



Voluntary Indigenous Self-Identification

#200.07

Adopted:	May 22, 2012
Last Reviewed/Revised:	May 2022
Responsibility:	Robert De Rubeis, Superintendent of Education
Next Scheduled Review:	2025-2026

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board believes that all students, including students of First Nation, Métis and Inuit ancestry, can learn to the fullest extent of their God-given gifts and talents as outlined in the Board's vision and mission statements.

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board will ensure that the learning aspirations and potential of Indigenous students are realized through a voluntary, responsive, transparent and accountable process focused on the support of students and a strong partnership with Aboriginal parents and the Indigenous community.

APPLICATION AND SCOPE:

The Voluntary Indigenous Self-Identification Policy is designed to achieve the following goals:

- to provide high-quality learning opportunities that are responsive, flexible and accessible to Aboriginal students that will nurture a sense of belonging and appreciation of Aboriginal perspectives, values and cultures;
- to improve the retention/graduation rate of Aboriginal students;
- to ensure that Aboriginal students are well-prepared for participation in post-secondary studies and the world of work;
- to use achievement data from a variety of sources to determine possible gaps and areas for focused intervention; and
- to provide effective, respectful working relationships and partnerships with First Nation, Métis and Inuit parents and the general Aboriginal community.

REFERENCES:

- Aboriginal Student Self-Identification: www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/aboriginal/selfID.html
- First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education: www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/aboriginal/policy.html

DEFINITIONS:

Administrator: Principal or Vice-Principal

Indigenous: Indigenous refers to the definition in the "Constitution Act, 1982, Section 35 (2) "in that Indigenous peoples 'include' Indian, Inuit and Métis."

These groups include the following categories:

- First Nation, Métis and Inuit students who live in the jurisdiction of and attend provincially-funded elementary or secondary schools
- First Nation students who live in First Nation communities and attend provincially-funded elementary or secondary schools under a tuition agreement



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES:

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to provide direction for the Superintendent of Education and Administrators regarding the Voluntary Indigenous Self-Identification process.

Responsibilities

The Superintendent of Education will oversee the implementation of the procedures for the “Voluntary Indigenous Self-Identification” process from a Board level. The Administrators will be responsible for the implementation of the specific school procedures.

Information

- The dignity and well-being of students shall be given the highest priority.
- Voluntary Indigenous self-identification shall include all First Nation, Métis and Inuit people, regardless of status. No proof of ancestry is required.
- Voluntary Indigenous self-identification of First Nation, Métis and Inuit ancestry by parents/guardians, students 16/17 years of age and withdrawn from parental control, and students 18 years of age and older, shall be voluntary.
- Data collected under this policy will be in accordance with the Education Act, the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA), and the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA).
- Individual data will be confidential to individuals in the school system who require such information for the provision of resources, services and experiences to benefit First Nation, Métis and Inuit students.
- Aggregate data will be available to the school system, the Ministry and the First Nation, Métis and Inuit students.
- Aggregate data will be reported publicly by the Education Quality and Accountability Office.
- Data is collected to:
 - assist schools in better understanding the demographics of their population;
 - assist the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board in assessing which schools require additional programming, targeted initiatives, additional support, and the involvement of family and the greater community in the life of the school;
 - identify First Nation, Métis and Inuit who would benefit from additional support; and,
 - measure the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board's effectiveness in improving the achievement, retention and graduation rates of First Nation, Métis and Inuit students.

Procedures

1.0 The Superintendent of Education shall:

- engage in a consultation process with First Nation, Métis and Inuit families and communities, as appropriate, to ensure the purpose, process and implementation of voluntary self-identification are clearly understood;
- ensure that the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board Student Registration Forms, as well as the Student Verification Forms, reflect the First Nation, Métis and Inuit Self-Identification fields in the collection of accurate data and that the data entry system will correlate with the self-identification fields;
- ensure that students attending a Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board elementary or secondary school will be able to self-identify by selecting the appropriate field on the Student Verification/Information Form. For students under 18 years of age, the First Nation, Métis and Inuit self-identification requires parent/guardian signature, unless the student is 16/17 years of age and withdrawn from parental control;
- ensure that new students registering in a Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board elementary or secondary school can acknowledge their First Nation, Métis or Inuit ancestry on the Student Registration Form and will be invited to self-identify at the time of registration;



- ensure that communication material on the Voluntary Indigenous Self-Identification Policy for First Nation, Métis and Inuit students will be distributed to all currently registered families, provided to new registrants, and made available on the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board website; and
- ensure that all student information in the Board's data system is confidential within the Board and is protected under the Education Act R.S.O. 1990, the Ontario Student Record Guideline, Provincial Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O., 1990.

2.0 The Administrator will ensure that:

- the Student Information Forms and the Student Verification Forms are fully completed;
- the students receive supportive programming and instructional practices that better serve the students learning needs;
- effective, respectful working relationships with First Nation, Métis and Inuit parents and the general community are promoted;
- parents and students 18 years of age and older will be able to withdraw the identification or add the identification at any time, upon written request to the principal or by updating the Student Verification Form;
- students who have not voluntarily self-identified will not be included in the data collection;
- data will be used for the purpose of analysis and for potential enhancement of program delivery; and
- all information will be securely stored to respect privacy.