

**DATE:** January 13, 2025

**RE:** Request for your child to participate in the “Philosophy as Resistance Project”

Dear Parent(s) or Guardian(s):

My name is Dr. Laura Mae Lindo and I am an Assistant Professor at the University of Waterloo working in the Department of Philosophy. I am writing to ask your permission for your child to participate in a University of Waterloo pilot project on the use of philosophy classrooms to talk about race, racism, and racial equity. The “*Philosophy as Resistance: Imagining Pathways to Philosophy for Black Students*” project will be conducted at **Cameron Heights Collegiate Institute** over the next several months. This is a pilot project and will help the research team gain better insight into what topics and ideas Black students think belong in Philosophy classrooms. More specifically, the results from this research will be used to inform a larger study later on that will investigate how Philosophy can become a site of resistance for Black students. For example, some students think that we can talk about race, racism, and anti-racism work in a Philosophy classroom while others might think that these topics do not belong in the classroom at all. This pilot project is also an important step in helping the research team consider how we can talk about racial equity in high school Philosophy classes and may help us understand more about what Black students feel they need from the optional Philosophy credit in high school. Students can participate in the Focus Group Sessions, the Online Survey, or both. Details for each are provided below and their participation will be eligible to be used towards their community involvement hours. We expect this project to be an enjoyable experience and we believe that the information gathered in this project will help to ensure the field of Philosophy supports Black students with the care, compassion, and guidance that they deserve.

However, the decision about participation is yours and your child’s.

To help you in this decision, I have included the **Philosophy as Resistance Pilot Project Brochure**, although everything you need to know is right here in this information letter including what is to be expected from participants in the pilot project.

### **About Focus Group Sessions**

Your child would participate in a series of **3 Focus Group Sessions** with a small group of 10-15 students. Focus Group Sessions will be 2 hours long, will be conducted during the 2024-2025 school year. Focus Group location will be shared with interested participants once the dates are finalized. All conversations will be audio video recorded for research purposes, but your child’s identity will be kept confidential in study findings. This means that their name will not be used in any paper or publication resulting from this study, however, with their permission, quotations may be used with a pseudonym in place of their real name. In the final report shared with all participating schools, real names of students will not be used, and no identifying details will be included. Only children in Grade 9 to 12 will be allowed to participate in the Focus Group sessions, and for students under the age of 18, only those with parental permission and who themselves agree to participate will be involved in the study.



Focus group questions will include exploring past report recommendations to help make schools more supportive of Black students as well as considering whether certain classrooms are better places to talk about experiences of race and racism. This might result in your child feeling some discomfort as they think about their own experiences in school. But our hope is that our discussions will also result in finding ways to navigate these feelings together. Should students need additional support they can speak to the Child and Youth Worker or to the Black Brilliance Coordinators at their school.

Data from Focus Groups using pseudonyms will be stored using password protected documents and a dedicated external drive specific to this project.

Students or parents may withdraw their permission at any time during the study without penalty by indicating this decision to the researcher. If you wish to withdraw your child's study data after participating, please contact the Primary Investigator, Dr. Laura Mae Lindo, at the email listed below.

Please note that identifying information will be removed from the data we collect and stored separately for 6 months before being permanently erased. If you change your mind about allowing your child to participate in the study and want the information contributed removed, please contact us within this time frame. We will do our best to remove individual data (e.g., quotes etc.), however, please be aware that it may not be possible to remove all data associated with your child given the group format of the focus group discussions. Additionally, it is not possible to withdraw data from results that have been submitted for publication or otherwise shared publicly, however nothing will be published using your child's real name – only pseudonyms will be used in any and all publications.

### **About Anonymous Online Survey**

This project also includes an online survey conducted with Black students in high schools [Grades 9-12] (with parental permission) and universities across Ontario. This survey explores students' views on philosophy as an anti-racist educational space and should take no more than 20-30 minutes to complete. Students from the Black Students' Union at your child's school will be invited to participate in the survey. We have also received permission to allow the Black Brilliance Program to assist in recruiting student participants to take part in this important discussion, but students under the age of 18 cannot participate in the survey without parental/ guardian permission.

All survey data is anonymous, and while you will be asked to provide your child's name in order to indicate your permission for them to participate, the survey itself will not ask for their names or any other identifying information. Therefore, their **survey responses will be anonymous** and no identifying information will be used in any paper or publication resulting from this study. Because it will not be possible to identify which responses are theirs, survey data cannot be removed once responses have been submitted.

All data from this pilot project will be kept for 7 years on a secure University of Waterloo drive.

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Board (**REB #46199**). If you have questions for the Board, contact the Office of Research Ethics, toll-free at 1-833-643-2379 (Canada and USA), 1-519-888-4440, or [reb@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:reb@uwaterloo.ca). In addition, it has been approved by the **Waterloo Region District School Board** and has the support of the principal at your child's school.



We would appreciate if you would permit your child to participate in this project, as we believe it will contribute to furthering our knowledge of Philosophy classrooms as places to challenge racism and build more inclusive schools and communities. Please complete the attached permission form whether or not you give permission for your child to participate and return it to the address provided below by **January 31, 2025**.

If you have any questions about the study, or if you would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision, please feel free to call us at the University of Waterloo, 519-888-4567, ext. 46053 or email [lmindo@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:lmindo@uwaterloo.ca). Thank you in advance for your interest and support of this project.

Yours sincerely,



**Dr. Laura Mae Lindo**  
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Department of Philosophy  
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By providing your consent, you are not waiving your legal rights or releasing the investigator(s) or involved institution(s) from their legal and professional responsibilities.

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### PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

I am the Parent/ Guardian of the child named below OR I am 18 years of age or older. I have read the information letter concerning the research project entitled *Philosophy as Resistance: Imagining Pathways to Philosophy for Black Students* conducted by Dr. Laura Mae Lindo of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Waterloo.

I have had the opportunity to ask any questions and receive any additional details I wanted about the study, and I consent to the following:

- ☐ **For Parents/ Guardians: I Consent** to having my child participate in the Philosophy as Resistance Pilot Project Focus Group Sessions.
- ☐ **For Parents/ Guardians: I Consent** to having my child participate in the Philosophy as Resistance Pilot Project's Anonymous Online Survey.
- ☐ **For Parents/ Guardians: I Do Not Consent** to having my child participate in the Philosophy as Resistance Pilot Project Focus Group Sessions.
- ☐ **For Parents/ Guardians: I Do Not Consent** to having my child participate in the Philosophy as Resistance Pilot Project's Anonymous Online Survey.

**For Parents of students 17 years of age or younger:**

**Participating Student's Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent / Guardian Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return signed consent form to the Research Team at:**

**[PhilosophyAsResistance@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:PhilosophyAsResistance@uwaterloo.ca)**

