

# What Educational Practitioners Can Do to Support Black and African American Students in their Success

## Relationship Building

- Share your story
- Show genuine care and concern for Black and African American students
- Be intrusive, don't be afraid to reach out; talk to students about what they need to be successful
- Normalize help seeking behavior
- Learn their names and how to enunciate it

## Affirming and Validating

- Let them know that they belong in the class and in the educational environment
- Let them know they are smart and that they can succeed in your class
- Have high expectations
- Connect course content to student experiences and do not dismiss their lived experience
- Find ways to bring in the voices and experiences of all students
- Praise publicly, give critical feedback privately

## It Takes a Village

- Know when and to whom you can refer students to
- Use a trauma informed approach – consider that traumatic events in the past or present are causing certain behaviors

## Touching the Sakhu (a Kiswahili term meaning to illuminate the soul or spirit)

- Look for unique gifts, talents and abilities and acknowledge them
- Invite them back if they go missing; express how their absence deprives the class of their brilliance
- Cite works by Black scholars/authors in your lectures or conversations with students

## List of Recommended Readings

***Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America*** by Ibram X. Kendi

***How to be an Antiracist*** by Ibram X. Kendi

***The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*** by Michelle Alexander

***Just Mercy*** by Bryan Stevenson

***Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?: And Other Conversations About Race*** by Beverly Daniel Tatum

***Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome: America's Legacy of Enduring Injury and Healing*** by Dr. Joy DeGruy

***White Fragility: Why It's so Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*** by Robin DiAngelo

***White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of Our Racial Divide*** by Carol Anderson

***Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*** by Isabelle Wilkerson