



LETTER FROM OUR COACH, JODY BROWN

As a Graduation Coach for Black Students, my mission is to ensure that every student is seen, heard, and valued. I strive to create spaces where Black students feel a deep sense of belonging, representation, and pride. By using my own lived experiences, I guide and empower students to navigate their educational journeys with confidence, resilience, and purpose. Together with families, I work to break down barriers, celebrate Black excellence, and support each student in achieving their full potential—from graduation and beyond.



CONTACT Jody Brown
EMAIL jody.brown@wcdsb.ca
PHONE (226)-747-5485

MAIN LOCATIONS

St. Mary's High School (Office)
Resurrection Catholic Secondary School



**Waterloo Catholic
District School Board**
Quality, Inclusive, Faith Based Education

GRADUATION COACH PROGRAM

Where our goal is to support and empower our Black students on their educational journeys by ensuring they are seen, heard, and valued.



| THE PROGRAM

The Graduation Coach Program provides intensive, culturally relevant and responsive support to Black, African, and Caribbean students. This coach helps the students with personal well-being, school engagement, academic goal setting and achievement, and post-secondary transitions. Researchers have concluded that our young Black people are less likely than their counterparts in the rest of the population to have a post secondary certificate, diploma, or degree. This leads to a lifetime of systemic inequities. The Graduation Coach Program challenges the outcomes.

STUDENT TESTIMONIES

"[The Coach's] presence in the school gave me the push, the confidence, and the motivation I needed to keep showing up and keep trying. He made sure I knew I mattered."

- Nyaruey, Recent Graduate

"From professional workshops to community events, the program has consistently provided real-world lessons and practical experience."

- Joseph, Recent Graduate

"[The Affinity Space] became a safe space. Some days I went there to study, other days just to play a game or sit and have a moment to myself. No matter what I needed that day, I knew I could walk into that room and be welcomed."

- Aliyah, Recent Graduate

"[The Program] also gave me the courage to push myself toward more challenging academic and career fields, spaces where Black representation is often limited."

- Aisha, Current Student

THE SUPPORTS

- A safe space ("The Affinity Space") for students to relax, eat lunch, and gather to share culture and experiences
- Academic supports, such as tutoring, pathways to postsecondary education, scholarship writing, and advocacy
- Hard skills and soft skills development with guest speakers and mentors
- Volunteer Opportunities
- March Break, Winter, and Summer Programming

"THE AFFINITY SPACE"

“EVERYONE DESERVES SOMEONE IN THEIR CORNER, AND THAT’S EXACTLY WHAT THE GRADUATION COACH PROGRAM GIVES YOU.”

- Angel, Recent Graduate

