



**Brant Haldimand Norfolk
Catholic District School Board**

Policy: Equity and Inclusive Education

		Policy Number:	200.23
Adopted:	23/11/2010	Former Policy Number:	
Revised:	24/04/2012	Policy Category:	Students
Subsequent Review Dates:	TBD	Pages:	3

Belief Statement:

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board (the "Board") recognizes that all people are created equal, in the image of God, each with unique characteristics deserving of dignity (Genesis: 1:27). In accordance with the Church's teachings, it is the policy of the Board to provide in all its operations an educational environment which supports and enables diversity within our inclusive Catholic community.

The Board recognizes that any form of social or cultural discrimination is incompatible with the Catholic faith's moral principles and is in violation of the Ontario Human Rights Code ("the Code"). The Board recognizes that the school system gives primacy to the teachings of the Catholic faith, congruent with the protection afforded in the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Constitution Act, 1982 and confirmed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The Board and its staff are committed to the elimination of discrimination as outlined in Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy and the Ontario Ministry of Education (the "Ministry") Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119, in a manner which is consistent with the exercise of the Board's denominational rights under section 93 of the Constitution Act, 1982 and as recognized in section 19 of the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Policy Statement:

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board is committed to serving the staff, students and families in its diverse Catholic community by incorporating the principles of equity and inclusive education into all aspects of its policies, programs, procedures and practices that are consistent with Catholic denominational rights.

Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation, Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy and Policy/Program Memorandum No.119 (2009) "Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools" identify eight areas of focus for implementing equity and inclusive education.

In accordance with the above documents, as well as applicable legislation that outlines the denominational rights of the Catholic school system, and with adherence to the Guiding Principles of the Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, consistent with the Code, and in the context of each area of focus, the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board shall:

1.0 Board Policies, Programs, Procedures and Practices:

- Ensure that principles of equity and inclusive education permeate and are explicitly stated in all Board policies, programs, guidelines, operations, practices, and Board Improvement Plans.
- Ensure all persons with disabilities are accommodated appropriately and in a manner consistent with the Code.
- Provide opportunities for the diverse Catholic school community, including students, staff, parents, trustees and community members, to provide active input into Board policies and improvement plans on an ongoing basis.
- Ensure that staff will 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.
- Develop and implement strategies to actively engage students, parents, families and the wider community in the review, development, and implementation of initiatives to support and promote equity and inclusive education.



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2.0 Shared and Committed Leadership:

- Establish and maintain partnerships with all members of our diverse Catholic community so that the perspectives and experiences of all students are recognized and their needs are met.
- Ensure that members of communities that are underserved and/or marginalized are included in the shared leadership.
- Establish a collaborative culture where the collective capabilities and voices of stakeholders are used to develop and implement equity and inclusive education goals.
- Promote equity minded student leadership related to issues of social justice in the tradition of the Catholic Church.

3.0 School-Community Relationships:

- Collaborate with students, parents, staff and other Catholic community partners to create and sustain a positive school climate reflective of Catholic values that supports student achievement.
- Examine and remove any barriers that exist that are part of systemic discrimination under the Code and that prevent full participatory school-community relations.
- Establish and maintain partnerships with all members of our diverse Catholic community so that the perspectives and experiences of all students, families, and employees are recognized.
- Establish processes to identify and address systemic barriers that limit or prevent all sectors of the school community from benefiting from enhanced opportunities for Board representation and greater access to Board initiatives.
- Identify under-represented communities and facilitate their participation and involvement in Board activities.

4.0 Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment Practices:

- Ensure that staff will review student assessment and evaluation policies and practices to identify and address systemic bias that may exist in the way students' work is assessed and evaluated in order to reduce the achievement gap. The principles of such a review will be consistent with the Code.
- Support the schools' review of classroom strategies that promote school-wide equity and inclusive education policies and practices specifically addressing areas of discrimination (e.g., race, gender, disability).

5.0 Religious Accommodation:

- Support freedom of religion and an individual's right to manifest his/her religious beliefs and observances. The right to freedom of religion, however, is not absolute and religious accommodation in the Board is carried out in the larger context of the Catholic education system and denominational rights of Catholic schools.
- Seek to accommodate an individual's right to freedom of religion in a manner that not only respects the individual's beliefs, but the principles of the Catholic Church.
- Ensure that an appropriate space or classroom, other than the chapel, is available for religious celebrations celebrated by other Christian denominations or other faith traditions.
- Consult with their respective local Ordinary on such accommodations.

6.0 School Climate and the Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment:

- Create a climate in which excellence is continually strived for and respect for all permeates the environment.
- Ensure that codes of conduct are revised to address all forms of racism, discrimination, and harassment.
- Ensure the use of progressive discipline.

7.0 Professional Learning:

- Support the school's review of classroom strategies that promote school-wide equity and inclusive education policies and practices.
- 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.
- Provide anti-racism and anti-discrimination training that examines power and privilege, including training and prevention and early intervention strategies. This training should include information on cross-cultural differences and promote a deeper understanding of exceptionalities and of how to mitigate discipline in light of its effect on students with disabilities.



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- Identify a board equity and inclusive education contact to liaise with the Ministry of Education and other boards in order to share challenges, promising practices and resources.

8.0 Accountability and Transparency:

- Embed the principles of equity and inclusive education into all Board policies, programs, guidelines and practices.
- Communicate the equity and inclusive education policy to students, teachers, parents, staff, Catholic Parent Involvement Committees, community partners, and volunteers and post it on the Board's website.
- Engage Board and school teams in school improvement planning.
- Establish processes to monitor progress and assess effectiveness of policies, programs and procedures.
- Report on the progress of implementation of the policy and its impact on student achievement using specific criteria.

Glossary of Key Policy Terms:

Equity

A condition or state of fair, inclusive and respectful treatment of all people. Equity does not mean treating all people the same without regard for individual differences.

Inclusive Education

Education that is based on the principles of acceptance and inclusion of all students. Students see themselves reflected in their curriculum, their physical surroundings, and the broader environment in which diversity is honoured and all individuals are respected.

Ontario Human Rights Code ("the Code")

A provincial law that gives everyone equal rights and opportunities, without discrimination, in specific areas such as education, jobs, housing, and services. The goal of the Code is to address and ultimately prevent discrimination and harassment (available at www.ohrc.on.ca).

Religious Accommodation

An obligation under the Ontario Human Rights Code to provide reasonable accommodation for students and employees who wish to observe the tenets or practices of their faith, as well as for those who wish not to participate in any form of religious observance.

References

Statutory/Regulatory

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms: <http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/charter/>

Constitution Act, 1982: http://www.solon.org/Constitutions/Canada/English/ca_1982.html

Ontario Human Rights Code: http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90h19_e.htm

Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy

Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119 (2009) - Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools

Policy/Program Memorandum No. 108 - Opening or Closing Exercises in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools

Related Board Policy

Opening and Closing Exercises Administrative Procedure 200.11

Student Behaviour, Discipline and Safety 200.09



Equity and Inclusive Education AP 200.23

Procedure for:	Superintendents, Principals/Vice Principals	Adopted:	April 24, 2012
Submitted by:	Trish Kings, Superintendent of Education	Revised:	N/A
Category:	Students		

Purpose

To provide direction for the Superintendent of Education and Principals/Vice-Principals regarding the Ontario Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy.

Responsibilities

The Superintendent of Education will oversee the implementation of the Ontario Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy from a system perspective. The Principals/Vice-Principals will be responsible for implementing the Ontario Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy at the school level.

Information

School boards in Ontario are required to implement and monitor the Ontario Equity and Inclusive Education Strategies adhering to the eight areas of focus, which include:

- Board Policies, Programs, Procedures and Practice
- Shared and Committed Leadership
- School-Community Relationships
- Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment Practices
- Religious Accommodation
- School Climate and the Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment
- Professional Learning
- Accountability and Transparency

Procedures

1.0 Board Policies, Program, Procedures and Practice

1.1 The Superintendent of Education will:

- Provide direction for the implementation of the Board equity and inclusive education policies, programs and school improvement plans consistent with the Code and that reflect the needs of their diverse Catholic school community.
- Review existing school policies/practices (i.e., codes of conduct) to determine that they reflect the principles of equity and inclusive education.
- Provide training for school and system leaders to facilitate equitable recruitment and hiring to reflect Ontario's diverse society.
- Collect information needed to monitor the effects of the Board's Equity and Inclusive Education Policy.

1.2 The Principal/Vice-Principal will:

- Ensure that the principles of equity and inclusion permeate the programs, practices and operations of the school environment.
- Implement strategies to actively engage students, parents and the wider community to promote equity and inclusive education.



2.0 Shared and Committed Leadership

2.1 The Superintendent of Education will:

- Provide ongoing training for staff that reflects comprehensive attention to the principles of human rights and the staff's fundamental role in an equitable and inclusive environment.
- Provide ongoing education and training for staff, students and trustees in implementing equity and inclusive education and leadership initiatives.
- Include in the leadership selection criteria demonstrated commitment, knowledge and skills related to equity and inclusive education.

2.2 The Principal/Vice-Principal will:

- Demonstrate leadership in setting the tone for the positive and proactive implementation of equity and inclusion.
- Establish a collaborative culture within the school where all voices are heard in the development and implementation of equity and inclusive education goals.
- Provide staff and student leadership opportunities related to social justice issues.

3.0 School-Community Relationships

3.1 The Superintendent of Education will:

- Ensure that existing board-wide committees represent the diversity of the wider community.
- Review and deepen existing community partnerships to ensure that they reflect the principles of equity and inclusive education.
- Expand community efforts to foster new partnerships that engage a cross-section of diverse students, parents, staff, and community organizations to ensure inclusion.
- 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.
- Develop a database of information that establishes the diversity of communities based on self-identification.

3.2 The Principal/Vice-Principal will:

- Invite, include and support representation on school committees, including school improvement planning.
- Collaborate with and actively engage students, parents, staff and other Catholic community partners to create and sustain a positive school climate reflective of Catholic values that supports student achievement.



4.0 Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment Practices

4.1 The Superintendent of Education will:

- Ensure that the Administrative Procedures for Assessment and Evaluation support the principles of equity and inclusion and are free of systemic bias and discrimination.
- Make certain that resources and instructional strategies:
 - are in accordance with Catholic teachings and values;
 - are in compliance with the provision of the Code with respect to the prohibitive grounds of discrimination;
 - show people of different races, genders and ages in non-stereotypical settings, occupations and activities;
 - explore the roles and contributions of all peoples in Canada and the factors that shaped these roles; and,
 - encourage open discussion of the prohibited grounds of discrimination under the Code in society, the community and the school.

4.2 The Principal/Vice-Principal will:

- Review, along with staff, assessment and evaluation practices to identify and address systemic bias.
- Ensure that classroom instructional strategies support the principles of equity and inclusion in accordance with Catholic teaching and values.
- Make certain that resources used in the classroom/libraries:
 - are in accordance with Catholic teachings and values;
 - are in compliance with the provisions of the Code with respect to the prohibited grounds of discrimination;
 - portray people of different races, genders and ages in non-stereotypical settings, occupations and activities;
 - explore the roles and contributions of all peoples in Canada and the factors that shaped these roles; and
 - encourage open discussion of the prohibited grounds of discrimination under the Code in society, the community and the school.

5.0 Religious Accommodation

5.1 The Superintendent of Education will:

- Develop an administrative procedure for Religious Accommodation in keeping with the Code.

5.2 The Principal/Vice-Principal will:

- Implement religious accommodation practices adhering to the Board's Religious Accommodation Administrative Procedure.

6.0 School Climate and the Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment

6.1 The Superintendent of Education will:

- Implement strategies to identify and remove discriminatory barriers that limit engagement by students, parents and the community so that diverse groups and the broader community have better Board-level representation and greater access to Board initiatives.



- Put procedures in place that will enable students and staff to report incidents of discrimination and harassment safely and that will also enable staff/the Board to respond in a timely manner.
- Communicate that administrators are expected to use progressive discipline and professional discretion, and to understand the duty to accommodate students with disabilities.

6.2 The Principal/Vice-Principal will:

- Welcome, respect and validate the contributions of all students, parents and other members of the school community.
- Ensure that every student is supported and is inspired to succeed in a culture of high expectations for learning.
- 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 and community members.
- Ensure that the established Board procedure will enable students and staff to report incidents of harassment and discrimination safely and to have confidence that they will receive a timely and appropriate response.
- Ensure that all information about the new or revised procedures involving equity and inclusive education is communicated to all students, staff, families, and others in the school community.

7.0 Professional Learning

7.1 The Superintendent of Education will:

- Ensure that connections are made related to equity and inclusion, Catholic social teachings and the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations.
- Support the schools' review of classroom strategies that promote school-wide equity and inclusive education policies and practices.
- 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.
- Provide antiracism and antidiscrimination training that examines power and privilege, including training in prevention and early intervention strategies.
- 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.

7.2 The Principal/Vice-Principal will:

- Review classroom strategies and revise them as needed to help ensure that they are aligned with and reflect school-wide equity and inclusive education policies.
- Promote collaborative teams that learn together, implement their learning and reflect together on best practices.
- Build staff capacity through ongoing needs-based professional learning determined through data analysis and based on results.



- Build staff capacity in understanding the connection between Catholic social teaching and equity and inclusion.
- Encourage and support students in their efforts to promote social justice, equity, antiracism, and antidiscrimination in schools and classrooms.
- Develop equity initiatives and provide timely and specific feedback that will further school-wide equitable practices.

8.0 Accountability and Transparency

8.1 The Superintendent of Education will:

- Embed the principles of equity and inclusive education into all Board policies, programs, guidelines and practices.
- Communicate the equity and inclusive education policy to students, teachers, parents, staff, school councils, community partners and volunteers and post it on the Board's website.
- Seek and use feedback to improve the Equity and Inclusive Education Policy, in the spirit of continuous improvement.
- Engage Board and school teams in school improvement planning with 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 about racism and other equity issues.
- Establish processes to monitor progress and assess effectiveness of policies, programs and procedures.
- Report on the progress of implementation of the strategy and its impact on student achievement using specific criteria.
- Ensure that the transparency of the Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) process informs and supports parents through this process.

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