

KAWARTHA PINE RIDGE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

POLICY STATEMENT

Section: Board and Community

• Goals

Policy Code: B-3.2

Policy: EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

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1. Background

The Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board values the contribution of all members of its diverse community to the achievement of its mission and goals.

The Board believes that excellence in education is founded on respect for the dignity and humanity of all individuals and the development of human potential, enabling individuals and groups to contribute fully within a diverse society. The education system's continuous improvement requires the creation and maintenance of safe, fair, nurturing, positive and respectful learning and working environments. Equity of opportunity and equity of access to the Board's programs, services and resources are central to educational excellence and effective human resource, business and administrative services, enabling us to achieve our potential as individuals, as an organization and as a society.

The Board recognizes, however, that various groups in our society have historically been treated inequitably. Unfair biases may have been expressed in various forms including prejudice, stereotyping, harassment, discrimination, exclusion, poisoned learning and working environments, and/or generally objectionable behaviour.

Individual and systemic biases may relate to the prohibited grounds of discrimination identified by the Ontario Human Rights Code. They may also relate to different aspects of cultural identity (eg. culture, linguistic origin, socio-economic status, nationality, gender).

It is the policy of the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board, therefore, to ensure that the principles of equity, valuing diversity and inclusion are integrated into our goals, policies, practices, structures, programs and institutional, individual and collective interactions such that they bolster the overall culture of the Board and its contribution to the communities it serves.

2. Principles of Equity, Valuing Diversity and Inclusion

Equity, valuing diversity and inclusion are related yet distinct concepts. They form the foundation for social justice and reflect values such as fairness, empathy, respect for the dignity of all humans, and accounting for the diverse needs, abilities, experiences, knowledge and contributions of people within our goals, policies, practices, structures, programs, actions and interactions.

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Equity, valuing diversity and inclusion aim to correct the imbalance of power that has historically marginalized particular groups by respecting the dignity and humanity of all, supporting the development of human potential, and enabling groups and individuals to contribute fully to society.

The Board recognizes that groups that have historically been disadvantaged include, but are not limited to, Aboriginal, racial, ethnocultural and faith communities, women, persons with disabilities, lesbian, gay, two-spirited, bisexual and transgender people, as well as communities of lower socio-economic status. The Board also acknowledges that emergent biases, stereotypes and prejudices will have a discriminatory impact on other individuals and groups.

Equity encourages fairness by requiring that we recognize and strive to eliminate the unfair biases and prejudices that limit our individual and collective freedom. Practising equity involves proactively eradicating attitudes, actions, structures and systems that result in discrimination and exclusion. Diversity calls on us to value both ourselves and one another by respecting our unique qualities. We practise equity when we engage all members of society and esteem the contributions of groups and individuals.

3. Policy Objectives

It is the objective of this policy to require that all reasonable steps be taken to ensure that:

- 3.1 procedures are in place for infusing the principles of equity, valuing diversity and inclusion into all aspects of the system's function including the development, implementation and timely review of goals, policies, practices, structures, programs and institutional and individual interactions; and that mechanisms exist for assessing their effectiveness and for making changes where necessary.
- 3.2 informed, accountable leadership as well as financial and human resources are provided to support the work of staff, students, parents/guardians and community groups, and for staff development in promoting equity and inclusion in the school system.
- 3.3 the contributions of our diverse community of parents/guardians and community groups to our schools are valued and encouraged, and that parents/guardians and community groups are provided with equitable opportunities for working with staff and with each other for the benefit of all students.

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- 3.4 our school and professional development curricula accurately reflect and use the diversity of knowledge of all peoples as the basis for instruction; that it actively provides opportunities for all students, staff and trustees to understand the factors that cause inequity in society and to understand the similarities, differences and connections among different forms of discrimination; and that it helps students, staff and trustees to acquire the skills and knowledge to challenge unjust practices and to build positive human relationships among all members of society.
- 3.5 all students are provided with equitable opportunities to be successful in our system; that institutional barriers to success are identified and removed; and that all learners are provided with supports and reinforcements to develop their abilities and achieve their aspirations.
- 3.6 recruitment, selection, staffing, promotion, professional development, performance evaluations and retention practices are fair and equitable; that employees enjoy opportunities for advancement and support for professional development; and that their skills and knowledge are valued and used appropriately.
- 3.7 students, employees, parents/guardians and community partners are provided with effective procedures for communicating and resolving concerns and/or complaints that may arise from experiences of unfair or inequitable treatment within the system.

4. Application

The Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board expects this policy to be observed by all persons in schools, workplaces and meeting places associated with the Board. This applies to all persons on Board premises, persons working on Board-related business, whether on or off Board premises, and persons involved with Board-sponsored programs at other premises. This includes students, staff, trustees, parents/guardians, volunteers, visitors, suppliers, service providers, corporate partners and community agencies.

5. Accountability

Mechanisms for guiding the implementation of this policy will be established over time. Such measures may include ongoing planning and evaluation processes, annual reporting, and constituting consultative stakeholder groups.

Established: March 23, 2000

Revision Dates: November 23, 2000
November 2004
October 23, 2008