



# ALGONQUIN AND LAKESHORE CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

### EQUITY AND INCULSIVE EDUCATION (Policy Statement: Equity and Inclusive Education)

#### Purpose

It is the belief of the Board that all people are created equal, in the image of God, each with inimitable characteristics deserving of dignity (Genesis 1:27). It is the policy of the Board to provide in all its operations an educational environment which promotes and supports diversity within its Catholic community as well as the equal attainment of life opportunities for all students, staff, parents and other members of the community.

The standards of practice set out in the Board Policy, Equity and Inclusive Education, are consistent with the requirements of the Education Act and PPM 119: Equity and Inclusive Education.

The purpose of the administrative procedure is to provide a guideline to assist students, staff, parents and members of the community of the Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board in eliminating discrimination, harassment and marginalization of students, staff, parents and members of the community in our schools. This administrative procedure is framed around *Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation (2009)*.

The Administrative Procedures are framed by the eight areas of focus in the Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy (PPM119) and outlined in *Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation (2009)*:

#### **1. Board policies, programs, guidelines, and practices**

Board policies will align with the *Strategy* and with Ministry initiatives that support student achievement and well-being. This focus will be embedded into all other policies, programs, practices and interactions, so that equity and inclusive education permeates everything that happens in schools.

#### **2. Shared and committed leadership**

The focus of shared and committed leadership recognizes that all partners in education are responsible for preparing students to live in a diverse society. The Board and schools will provide leadership that is responsive to the diverse nature of our communities and committed to identifying and removing discriminatory biases and systemic barriers to learning.

### **3. School-community relationships**

The Board and schools need to build capacity to serve increasingly diverse communities. By encouraging community involvement and participation in the implementation and monitoring of school board policies, the Board can ensure that all perspectives are represented and foster trust based school-community relationships.

### **4. Inclusive curriculum and assessment practices**

The ALCDSB will ensure that pedagogy is culturally responsive and relevant to the changing needs and lives of students. Students need to feel engaged and empowered by what they learn, from whom they learn and the environment in which they are learning.

### **5. Religious accommodation**

The Board will promote a learning environment that is safe and respectful for all, in recognition of the dignity of all people and their equality as children of God. The Board follows a Religious Accommodations Guideline (Appendix 1), in keeping with denominational rights, PPM 199, and the provisions of the Ontario Human Rights Code.

### **6. School climate and the prevention of discrimination and harassment**

School climate and well-being are defined as the sum total of all the personal relationships within a school and every person within a school community is entitled to experience a positive school climate, free from discrimination and harassment. By monitoring and promoting Positive School Climate and Well-Being plans, the Board nurtures and responds to the needs of our school communities.

### **7. Professional learning**

To build capacity among staff to understand and address issues that pertain to equity, diversity and inclusive education, the Board will focus on student-centred learning models for all professional learning opportunities.

### **8. Accountability and transparency**

All members of the Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board have a collective responsibility to foster student achievement and well-being as identified through the strategic priorities of the Board and as articulated in the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement and Well-Being. By listening to and acting upon community feedback, engaging all to work in the best interest of students, the Board will facilitate accountability and transparency.

## **References**

*Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board Mission Statement*  
*Equity and Inclusive Education Policy 2010–06-01*  
*The Education Act*  
*The Ontario Human Rights Code*  
*Ontario's Equity Action Plan, 2017*

*The Promise of Diversity: Ontario`s Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy and Implementation Guide, 2009*  
*Policy Program Memorandum No. 119 (2009)*  
*The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Constitution Act, 1982*  
*Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*  
*PPM 145 Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour*  
*PPM 128 the Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct*  
*Respecting Difference, OCSTA, 2012*  
*Keeping Our Kids Safe at School, Bill 157, 2010*

## **Procedures**

1. In order to ensure that Board policies, programs, guidelines and practices reflect diverse points of view, needs and aspirations of the diverse community, the Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board will:
  - 1.1 Review all policies, in a cyclical manner, to determine and eliminate systemic biases in hiring, mentoring, retention, promotion and succession planning and embed principles of equity and inclusion.
  - 1.2 Ensure that all policies, guidelines and practices are drafted and implemented in accordance with the Board's equity and inclusive education policy.
  - 1.3 Ensure that each group is included in the collaboration and consultation as applicable policies and practices are put into place.
  - 1.4 Make every effort to ensure that employees of ALCDSB reflects the diversity within the community so that students, parents and community members are able to see themselves represented.
  - 1.5 Ensure all persons with disabilities are accommodated appropriately to meet their individual needs and in a manner consistent with the *Code*.
  - 1.6 Provide opportunities for school communities, including students, staff, parents, trustees and community members, to provide active input into Board policies and improvement plans on an ongoing basis.
  - 1.7 Investigate in a thorough and timely manner any claims of discrimination and/or racism and take appropriate action consistent with the principles of the *Code*.
  - 1.8 Review existing school policies, for example, codes of conduct, to determine that they reflect the principles of equity and inclusive education.
  - 1.9 Extend, develop, and implement strategies to actively engage and collaborate with students, parents, families, and the wider community in the review, development, and implementation of initiatives to support and promote equity and inclusive education.

- 1.10 Implement Board equity and inclusive education policies, programs and Board and school improvement plans for student achievement and well-being consistent with the *Code* and that reflect the needs of our diverse Catholic school communities.
2. The Board shares in the life and mission of the Church through system planning to build and sustain Board and staff capacity in the areas of equity and inclusive education in curriculum and instruction, human resources and governance.
    - 2.1 Identify and appoint an Equity and Inclusive Education Lead to liaise with the Ministry and other boards to share challenges, promising practices and resources.
    - 2.2 Provide ongoing education and training for students, administrators, teachers chaplaincy leaders, support staff and trustees to highlight equity and inclusive education and leadership initiatives.
    - 2.3 Recruitment for leadership positions in ALCDSB prioritize demonstrated commitment, knowledge and skills related to equity and inclusive education, inclusive leadership, and are consistent with the *Code*.
    - 2.4 Provide ongoing training for all staff that reflects comprehensive attention to the principles of human rights and their fundamental role in an equitable and inclusive environment.
    - 2.5 Promote equity-minded student leadership through the lens of Catholic Social Teaching.
    - 2.6 Develop and or participate in regional and local Equity and Inclusive Education initiatives.
    - 2.7 Demonstrate leadership in promoting the Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy.
  3. The Board recognizes that the effective review, development, implementation and monitoring of equity and inclusive education policies and practices requires the involvement of all members of the entire Catholic school community. The Board is committed to nurturing relationships with all members of our school communities so that the perspectives and experiences of all students, families, and employees are recognized. The Board will:
    - 3.1 Utilize a database that identifies the diversity of communities based on self-identification.
    - 3.2 Engage school communities to collect, analyze, and evaluate school climate survey data to inform Positive School Climate and Well-Being plans.
    - 3.3 Take proactive steps to ensure that school and Board committees represent the diversity of the wider community.
    - 3.4 Ensure that new and existing community partnerships reflect the principles of equity and inclusive education.

- 3.5 Establish processes to identify and address systemic barriers to ensure that all members of the school community benefit from enhanced opportunities for Board representation and greater access to Board initiatives.
  - 3.6 Gather and use the knowledge, skills, and experience of Board community partners to enrich the total educational and career experiences of staff, students, and volunteers.
4. The Board is committed to implementing an inclusive curriculum that reflects Catholic Social Teaching and to reviewing resources, instruction, and assessment and evaluation practices in order to identify and address discriminatory biases so that each student may maximize their learning potential. The Board will:
- 4.1 Support the schools' review of classroom strategies that promote school-wide equity and inclusive education practices and school-based Promoting Positive School Climate and Well-Being Plans, specifically addressing areas of discrimination (e.g. race, gender, disability, orientation).
  - 4.2 Support teaching and learning strategies that promote school-wide equity and inclusive education practices;
    - 4.2.1 Take proactive steps to address systemic barriers by delivering curriculum and applying assessment strategies that are culturally responsive, with entry points accessible to all students so that all learners can access the curriculum.
    - 4.2.2 Promote learning that is student-centred (use of learner profiles, data collection and pedagogical documentation by educators to plan and respond to student needs, student self-assessment).
    - 4.2.3 Plan for learner variability through the lens of Universal Design for Learning, including timely and strategic interventions and differentiated instruction through an asset-based pedagogical stance.
    - 4.2.4 Provide multiple opportunities for assessment (self, peer, teacher, student-led conferencing and/or parent/student and teacher interviews).
5. The Board is committed to the values of freedom of religion and freedom from discriminatory or harassing behaviour based on religion and will take all reasonable steps to provide religious accommodations within the legal rights afforded to the Catholic school system. The Board will:
- 5.1 Consult with a variety of individuals and groups who represent the religious diversity of the Board in cyclical review of this policy.
  - 5.2 Inform students and their parents/guardians/caregivers and staff of their right to request accommodation for religious beliefs and practices.
  - 5.3 Maintain Religious Accommodation Guidelines for students and staff, where reasonable and consistent with the *Code*, and consistent with its denominational rights, which prohibits discrimination on the grounds of creed, and other *Code* protected grounds, and provides a duty to accommodate.

- 5.4 Schools will implement their religious accommodation practices to align with the Board's Religious Accommodation Guideline.
6. The Board is committed to the principle that every person within the school community is entitled to a respectful, positive and Christ-centred school climate and learning environment, free from all forms of discrimination and harassment. The Board will:
- 6.1 Implement strategies to identify and remove discriminatory barriers that limit engagement by students, parents/guardians/caregivers, and the community, so that diverse groups and the broader community have better Board-level representation and greater access to Board initiatives;
  - 6.2 Support students and staff to report incidents of discrimination and harassment safely and that will also enable Boards to respond in a timely manner in accordance with the requirements of Bill 157.
  - 6.3 In an effort to alleviate the negative impact of suspensions and exclusions on students, proactive programs will be initiated or expanded to decrease the number of suspensions and expulsions.
  - 6.4 The Board promotes positive school climate and well-being in all school communities, and as such, promotes a climate of respect for all individuals as created in the image and likeness of God.
  - 6.5 School administrators are expected to use progressive discipline, including peer mediation, restorative justice and professional discretion, and to understand the duty to accommodate students with disabilities.
  - 6.6 Schools will ensure that codes of conduct are revised to address all forms of racism, discrimination, and harassment.
  - 6.7 Welcome, respect and validate the contributions of all students, parents/guardians/caregivers, and other members of the school community.
  - 6.8 Ensure that every student is supported by strategies outlined in *Student Success, Learning for All, Reach Every Student, Caring and Safe Schools in Ontario, Ontario's Equity Action Plan* and other applicable legislation, and is inspired to succeed in a culture of high expectations for learning.
  - 6.9 Ensure that school codes of conduct reflect the needs of the diverse Catholic community served by the school and are developed with the active consultation and involvement of students, staff, parents/guardians/caregivers, and a representative cross-section of community members.
  - 6.10 Address the prohibited grounds of discrimination under the Code as they may apply to students, staff, and others in the Catholic community.
  - 6.11 Ensure that all information about the revised procedures involving equity and inclusive education is communicated to all students, staff, families, and others in the school community.
7. The Board is committed to providing the school community, including students, with opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviours needed to identify and eliminate discriminatory biases and systemic barriers under the *Code*. The Board will:

- 7.1 Support the schools' review of classroom strategies that promote school-wide equity and inclusive education practices.
  - 7.2 Allocate adequate resources to provide ongoing opportunities for students, administrators, teachers, support staff, and trustees to participate in equity and inclusive education training and leadership initiatives including prevention and intervention strategies.
  - 7.3 Ensure that training includes information on cross-cultural differences, and promotes a deeper understanding of exceptionalities and of how to mitigate discipline, in light of its effect on students with disabilities.
    - 7.3.1 Provide ongoing opportunities for students, administrators, teachers, support and Board staff, as well as trustees, to participate in equity and inclusive education training and leadership initiatives.
    - 7.3.2 Ensure that the principles of equity and inclusive education are modelled and incorporated in professional learning opportunities.
  - 7.4 Identify a Board equity and inclusive education contact to liaise with the Ministry of Education and to collaborate with other boards in order to share best practices, opportunities and resources.
  - 7.5 Review classroom strategies and revise them as needed to help ensure that they are aligned with and reflect school-wide equity and inclusive education practices.
  - 7.6 Promote collaborative teams that learn together through job embedded learning, implement their learnings and reflect together on best practices.
  - 7.7 Build staff capacity through ongoing needs based professional learning determined through data analysis and based on results.
  - 7.8 Encourage and support students in their efforts to promote social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion in schools and classrooms.
8. The Board is committed to assessing and monitoring its progress in implementing the *Strategy*; to embedding the principles of Equity and Inclusive Education into all Board policies, programs, guidelines and practices; and to communicating these results to the community. The Board will:
- 8.1 Embed the principles of equity and inclusive education into all Board policies, programs, guidelines, and practices.
  - 8.2 Communicate the equity and inclusive education policy to students, teachers, parents/guardians/caregivers, staff, Catholic school councils, community partners, and volunteers and post it on the Board's website.
  - 8.3 Seek and use feedback to improve the Equity and Inclusive Education policy, in the spirit of continuous improvement.

- 8.4 Engage Board and school teams in school improvement planning for student achievement and well-being with particular emphasis on using data to identify and remove barriers to student achievement, to raise awareness about discriminatory practices and to encourage conversations and collaborative actions that support a positive school climate.
- 8.5 Engage in processes to monitor progress and assess effectiveness of policies, programs, and procedures (i.e. SIPSAW and Promoting Positive School Climate and Well-Being).
- 8.6 Report on the progress of implementation of the *Strategy* and its impact on student achievement and well-being through the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement and Well-being (BIPSAW) and the Board Strategic Priorities.
- 8.7 Ensure the transparency of the Identification Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) process, inform, and support parents through this process.
- 8.8 Report student achievement data annually to the Board and intervene at all levels to ensure high achievement and success of all students in our system.
- 8.9 Annually develop evidence-based School Improvement Plans for Student Achievement and Well-Being that are aligned with the *Strategy* informed by student and parent/guardian/caregiver voice.
- 8.10 Review and establish self-reflection and self-assessment tools to determine the effectiveness of the school's equity and inclusive education plans and procedures.

**Appendices**

- Appendix 1 Religious Accommodation Guideline
- Appendix 2 Guideline for Kirpan Accommodation

**Associated Documents**

Approved: June 15, 2010  
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