance being negatively impacted by what you posted on social media about antiracism.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. As a school counselor, how would you respond?
2. What supportive resources might benefit the school counselor's response to the principal?
3. What is the school counselor's role in advocacy?
4. What aspects of the Ethical Standards or the ASCA National Model are applicable in responding to the situation?

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

- Form an advocacy and antiracist group with fellow counselors and colleagues to facilitate safe spaces for discussion.
- Create and disseminate DEI needs assessments to collect data from students, teachers, parents, and community members.
- Join a curriculum workgroup to assist in decolonization of curriculum and materials.
- Focus on grants to build and strengthen services and support for BIPOC students and faculty.
- At every meeting, group, or systemic interaction, ask who is missing at the table?

KEY REFERENCES

Only key references appear in the print edition. The full reference list appears in the digital product on Springer Publishing Connect: connect.springerpub.com/content/book/978-0-8261-8753-6/part/part01/chapter/ch01

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