

NON-DISCRIMINATION

Background

The District believes in equitable treatment for all individuals regardless of race, colour, ancestry, ethnic origin, religion, socio-economic status, gender, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, or political beliefs. The letter and spirit of the *Canadian Human Rights Act* and the *B. C. Human Rights Code* shall be carefully observed, enforced, and supported, so that all members of the school community may work together in an atmosphere of respect and tolerance for individual differences.

This practice of non-discrimination shall prevail in all matters of instruction and course selection: in employment, promotion, and assignment of staff; in providing access to facilities; in the choice of instructional materials and the provision of career guidance and counselling; and in all matters pertaining to community relations. Specifically, the District will not tolerate hate crimes and propaganda, and will vigorously enforce administrative procedures dealing with such matters.

The District acknowledges the racial and cultural diversity of the communities that it serves. Under Canadian laws, all people have the right to their fundamental freedoms and protection from discrimination and racism.

The District supports the elimination of direct and systemic discrimination and racism. The District recognizes racism as a form of discrimination that robs society of the full participation of its members.

The District reaffirms its commitment to eliminating racism and promoting educational and employment equity. Furthermore, the District supports the development, implementation and evaluation of procedures, programs and services that promote and support the principles of Multicultural and Anti-Racism Education.

The District also acknowledges that all members of the school community; staff; students, parents and other stakeholders, share the responsibility for creating a welcoming and inclusive environment which honours and respects everyone. It is the District's responsibility to support all members in their efforts to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all.

In recognition of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the *B.C. Human Rights Code* and the *B.C. Multiculturalism Act*, the District accepts its responsibilities in promoting the spirit of the legislation. Additionally, the District recognizes that the principles of Multicultural and Anti-Racism Education are also embedded in the *Aboriginal Educational Enhancement Agreement* to which it is committed.

The District is committed to:

- Providing human, material and financial resources to support Multicultural and Anti-Racism procedures;
- Eliminating ethnocentrism, prejudice, stereotyping, discrimination and racism in any form;

- Ensuring that all schools' Codes of Conducts make explicit reference to the prohibited grounds of discrimination in the BC Human Rights Code;
- Developing and supporting an environment that affirms, respects, reflects and celebrates the racial, ethno-cultural and religious diversity of our society;
- Supporting employment equity, through the provision of effective processes to recruit, retain and develop all staff regardless of the race, colour, ancestry, national or ethno-cultural origin or religion;
- Supporting educational equity* through the provision of quality programs for all learners regardless of their race, colour, ancestry, national or ethno-cultural origin or religion;
- Creating a workplace environment that values and welcomes diversity.

Definitions

Anti-Racism is the practice of identifying, challenging, preventing and eliminating racism, in particular, by isolating, raising awareness and challenging beliefs (such as prejudice, bias and stereotypes) that maintain racism. It uses direct action at personal and institutional levels to create and implement action to fight racism for individuals and within an organization, workforce or group.

Bias is the usually unconscious process of favouring or not favouring individuals or groups based on internalized prejudices. Recent science has shown that neural pathways can be created based on stereotypes and prejudices that create unconscious bias that impacts our behavior and actions.

Cultural Diversity refers to the variety and range of cultures, languages, religions and backgrounds within the group.

Discrimination is unfair, unequal and differential treatment of individuals and/or groups often based in prejudice; in particular prejudice based on race, gender, class, religion, age, ability, sexual orientation or ethnicity. Discrimination can include overt differential treatment and create barriers to prevent access or opportunity such as through procedures and practices that exclude and/or limit people or groups.

Prejudice/Bias + Action = Discrimination.

Diversity the presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes within a group, some of which are visible and others that are not. It recognizes that we are all different and that our differences can be a source of strength for the group.

Educational equity is recognizing that for diverse groups and for students' educational success, systemic barriers that have excluded particular groups, such as racialised groups, must be challenged and removed. This involves looking at all aspects of education such as recruitment and retention of students, their success and participation and the curriculum and assessment.

Employment equity is recognizing that for diverse groups and individuals, employment equity requires that systemic barriers that have excluded particular groups, such as racialised groups, be challenged and removed. This involves all aspects of employment such as recruitment, selection, retention and progression of staff, workplace environments and pay equity.

Equality is about treating everyone equal and the same. Equal treatment does not recognize group or individual differences and in particular, the inequality of experiences, opportunities and options due to racism.

Equity/Equitable is about fairness; everyone is equal and different. It involves accommodating differences and recognizing that some people may face barriers or disadvantages in particular due to social inequalities such as racism, which require accommodation in order to achieve the same goal. Equity is not necessarily the same as equality, although at times it can be.

Ethno-cultural refers to a group of people whose members identify with each other through a common heritage, language, culture religion, ancestry or nationality.

Eurocentric is the tendency to present information, organize procedures and practices from a European perspective, so for example, the work week and holidays are based on European calendars and religious/historical holidays and history is taught with regards to the European perspective and impacts.

Ethnocentrism is the tendency to believe that one's ethnic or cultural group is centrally important and that all other groups are measured in relation to one's own. Ethnocentrism means to judge others relative to their own group's culture, values and behaviours.

Harassment is behaviours and actions that result in annoying, insulting or treating individuals or groups badly. It can include such things as name-calling, jokes, insults, ignoring or general rudeness. It is the *impact* of these behaviours and not the *intent* that is considered in defining harassment.

Identity (in multiculturalism and anti-racism) refers to the characteristics determining who or what a person is, what group(s) they belong to and specifically their ethno-cultural groups. It not only includes how individuals might self-identify but also how others might identify them, which includes racial identities.

Inclusion/Inclusive describes any effort to include people and value the diversity of their differences, so that they are able to participate as valued, respected and contributing members of society/community/organisation. In education, inclusion means all members of a school community (students, staff and parents) have equal access to the resources of their community and the opportunity to participate in all areas, regardless of their race, gender, social class, religion, sexual identity, sexual orientation or other dimension of diversity. An Inclusive organization will reflect their communities' diversity.

Multi-Centric Education literally means having more than one centre and is the practice of challenging ethnocentric and particularly Eurocentric practices and perspectives in education, offering diverse viewpoints of each issue. It also means recognizing and challenging the cultural bias in teaching and learning and offering different cultural styles of teaching and learning, acknowledging the strength and values in all styles not favouring one position over others.

Multicultural and Anti-racism Education is the practice of identifying, challenging, preventing and eliminating racism as it occurs within education, by isolating, raising awareness and challenging beliefs and practices that maintain racism both on an individual level and systemically. This includes challenging staffing issues, curriculum and pedagogy, assessment and climate issues.

Prejudice means to pre-judge; a preconceived assumption, belief, value or attitude about a person or group, either positive or negative, not based on experience, without adequate evidence or information, usually based on stereotypes.

Stereotype + Values = Prejudice

Race/Racial is a socially constructed belief that human beings can be divided up into distinct racial groups that are biologically different (based on such characteristics as skin colour, shape of eyes or nose) and that these differences are hierarchical, with some races being superior to others. Although science has proven the notion of races and racial differences to be false, the belief has been ingrained into cultural worldviews and is perpetuated despite evidence to the contrary and is thus recognized as a social construct.

Racial Achievement Gap refers to the different academic achievement and success rates of students and in particular that there is a significant gap between racialised groups in Canada and their fellow White students. This gap is due to systemic racism inherent in educational systems and society. These racialised students include Aboriginal students and Black students in particular and some groups of Hispanic, South Asian and Asian students when linked with migration, specific ethno-cultural identity and class.

Racialised is a general term used to refer to all people who experience racism regardless of ethno-cultural identity and specifically recognises that racism is based on a false belief that races exist. Sometimes racialised people self-define as 'people of colour' or 'visible minority' to highlight their experience of racism.

Racism is a belief, attitude and practice that is based on a false assumption that a group of people can be categorised based on race, in particular by using skin colour as a criteria and that different races are superior or inferior to others. This belief has led to legitimizing some groups over others creating a power imbalance. This power imbalance has resulted in actions limiting 'racialised' individuals and groups from full participation and can happen on an individual level or on a systemic or institutional level.

Discrimination + Power = Racism

Stereotyping is a conscious or unconscious shared understanding about a whole group of people, based on generalized, simplified characteristics. Some stereotypes may seem positive, but the impact of all stereotypes is negative. They are generalizations about all members of the group and ignore individual uniqueness and differences.

Systemic Discrimination occurs when the procedures and practices of the organization/community/society overtly or covertly prevent access, limit or exclude specific individuals and groups for full participation in the organization/community/society.

Systemic Racism occurs when procedures, rules, behaviours, practices and structures that are built into various systems and services in society result in disadvantages for people of a certain race, ethnic, national or religious group, although they may seem or are intended to be neutral.

Procedures

1. Building and Maintaining Community

- 1.1. The District values dialogue with all parent, student and community groups. The collaboration is important for the creation of effective educational procedures, programs and services. The District recognizes that special efforts may be needed to involve parents because of differing cultural assumptions and histories related to education. Additionally, the District recognizes the need to create an inclusive environment in which all parents and students from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds feel welcome and can contribute.
- 1.2. The District is committed to providing opportunities for diverse communities in order to develop equity in education and create an environment free from racism and shall:

- 1.2.1. Facilitate discussions with diverse communities and provide translation and interpretation as needed to facilitate these discussions;
- 1.2.2. Provide opportunities for all communities to enhance their awareness, knowledge and understanding of racism;
- 1.2.3. Ensure that specialized staff, such as the Aboriginal Educational Enhancement Workers, Multicultural Liaison Workers, Settlement Workers in Schools and the Engaged Immigrant Youth Program Workers work collaboratively with all members of the school community to provide services according to community needs;
- 1.2.4. Maintain the District Diversity Advisory Committee and encourage collaboration among the advisory committees.

2. Honouring Language

- 2.1. The District recognizes the role of language in learning. The District values language learning opportunities and affirms the importance of the learner's first language. The District also recognizes the power of language to create inclusion or exclusion.
- 2.2. The District is committed to creating a climate of respect for the linguistic diversity of the community and language that honours and creates inclusion of all and shall:
 - 2.2.1. Continue to recognize and value the importance of first language(s) and prior educational experiences of students;
 - 2.2.2. Support the development and implementation of additional language programs;
 - 2.2.3. Develop communication strategies that will assist and inform parents in their first language about their children's progress;
 - 2.2.4. Ensure that all efforts are made to use inclusive and welcoming language that respects the racial, cultural and religious diversity of its communities.

3. Inclusive and Multi-Centric Curriculum

- 3.1. The District recognizes that curriculum must present a global view of society from diverse perspectives that include the experiences and achievements of culturally diverse groups. The perspectives of all cultural groups must be included to encourage all students to develop pride in their own identity and to value the cultural identities and ancestries of others.
- 3.2. Examination and modification of existing curricula are required to eliminate racial, ethno- cultural and religious discrimination. An effective curriculum development process is one that is collaborative and supportive of educational equity.
- 3.3. The District is committed to developing and implementing racism-free curricula and shall:
 - 3.3.1. Support equitable access to quality programs for all learners;
 - 3.3.2. Develop and implement new inclusive curricula designed to eliminate racism;
 - 3.3.3. Develop and implement multi-centric approaches to curriculum and delivery;
 - 3.3.4. Select learning resources to eliminate racism, Eurocentric bias and negative cultural bias;
 - 3.3.5. Select learning resources that reflect the experiences and contributions of our diverse society.

4. Equitable Assessment, Evaluation and Placement

- 4.1. The District recognizes that the assessment and evaluation process must be multi-faceted in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of what students are capable of achieving. The previous experiences, knowledge and cultural and linguistic background of all students must be considered.
- 4.2. All staff members share the responsibility for creating a welcoming and inclusive environment which honours and respects the diversity of all students. The District and school-based reception process needs to support assessment and evaluation procedures that are appropriate for each student.
- 4.3. The District is committed to developing, implementing and evaluating processes for assessment, evaluation and placement that accommodate cultural differences and shall:
 - 4.3.1. Examine and monitor practices in assessment, evaluation, placement, engagement and tracking of students and implement practices that address the Racial Achievement Gap and support the principles of Multicultural and Anti-Racism Education;
 - 4.3.2. Ensure that parents are adequately informed about assessment and evaluation procedures and involved in placement decisions.

5. Implementing Staff Development

- 5.1. The District recognizes that general staff development on Multiculturalism, Diversity and Anti-Racism is fundamental to creating organizational change. All staff members need the knowledge, skills and attitudes to understand and accommodate diversity and difference. Additionally, specific staff development in Multicultural, Diversity and Anti-Racism Education is crucial to understand and accommodate diverse learning and communication styles. An effective staff development program on Multicultural and Anti-Racism Education will promote the academic, social and emotional growth of all students.
- 5.2. The District is committed to providing in-service training opportunities for all employees to enhance their awareness and competence in working effectively with people of diverse backgrounds and shall:
 - 5.2.1. Offer staff and professional development programs to all employees that heightens understanding of the racial, ethno-cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of the community;
 - 5.2.2. Implement staff development programs that promote the principles of Multicultural and Anti-Racism Education;
 - 5.2.3. Support the integration of Multicultural and Anti-Racism Education into existing and new staff development programs.

6. Preventing (Eliminating) Racism, Ethno-Cultural and Religious Harassment

- 6.1. The District recognizes that every individual has the right to freedom from harassment in the workplace and educational environment. A positive environment protects and promotes the dignity, worth and human rights of every person and supports mutual respect and co-operation among individuals. Racial, ethno-cultural or religious harassment in any form by any members of the school community, employees, students, parents, and other stakeholders is unacceptable.

- 6.2. The District is committed to supporting an environment free from intentional or unintentional racial, ethno-cultural or religious harassment for all students and employees and shall:
 - 6.2.1. Provide opportunities for employees and students to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to identify and respond effectively to harassment;
 - 6.2.2. Develop and implement procedures for resolving incidents of racial, ethno-cultural and religious harassment for all members of the school community;
 - 6.2.3. Monitor and investigate reported incidents of racial, ethno-cultural and religious harassment with annual reports of the number of incidents reported and outcomes.

7. Equitable and Inclusive Employment Practices

- 7.1. The District recognizes that effective employment practices remove barriers to fair and equitable hiring, promotion and training opportunities. Employment practices, consistent with Multicultural and Anti-Racism Education, would eliminate prejudice, stereotyping, ethnocentrism, racism and discrimination. Furthermore, the District recognizes that in removing barriers and practicing equitable and inclusive employment practices it would ensure that the organization is reflective of the communities it serves.
- 7.2. The District is committed to developing employment practices that are consistent with the principles of Multicultural and Anti-Racism Education and shall:
 - 7.2.1. Provide equitable access to employment opportunities and fair treatment in the workplace;
 - 7.2.2. Develop recruitment, interview, selection, training and promotion practices and procedures that identify and remove barriers;
 - 7.2.3. Monitor and examine applications, selections processes, recruitment, retention and progression of all employees with regular reports.

Reference: Sections 8, 8.4, 8.5, 20, 22, 65, 85, 177 School Act
Human Rights Code
Multiculturalism Act
Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
Canadian Human Rights Act
Criminal Code of Canada
Collective Agreements

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