



The End of Black History Month Does Not Mean the End of Teaching Black History This School Year

February 28, 2022 by Educator Barnes

28 days (29 when there is a leap year) are not enough to cover the depth that is Black history. Since Black history is American history, there is no reason why this history should cease just because the calendar moved from February to March.

Earlier this month, I talked to a teacher about the book "28 Days: Moments in Black History that Changed the World" by Charles R. Smith Jr.," and the teacher shared that she hadn't started the book on the first day of February. She planned to read about one moment per day. Before I could say something, the teacher shared that it didn't matter because it was okay if students read the book in March, too.

Inside my brain, I did a back-flip (because only in my dreams am I that coordinated). The teacher understood that it didn't matter when Black history is taught because it could be taught any time of the year.

As a Black American, I use Black history month as a chance to evaluate what I have learned thus far about Black history since the previous Black history month. As an educator, I think about what I can do to better integrate Black history into the curriculum as I work with other teachers as an education consultant.

Not only is now a good time to be reflective about the curriculum, but it is also a good time to evaluate partnerships with Black organizations and the status of Black educators and students in the building.

Questions teachers can ask themselves:

- How many Black people are displayed in your classroom?
- How many Black authors have students read?
- How many Black authors are included in all genres of your classroom library?
- How many Black people, who are experts in your content area, have you highlighted in your lesson plans?
- How often are you teaching local Black history?

Questions administrators can ask themselves:

- How many Black authors are included in all genres of your school library?
- How many highly qualified Black businesses does your school contract for services?
- How many highly qualified Black educators have you hired?
- How often do you view school data by race to see how Black students are doing?
- How many partnerships do you have with Black community organizations?
- How many Black parents participate in organizations such as the PTO?

This is a great time for educators to audit themselves in order to ensure Black history is part of the entire year and not just part of the shortest month of the year.

Also, if you missed the Black History Month edition of the Indianapolis Recorder, which is the 4th oldest Black publication in the United States, you should check it out. There is a wealth of knowledge that can be used in the classroom.