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RAPPIN'
Thomas Wyatt

COGNITIVE UNKNOWN

As you are aware by now, there was another school shooting. This time in **Winder, Georgia**.

Excuse me for a second: Does anyone else notice these shootings are happening at some of the most fantastic facilities a young person could ever hope to ask for in a high school, while striving for a higher education?

I watched arial shoots of the school premises while they were reporting on the tragedy taking fold. My mind blurred out what was being said because my inner thoughts kept asking, "This is a high school?"

I'm not being crass or facetious, but I've attended schools that would give good reason as to why someone would shoot it up. Growing up in the **South-Central Los Angeles** school system is an education in itself. We were literally locked in to keep the bad actors out.

But those folk making those types of decisions didn't have a clue on what that did to students on the inside. It felt like going to school in a prison. One might understand why a student lost his/her mind at some point during the school year.

But this is different. I can't understand how a 14-year-old student, in a brand-new school semester, could do something like this in an environment such as that. This was a suburban facility that looks like it puts Westlake to shame. Our country's leaders really need to get their act together and figure this out. To keep losing our young people this way is reprehensible.

This is why I'd like to take time to recognize the **Black Leaders Collective (BLC)** for their work on the **State of Black Education Series**. There is no doubt that it takes a community. When you incorporate the help of independent school districts, parents, and resource providers to aid in a social gathering with one objective in mind, the results can be tremendous.

And that effort can give our children a magnificent advantage going forward by providing them with a purpose in life. Something I believe is sorely lacking with these individuals who opt to kill their classmates.

Let's keep advancing the initiative. Save our schools. Save our children.

Empowering Black Futures: Recap of State of Black Education III



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(AUSTIN, TX) - On Saturday, August 31st, the Black Leaders Collective (BLC) proudly hosted the third and final installment of the State of Black Education Series. This pivotal event brought together superintendents, educational stakeholders, parents, and community members, all committed to advancing equity in education for Black students across Central Texas.

Throughout the summit, we engaged in deep, impactful discussions that built upon the insights from our previous gatherings. Panels featuring superintendents, students, parents, and advocates explored innovative strategies and models for accountability that will drive meaningful change in our schools.

The participation of the community was inspiring, especially the voices of our students who shared their experiences and aspirations for the future of Black education. We also deeply appreciate the contributions of our panelists, including Matias Seguro, Dr. Nicole Whetstone, John Armbrust, Dr. Robert

Sormani, Dr. Natalie Nichols, Jay Coats II, Conner Ford, Nehemiah Walker, Elijah M. Carlyle, Onnesha Demerson Williams, Sheila Henry, Dr. Angela Ward, L. Smith, Camela Guyton, and our moderators Matilda 'Tillie' Lewis Thompson, Bill Wallace, and Martin Jones.

The event was not just about conversation; it was a call to action. Interactive breakout sessions, focus groups, and a town hall enabled participants to co-create actionable strategies that will shape the future of education for Black students in our region.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation for their generous support, allowing us to provide stipends to parents, caregivers, and students, ensuring their valuable participation. We are also grateful to Mathnasium of Southpark Meadows, The Boys and Girls Club Austin Area, and The Algebra Project for their continued dedication to improving math literacy among Black students.

Special thanks to our Resource Fair participants, including :



- Round Rock ISD
- Austin PBS
- Back 2 Life Chiropractic
- Aura Rainwater
- Unparalleled Preparatory Academy
- Inspire Change Everywhere (I.C.E)
- Changing Expectations
- JSU Austin Alumni Chapter
- Affordable Childcare Now Coalition
- BRAVE Communities
- Joyous Tutoring
- Austin Independent School District
- Capitol Area Council, BSA
- Black Parents and Families Collective
- Mathnasium of Southpark Meadows

See **SUMMIT**, on back page

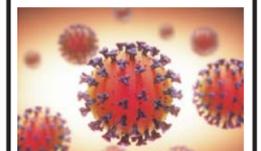


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INSIDE



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Wells Fargo experts offer advice for Black-owned businesses. See **MARKET** Page 4



COA receives funding to help combat homelessness. See **\$2.1M** Page 5

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