



2021 Stand Against Racism Content Curator Jennifer Hedrington



Jennifer Hedrington

2021 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year

Jennifer Hedrington is the 2021 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year. She has been a classroom math teacher and an educator of students for 16 years. It was while attending Massachusetts School of Law (2002-2005) that she found her calling to become an educator. Her teaching philosophy is *teaching in color through the lenses of love*, which allows her to educate the whole child while celebrating the uniqueness of each student. By teaching in *color*, Jennifer can see more than just skin deep. This affords her the ability to tap into the other colors that make up her students' identity. The lenses of love give room for compassion and fairness, while still maintaining high standards for all her students. Jennifer

understands that she, and all educators, is a powerful motivating force in the lives of students and has the ability to shape society's next superhero or villain. Jen says she teaches math because it allows her into that classroom, but educates because she loves.

Social media handles: Instagram: @lamhedrington & Twitter: @JenHedrington

Discussion Content

[Jennifer Hedrington's Keynote Speech](#), Department of Education 2021 Black History Month Program (video)

Brief intro:

As a child I learned to hate my skin tone. I was the girl trying to bleach her skin so that other children, especially children of color, would not make fun of me. I was not born detesting the intensity of my melanin, so where did I learn this? Media, most definitely,

but had I been slowly and intentionally injected with a hatred of all things black? Was this idea perpetrated by the adults in charge of my academic learning? How had I not realized that society was feeding me this self-hate? How can we truly change the views of others, if we still associate *black* with all things negative?

Jennifer Hedrington's Discussion Questions

1. What are the side effects, to society at large, by attributing *black* to all things negative? Do you think this is unintentional or by design? Why?
2. What physiological imprint, if any, does a child internalize about being black or about black people? Or is it just a color? Are the adults/educators immunized from the injection of black as a deviant? If not, how do they prevent the continuation of the negative narrative to their students?
3. How has the *color* white been portrayed, and what significance does that play on our society?