

FEBRUARY 2026



# BLACK HISTORY month

VEA EQUITY NEWSLETTER  
MARIELA MARRERO - EQUITY VP

February marks Black History Month, a time to recognize, honor, and learn from the profound contributions of Black individuals whose leadership, creativity, and courage have shaped our nation and continue to shape our schools and communities today.

Black history is not limited to the past. It is a living, evolving, and deeply connected entity, deeply rooted in the experiences of our students and colleagues. From education and civil rights to science, literature, and labor movements, Black leaders have transformed our world.



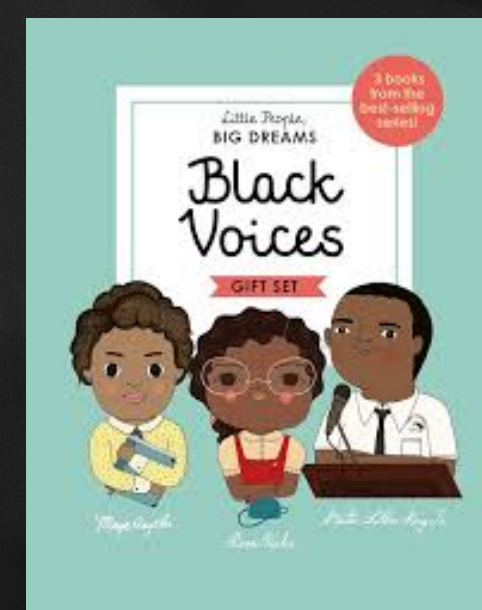
Black History Month was created by historian Dr. Carter G. Woodson, often called the "Father of Black History." In 1926, he established Negro History Week to confront the exclusion of Black history from schools and historical narratives. This later expanded and was officially recognized as Black History Month in 1976, affirming the importance of teaching Black history year-round.

## SOME OF MY FAVORITE CLASSROOM BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

One of my favorite ways to introduce Black history—especially for younger students, is through the Little People, BIG DREAMS series. These beautifully illustrated biographies make complex history accessible, engaging, and inspiring. These books work well for read-alouds, discussion starters, and independent reading, and they help students see themselves as future changemakers.

## IMPORTANT FIGURES EDUCATORS MAY HIGHLIGHT THIS MONTH INCLUDE:

- Harriet Tubman – Abolitionist and freedom fighter who led enslaved people to freedom through the Underground Railroad
- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. – Civil rights leader and advocate for justice and nonviolence
- Rosa Parks – Activist whose courage helped ignite the Civil Rights Movement
- Thurgood Marshall – First Black U.S. Supreme Court Justice and champion for civil rights
- Ruby Bridges – Education trailblazer who integrated public schools at age six
- Maya Angelou – Poet, author, and powerful voice for identity and resilience



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**EDUCATIONAL WEBSITES & CLASSROOM RESOURCES**

- Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture – [nmaahc.si.edu/learn](https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn)
- Learning for Justice (formerly Teaching Tolerance) – [learningforjustice.org](https://learningforjustice.org)
- PBS LearningMedia – [pbslearningmedia.org](https://pbslearningmedia.org)
- National Archives – [archives.gov/education](https://archives.gov/education)
- Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture – [schomburgcenter.org](https://schomburgcenter.org)



**HOW TO ADVOCATE AGAINST RACISM IN SCHOOLS**

- Speak up when you witness bias, microaggressions, or discriminatory behavior
- Incorporate anti-racist practices in lessons, materials, and classroom discussions
- Center diverse voices and perspectives in every subject area
- Encourage student-led initiatives that celebrate inclusivity and equity
- Collaborate with colleagues, families, and the community to address systemic issues
- Provide safe spaces for students to share experiences and ask questions



**HOW TO ADVOCATE AGAINST RACISM IN SCHOOLS**

- Integrate Black history and perspectives across subject areas
- Use resources created by Black authors, scholars, and institutions
- Celebrate Black excellence, creativity, and joy alongside history
- Create classroom spaces where all students feel seen, respected, and valued



We recognize that equity work is ongoing and requires care, reflection, and community. We are committed to supporting members through resources, dialogue, and collaboration as we continue this important work together.

Thank you for the dedication, compassion, and professionalism you bring to your classrooms every day. Together, we continue building schools and a union grounded in equity, dignity, and justice.

In solidarity,

Mariela Marrero  
Equity VP  
Vancouver Education Association

**JOIN US FOR TACOS & DIALOGUE  
EQUITY SOCIAL**

Where: Los Potrillos in Lake Shore

When: February 20 from 4:15–6:15 PM.

Enjoy the taco bar and 1 hosted beverage.

This is an opportunity to connect, reflect, and engage in meaningful conversation with fellow educators in honor of Black History Month.

