



**Dyslexia Alliance  
for  
Black Children**



**IMPACT REPORT**  
**2020 - 2022**



## OUR MISSION

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To eliminate the amplified inequities for Black children experiencing unaddressed dyslexia and related learning disabilities.

The Dyslexia Alliance for Black Children (DABC) is a national non-profit created by parents, educators, and advocates driven by the urgent need to alleviate the double disparity of unaddressed dyslexia and racism.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Alison L. Huguley, EdD

Edwin Mathieu

## THANK YOU TO OUR FORMER BOARD MEMBERS:

Jule McCombes-Tollis, PhD

Elizabeth Weisman

Christina White

# FROM OUR FOUNDER

It is a pleasure to take this opportunity to reflect on the last two years and to share the Dyslexia Alliance for Black Children's work and plan for growth. In 2020, a powerful founding Board composed of parents, educators, and advocates mobilized to address the urgent issues facing Black children with dyslexia. Since our founding, DABC has developed a multi-prong approach to empower families, dismantle barriers, and raise awareness about literacy, dyslexia, and systemic racism.

As a mother of a Black son with dyslexia, I was driven by my family's experience navigating the obstacles in our public school to obtain an evaluation and intervention. My story was not unique and mirrored the experiences of many families traversing the special education terrain. During this battle, I also heard the echoes of systemic racism, including the language of low expectations, a scenario that plagues the educational journey of so many Black students. Black students with dyslexia and related learning disabilities sit at the intersection of racism and ableism, a dangerous crossroad that makes them invisible and often leaves them underserved, undiagnosed, and misdiagnosed.



It is time to bring evidence-based reading instruction to our structured literacy deserts and address systemic inequities. Over the last two years, DABC has hosted family workshops, facilitated support between families and within communities, and forged ever-broadening partnerships with educators and administrators, and the work has only begun. We have sounded the alarm and have moved toward action.

Whether you have been here since 2020 or are just joining us, we could not be more grateful for your commitment to our mission. Thank you!

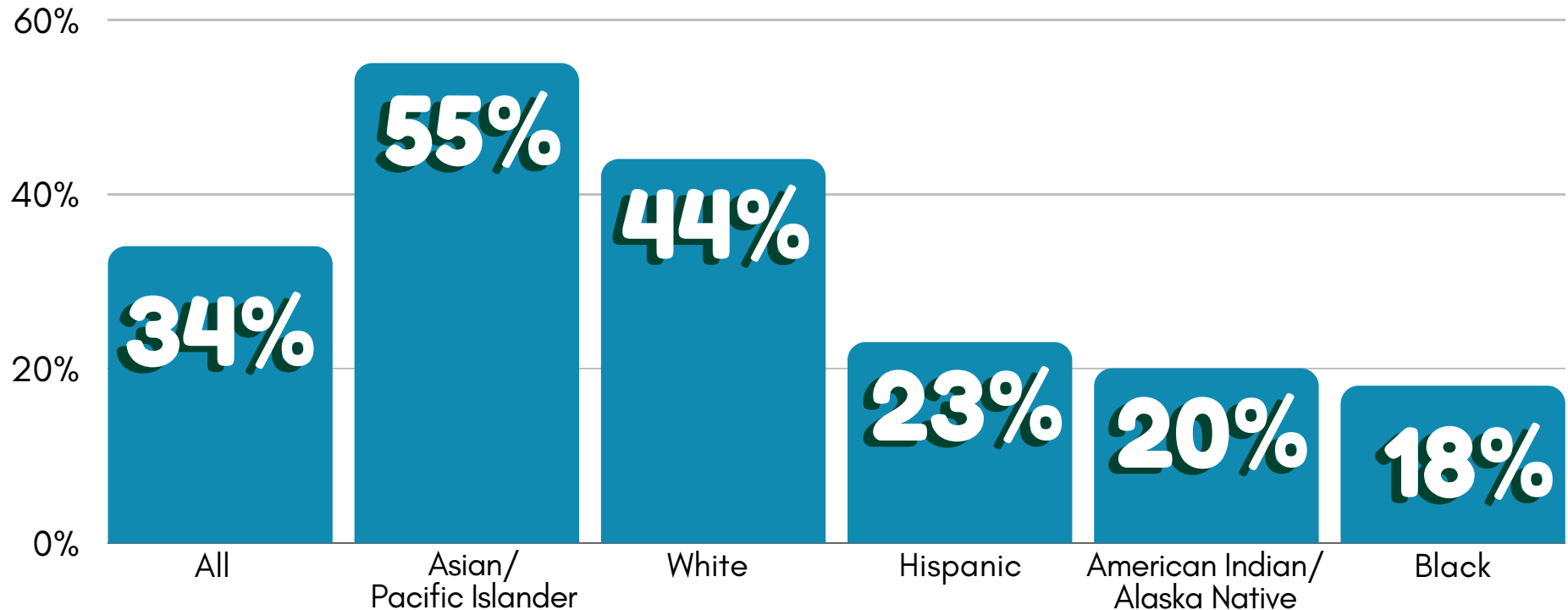
Handwritten signature of Resha Conroy in black ink.

Resha Conroy, M.S., M.P.A.  
Founder & Chairperson

# OUR WHY

We are facing a **national literacy crisis**, which disproportionately impacts **Black students**.

**PERCENTAGE OF FOURTH-GRADE PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS PERFORMING AT OR ABOVE NAEP PROFICIENT LEVEL IN READING (2019)**



“As we support students who struggle with language based learning disorders, it is clear that we need the support of the whole community. Educating families about dyslexia supports the growth of the students so that learning can continue at home. The Dyslexia Alliance for Black Children does the important work of advocacy and education. Our families have benefited greatly from their work.”

- *Christina Reyes, Founder & CEO, Inwood Academy for Leadership*

# OUR WHY

Black students with dyslexia are often **undiagnosed or misdiagnosed**.

Teachers **are less likely** to consider academic difficulties experienced by students of color as the result of a disability (Cooc, 2017).

In NYC, Black children are **2x** more likely to be classified with emotional disturbance than their non-Black peers (Fancsali and Chelsea Farley, n.d.).

Reading proficiency by the end of third grade is a key predictor of high school graduation. Among 4th graders, only **10%** of African-American boys living below the poverty line, scored at or above 4th-grade proficiency level. This only increased to **26%** for African-American boys not living below the poverty line (National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2013 Reading Assessment; KIDS COUNT).

When Black youth and their families are empowered by organizations like DABC, they are positioned to transform their family tree through literacy, overcoming the dark legacy of the past when Black people were denied the right to read legally. This kind of transformation begins with defining why change is needed and elevating a vision that is actionable. The leadership within DABC are not content to admire this decades old problem; they engage stakeholders across zip codes and racial lines to influence from the middle and translate hope into sustainable systems change.

- Dr. Tracy White Weeden



# OUR WHY

**80%** of prison inmates are reported to be functionally illiterate. **47.8%** of the inmates were deficient in word attack skills consistent with a dyslexia diagnosis (Moody, 2000).

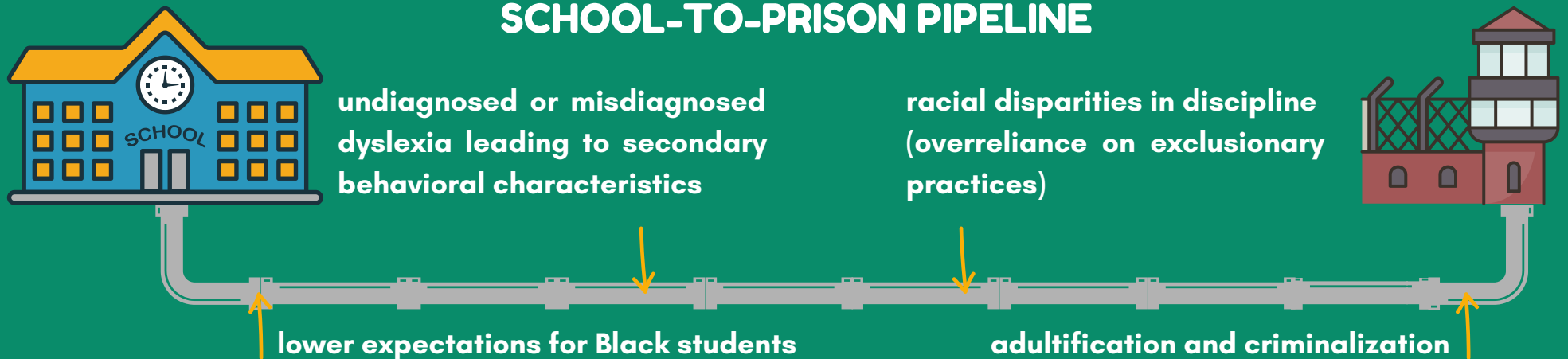
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Parents should not have to have advanced education to understand learning differences and how to address them. Instead, too many Black children, undiagnosed or misdiagnosed, follow my initial path, rising only to the low expectations set for me by my teachers. The work that DABC does is critical to change the language around low expectations and to make Black children with dyslexia visible.

- Ameer Baraka, Emmy nominated Actor, Author, *Undiagnosed: The Ugly Side of Dyslexia*

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## SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE



“ DABC illuminates the real-time mechanisms of systems of oppression that have yielded catastrophic results for Black and Brown students, including invisibility, low expectations, a wait-to-fail approach, ableism, and implicit biases. Yet as daunting as these truths can be, I am simultaneously inspired by the hope DABC conveys through practical strategies to dismantle oppressive systems and assure Black children’s access to quality services, such as acting early, deliberate and purposeful action, high expectations, freedom, affirming identity, and structured literacy as more than decoding.

- Dr. Alison Huguley, CEO, All Excel Consulting Inc.

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# OUR IMPACT

**358**

families served through workshops during Summer/Fall 2022

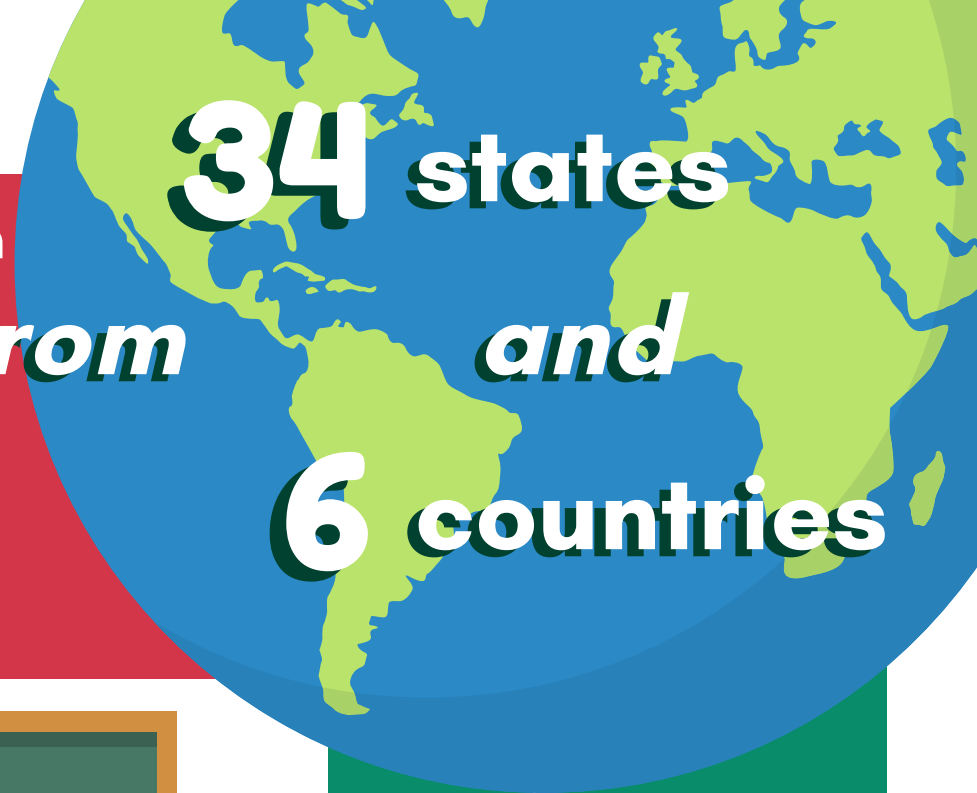


*from*

**34** states

*and*

**6** countries



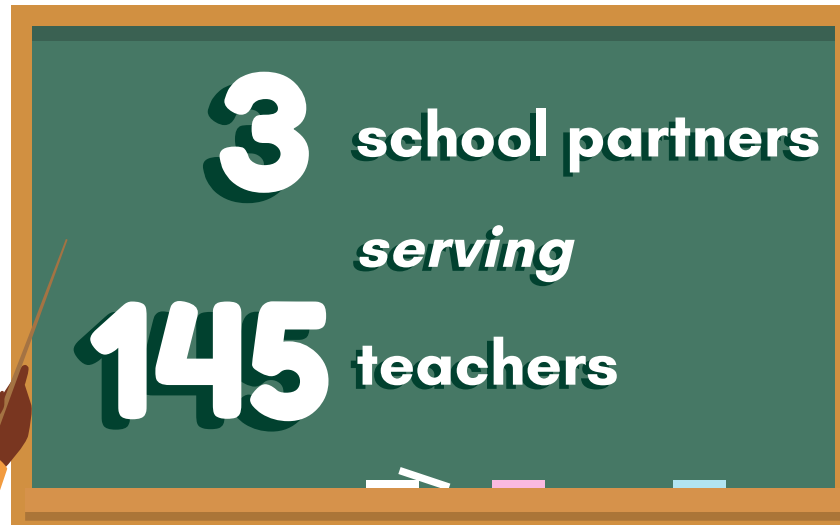
**3**

school partners

*serving*

**145**

teachers



Partnered with **25** organizations to deliver presentations reaching more than **7,000** participants



families served through Parent-to-Parent Coaching program

# WHERE WE WERE - 2021

## FEBRUARY



- Everyone Reading 48th Annual Conference on Dyslexia & Related Learning Disabilities

## MARCH

- Decoding Dyslexia Oregon, March to Literacy: Black Literacy Summit

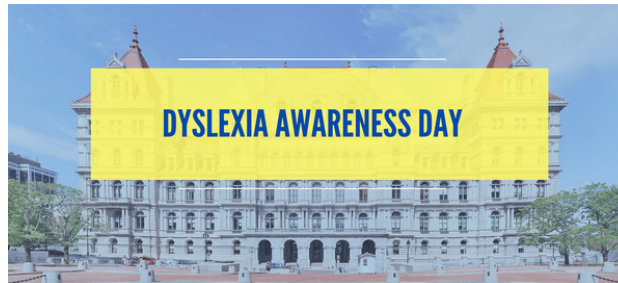


## APRIL



- Literacy: A Social Justice Issue sponsored by Learning Ally on EdWeb

## MAY



- New York State 6th Annual Dyslexia Awareness Day, School-to-Prison Pipeline: Institutional Racism and Reading Workshop

## SEPTEMBER

- The Chloe Day School and Wellness Center, Harlem, New York City



## OCTOBER

- IDA 2021 Annual Reading, Literacy, and Learning Conference panelists
- Windward Podcast Episode 25: The Intersectionality of Race and Dyslexia



# WHERE WE WERE - 2022

## JANUARY

- International Dyslexia Association Ontario – Race, Class, and Reading: Disrupting the Pedagogy of Low Expectations

## MARCH



- AIM Institute for Learning and Research, 2022 Research to Practice Symposium
- Everyone Reading Mini Conference on Dyslexia & Related Learning Disabilities

## MAY

- InterACTions webinar: InterACTions: Oregon's Literacy Crisis—Why Reading Matters & What Solutions Count!
- UCSF | UC Berkeley Schwab DCDC Spring Symposium 2022

## JUNE



**Everyone Reading Illinois**

SUCCESS FOR ALL WITH DYSLLEXIA

- Everyone Reading Illinois Legislative Lunch and Learn

## JULY



- Andrew Heiskell Braille and Talking Book Library, The New York Public Library

## AUGUST



- New York Public Library – Pelham (Bronx, NY)

## SEPTEMBER

- Black Women for a Better Education Learning Institute (PA)

## OCTOBER

- California Dyslexia Initiative October 2022 PLN
- Oregon Response to Instruction and Intervention Reading Symposium
- Now I Can Read

## NOVEMBER

- Western New York Science of Reading Conference
- Region of Waterloo Library (Ontario)

## DECEMBER

- Education Week Webinar Reading, Dyslexia, and Equity: Best Practices for Addressing a Threefold Challenge
- Sojourner Truth School PS149, Harlem, NYC
- Harlem Parent Power Hour

# DONATIONS AND FUNDERS



The Dyslexia Alliance for Black Children joins @NSVF's #LearningDifferences cohort, consisting of organizations that support and empower students with learning differences and their caregivers, specifically those who are also facing the impacts of poverty and racism.

In addition to a grant from New Schools Venture Fund awarded in December 2022, DABC also received a grant from EGF Accelerator.



“The Dyslexia Alliance for Black Children has been a valuable resource for me and my family. The workshops are informative, interesting and credible. My involvement with the DABC has made me a better parent.  
- DABC Parent”

## INDIVIDUAL DONORS

Craig Barrett, Esq.  
Resha Conroy  
Heather Gregory  
Winnie Joy  
Debbie Meyer  
Sean Naturo  
Tamika Taylor

[The Beacon, The Windward Institute](#)

[Office of Special Education and  
Rehabilitative Services Blog  
U.S. Department of Education](#)

[The Hechinger Report](#)



## READ ABOUT OUR WORK

# 2023 PROGRAMMING AND EVENTS

## Family Literacy Program

The Family Literacy Program provides support for families seeking immediate literacy solutions for their learners at no cost. This program provides access to literacy, dyslexia, and advocacy workshops, recordings, and tool kits. Participants have access to a monthly Literacy Question & Answer Hour and regular Informational Sessions with a Special Education Attorney or Advocate. In addition, DABC partners with organizations to provide access to supplemental literacy interventions and products. For families seeking at-home literacy solutions, DABC provides guidance and a community of learning.

## Parent-to-Parent Coaching

Parent-to-Parent Coaching provides parents/caregivers with one-on-one coaching with a parent of a child with dyslexia and access to monthly parent coaching meetings. The program's goals are to reduce isolation and provide a network of ongoing support.

## FAQ Video Series

The FAQ Video series is a groundbreaking resource of interactive videos featuring parents/caregivers of Black children with dyslexia and adults with dyslexia. This collection of videos answers the questions that families frequently ask when facing systemic inequities, racism, and ableism.

## Workshops for Schools, Educators, and Related Professionals

DABC offers interactive and meaningful workshops that equip schools, educators, and other professionals with the tools necessary to recognize dyslexia's effects on students and combat systemic racism in their environments. We strive to create an impactful learning experience that provides valuable insight into how such issues can affect student well-being, giving participants actionable guidance for addressing these structural and complex matters.

**FALL 2023**

**Dyslexia Alliance for Black Children  
Annual Conference**

# 2023 PROGRAMMING AND EVENTS

## MONTHLY COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

### January

*Introduction to Assistive Technology*  
with Pthara Jeppe, Special Education Attorney and  
Person with dyslexia

### February

*Dyslexia Beyond High School, Yes You Can*  
with Kelly Scimone and Suzanne Crossman from  
Landmark School, Massachusetts

### March

*Understanding Your Child's IEP*  
with Shemica Allen, MS, Education Advocate and  
Consultant

### April

*Dyslexia and Special Education Law*  
with Dayna Friduss, Special Education Attorney and  
Winnie Joy, School Psychologist

**More workshops to be announced.**



**The parent workshops from the Dyslexia Alliance for Black Children are inclusive and welcoming. I learned about this organization at a critical time in my parenting journey, when I felt alone and overwhelmed. Having access to the knowledge and wisdom of the Dyslexia Alliance for Black Children has eased my concerns and allowed me to focus on how best to help my child.**

**-DABC parent**



**WHERE  
CAN YOU  
FIND US?**

### January

Hamlin Robinson School Speaker Series  
Reading Allowed Speaker Series:  
Literacy is a Social Justice Issue  
313Reads Learning for Collective  
Learning Series

### February

Advocating 4 Kids Black History Month:  
Black Trail Blazers in the Disability Community Event  
Iona College, Guest Lecture for Language and Literacy Acquisition  
The Siena School, Undiagnosed: A Panel Discussion

### March

Dyslexia Training Institute  
Virtual Conference

### TBD

Learning Ally Literacy Leadership Podcast  
Right to Read Film Screening

# CONNECT WITH



Dyslexia Alliance for  
Black Children

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Edwin Mathieu, *Chair*  
Dayna S. Friduss, Esq.  
Dr. Sanayi Canton  
Micah Wittmer, PhD

## VOLUNTEER

The Dyslexia Alliance for Black Children seeks dynamic, passionate, and resourceful Board members, Advisory Board members, and volunteers who believe that a strategic plan and response is required to address the needs of Black children with dyslexia and related learning disabilities.

If you are interested, please contact us at [info@dyslexiaallianceforblackchildren.org](mailto:info@dyslexiaallianceforblackchildren.org)

TAKE ACTION  
SUPPORT OUR WORK

[CLICK TO DONATE](#)



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