



Equity and Inclusive Education

Board Received: May 26, 2014

Review Date: June 2017

Policy Statement:

The Grand Erie District School Board promotes the principles of equity and inclusive education. The Board endeavours to maintain a working environment which is free of discriminatory biases and is barrier free. The Board values diversity, including, but not limited to, race, colour, creed, sexual orientation, age, ancestry, gender identity, disability, citizenship, family status, marital status, gender expression, sex, place of origin, and ethnicity within our communities. (These are Protected Grounds under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.)

The Board recognizes that equity of opportunity and equity of access to the full range of programs, the delivery of services, and resources are critical to the achievement of successful educational and social outcomes for those served by the school system as well as those who serve the system.

The Board is ~~therefore~~ committed to an equitable education system that upholds and reflects the principles of fair and inclusive education, which must permeate all policies, programs, practices, and operations.

Accountability:

1. Frequency of Reports – as needed
2. Severity Threshold – as needed
3. Criteria for Success – Positive Learning environments where all students feel engaged.
– Diverse communities are comfortable and supported within Grand Erie

Areas of Focus:

In order to uphold the principles of equity and inclusive education, the Board will address the following eight areas of focus:

1. PROGRAMS, GUIDELINES AND PRACTICES

Programs, guidelines and practices of the Board will serve staff, students, and families in diverse communities by incorporating the principles of equity and inclusive education into all aspects of its operations, structures, policies, programs, procedures, guidelines, and practices, consistent with the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

2. SHARED AND COMMITTED LEADERSHIP

The Board will provide and promote informed shared leadership to improve student achievement and to close achievement gaps for students, by endeavouring to identify, address and remove barriers and all forms of discrimination.

3. SCHOOL–COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

Under the leadership of equity-related committees (e.g., the Equity and Inclusive Education Steering Committee; the Accessibility Committee), the Board will establish and maintain a collaborative

relationship with diverse communities so that the perspectives and experiences of all students, families, and employees are recognized and addressed.

4. **INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT PRACTICES**

The Board will implement an inclusive curriculum and review resources, instruction, and assessment and evaluation practices in order to identify and address discriminatory biases, so that each student can maximize her or his learning potential.

5. **RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION**

The Board acknowledges each individual's right to follow, or not to follow, religious beliefs and practices free from discriminatory or harassing behaviour and is committed to taking all reasonable steps to provide religious accommodations to staff and students.

6. **SCHOOL CLIMATE AND THE PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT**

The Board is committed to the principle that every person within a school community is entitled to a respectful, positive school climate and learning environment that is free from all forms of discrimination and harassment.

7. **PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

The Board will provide administrators, staff, students and other members of the school community with opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviour needed to identify and eliminate discriminatory biases and systemic barriers.

8. **ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY**

The Board will assess and monitor progress in implementing the principles of Equity and Inclusion into all Board policies, programs, guidelines and practices, and communicate these results to the community.

Legislative and Policy Framework

- *Guide to your rights and responsibilities under the Human Rights Code (2009)*
- *Guidelines on developing human rights policies and procedures (2008)*
- *PPM 119 – developing and implementing Equity and Inclusive Education policies in Ontario Schools (2009)*
- *Character Attributes*
- Tuition Agreement between Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) and The Grand Erie District School Board
- *Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy (2009)*
- *Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation (2009)*
- *Bill 13 (the Accepting Schools Act)*
- Administrative Procedure SO136 – Equity and Inclusive Education