

National Black Lives Matter At School Receives Initial \$100K Support to Expand Community Collective Power in Public Education for Thriving Black Futures

Thursday, October 27, 2022 // FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

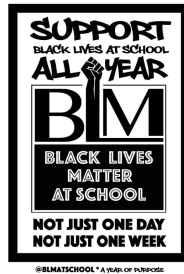
These funds will be dedicated to upgrading our national-level coordination and outreach across our coalition, while we invite continued grassroots support to strengthen local BLM@School organizing nationwide! Help us meet our goal of \$25,000 for the **2023 BLM@School Activity Support Fund** to grow joyful, radical Black education organizing!

Black Lives Matter At School has been evolving as a national organization to advance Black liberation through PK-16 education since its inception in Philadelphia in late 2016, drawing inspiration from teacher-led action in Seattle towards grounding an expansive organizing framework based around an intersectional racial justice education policy platform, liberatory curriculum building, and deepening place-based relationships between educators, learners, and local, progressive, multi-issue community organizing. We've since seen multiracial, multigenerational collectives implement our *Black Lives Matter At School Week of Action & Year Of Purpose* invitations all across the country, earning the endorsement of the nation's largest teacher unions, and even engaging wider transnational relationship building toward achieving a world where we are *all free*.

Between 2016 until 2021, we all made a commitment to organize this project as a full volunteer-driven operation, committing close to 100 hours each year to renewing the celebrations and actions without receiving any grant support and very light operational crowdfunding. In 2021, we made strides toward collectivizing our work as an all-volunteer effort to become a fiscally sponsored project of the Open Collective Foundation, setting us on a path to integrate greater financial support from grassroots donors and optimize our operations. As one of the leading national efforts building community collective power through the education system to advance liberation work, we felt called to this evolution during a time of increased backlash toward recent Black freedom movement gains. We maintain a commitment to a Black Queer Feminist praxis, enriched by the truthful histories of Black diasporic struggles, to build thriving futures of abundance, justice, relation, and joy.

Black Lives Matter at School is a national coalition organizing for racial justice in education.

www.blacklivesmatteratschool.com



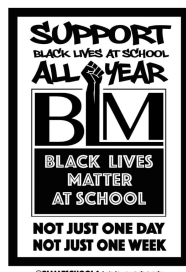
The National Steering Committee of Black Lives Matter At School is proud to announce that we've received our first six-figure investment (\$100,000) through our movement partners Communities For Just Schools Fund. This will allow us to have our first employees, bringing greater efficiencies and effectiveness to our continued national organizing. Sam Carwyn & chanel hurt have been dedicated activists working within the National Steering Committee of BLM@School. We cherish the opportunity to advance our collective mission by being able to provide material support for their continued engagement and advocacy for our mission.

We are committed to helping build a world in which we live in conscious relationship with ourselves, each other, and the lands we occupy with the least amount of harm and violence. We lead with the heart in creating systems and networks of care to make the domination, erasure, and dehumanization of any being impossible. We recognize this as a beginning, and want to impress upon our community and followers the opportunity to continue to invest in *our* work, not just as grassroots donors, but in the shared awareness that we will need long-haul-committed, localized roundtables of educators, families, and multi-sector community organizers to construct the futures we deserve. In that spirit, as we dedicate these grant funds to upgrading our national coordination, we are opening a new grassroots funding project:

- **The 2023 BLM@School Activity Support Fund.** This fund will be 100% dedicated to spreading funds across our national network to support significant organizing events that advance local Black education organizing and relationship building with multi-sector Black-led social change organizations. More details to come as we prepare a budget (based on donor support) and equitable application process for disbursement.

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Introducing Our First Paid National Staff

Sam Carwyn, she/her, Organizer

Favorite BLM@School Principle: Collective Value

Joined BLM@School: 2019



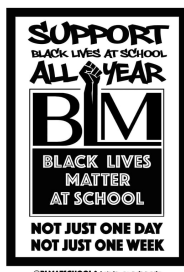
Sam has been dedicated to her community throughout her professional career in the non-profit sector. She focuses primarily on youth, families, reproductive justice, and supporting individuals who have experienced violence. As an advocate, she centers her efforts on those who are most marginalized, which has included youth in foster care, the Black community, disAbled individuals, LGBTQIA+ youth, and adults. She is devoted to creating accessible, inclusive, and uplifting environments collaboratively.

Sam earned a Bachelor's degree in Child, Youth, and Family Studies. Then went on to obtain a MA in Teaching. She is set to graduate in May 2023 from United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities with a MDiv and a concentration in Social Transformation. She is in care for ordination with the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. Grounded in her faith, she works within systems to address injustice and advance equity with a liberation theology lens.

Sam believes sharing our narratives has the power to promote authenticity, dispel myths, and reject shame. She embodies this by producing art regarding reproductive injustice, sharing about being an adoptee, acknowledging living with invisible disAbilities, and testifying on taboo topics to advance policy reform. She enjoys dystopian content, baking, cultivating belonging, and analyzing diverse representations in pop culture. She strives to create a legacy that will make her son, Gabriel, and bonus kid, Kayla, proud.

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chanel hurt, any pronouns, *Administrative Assistant*

Favorite BLM@School Principle: Loving Engagement

Joined BLM@School: 2021



Growing up around artists taught them a lot about creation, self-awareness, accountability, and collaboration. No matter where or who they find themselves with, these practices remain. chanel self-identifies as an eager learner, avid traveler, and constant thinker. Friends and family might add that she's a teacher, activist, and firstborn. Ultimately chanel loves learning new skills, getting to know new people, and exploring new places.

Since graduating with a music performance degree, chanel has been a freelance violinist, lived and worked abroad, and most recently was the orchestra director at a middle and high school in Virginia. chanel strives to lead

with the heart and do all they seek with gentleness, authenticity, and gratitude. Noteworthy moments include receiving a grant to design learning spaces, serving as an attendant at a synagogue and Buddhist temple, and becoming radicalized by their union caucus, which led to a love for organizing.

chanel is passionate about working alongside people of all ages to realize our individual and group potential and exchanging stories and wisdom with people they are fortunate enough to share time and space with. chanel is committed to holding hope, changing the idea of work and labor, and modeling a more just world.

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