



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS	
Effective:	September 1, 2014
Last Revised:	

FIRST NATION, MÉTIS, INUIT EDUCATION: SELF-IDENTIFICATION

1. PURPOSE

Rainbow District School Board believes that fulfilling a commitment to equity and inclusion requires a focus on effective educational programs for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students, built upon strong partnerships and regular communication with FNMI parents and communities.

The learning aspirations and potential of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students can be realized through a responsive, transparent, and accountable self-identification process that focuses on improved programs and services, and builds strong partnerships with parents and communities.

This administrative procedure addresses the self-identification process and the provision of supports for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students.

2. DEFINITIONS

Equity: Equity is the provision of opportunities for equality, ensuring that personal or social circumstances are not an obstacle to achieving potential. Equity of treatment is not the same as equal treatment because it includes acknowledging historical and present discrimination against identified groups and removing barriers, eliminating discrimination, and remedying the impact of past discrimination.

Inclusive Education: Inclusive education is based on the principle 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.

Aboriginal Peoples: Aboriginal peoples are the descendants of the original inhabitants of North America—the First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples. It is important to remember that these separate groups have unique heritages, languages, cultural practices, and spiritual beliefs. [Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework, 2007]

First Nation: “First Nation” is a term that came into common usage in the 1970s to replace the word “Indian” which many found offensive. The term “First Nation” has been adopted to replace the word “band” in the names of communities. [Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework]

Inuit: The Inuit are aboriginal people in northern Canada, living mainly in Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, northern Quebec, and Labrador. Ontario has a very small Inuit population. [Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework]

Métis: The Métis are people of mixed First Nation and European ancestry. Métis history and culture draws on diverse ancestral origins, such as Scottish, Irish, French, Ojibwe, and Cree. [Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework]

Self-identification: Self-identification is a process that will allow students to declare their origin as First Nation, Métis, or Inuit.

Parents: All references to parents in this administrative procedure include legal guardians.

3. APPLICATION

This administrative procedure applies to opportunities for students of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit origin to self-identify in order to receive supports for their achievement and well-being.

Self-identification results in a shared responsibility of all members of the educational community to work collaboratively with the First Nation, Métis, and Inuit communities to incorporate the principles of equitable and inclusive education into all aspects of school programs and practices.

PROCEDURES

4. Goals of Self-Identification

4.1. It is important for the Ministry of Education to have accurate and reliable data in order to assess progress towards the goal of improving the achievement of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students. Such data is also needed to support Ministry of Education improvement planning and accountability, and to inform policy and funding decisions, measurement, and reporting.

[Ontario Ministry of Education. Building Bridges to Success for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Students, p. 7]

4.2. The self-identification of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students provides Rainbow District School Board with the information required to access and focus resources to improve the achievement and well-being of its FNMI students. The goal is to increase student achievement and well-being and create a school climate that emphasizes positive relationships among all members of the educational community.

4.3. Rainbow schools will promote programs to improve outcomes for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students which will:

- a) provide high quality learning opportunities that are responsive, flexible, and accessible;
- b) contribute to an increase in the retention rate/graduation rate;
- c) ensure that FNMI students are prepared for participation in post-secondary studies or the world of work;

- d) promote effective, respectful working relationships and partnerships with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit parents and the FNMI community; and
- e) promote working relationships and partnerships between FNMI parents and communities and the wider educational community.

4.4. In addition, the delivery of effective and sustainable education programs is supported by providing equitable access to differentiated and relevant learning opportunities, resources and programs, and engaging students as partners in their own learning.

5. Registration

- 5.1. The principal will ensure that self-identification for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students is promoted through annual communication to the school community. Community members will be informed that parent approval is required for students under the age of 18 to self-identify.
- 5.2. The principal will make certain that all new students who are registering with the board are informed of the opportunity for FNMI self-identification. If students so choose, their ancestry will be recorded on the Registration Form.
- 5.3. The principal will ensure that students who are already attending school are provided with an opportunity to declare their FNMI ancestry by completing a First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Self-Identification Form at their home school.

6. Educational Supports

- 6.1. Programs for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students will be provided and evaluated based on the guiding principles set out in the Ontario Ministry of Education First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework as follows:
 - a) **Excellence and Accountability:** The academic achievement of every First Nation, Métis, and Inuit student is supported through the delivery of quality programs and instruction. School supports and resources must be adapted to the specific needs of FNMI students.
 - b) **Equity and Respect for Diversity:** The academic environment for every FNMI student must promote the development of a positive personal and cultural identity, as well as a sense of belonging to both the FNMI and wider communities. The curriculum includes learning about FNMI cultures, histories, and perspectives.
 - c) **Inclusiveness, Cooperation, and Shared Responsibility:** Cooperation among educational institutions and First Nation, Métis, and Inuit families, communities, and organizations is essential for the implementation of education programs and services designed to meet the specific needs of FNMI students.
- 6.2. Specific board expectations for the educational program, and the roles and responsibilities of the Rainbow District School Board and its schools are set out in detail in Administrative Procedure First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education.

7. Data Collection: Security Protocol

7.1. All data will be securely stored to respect privacy and used only as a means to enhance education programs for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students. Data will be treated in the same manner as Ontario Student Records and protected and governed by the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. Individual data will not be communicated. The information gathered will be used in the aggregate only.

[Ontario Ministry of Education. Building Bridges to Success for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Students. p. 27]

7.2. Student achievement data that is collected and aggregated allows staff to determine whether the programs currently delivered offer opportunities for success for all First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students. Data collection and analysis provides information for decision-making in order to enhance student success.

8. Program Evaluation

8.1. The data collected as a result of the self-identification procedures set out in this document will be evaluated on an annual basis and the results reported to the First Nation Advisory Committee.

8.2. The administrative procedure will be reviewed annually for its effectiveness and need for continuation.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Legal:

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Ontario Human Rights Code

Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2007). Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework.

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2007). Building Bridges to Success for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Students. Developing Policies for Voluntary, Confidential Aboriginal Student Self-Identification: Successful Practices for Ontario School Boards.

Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy 2009

Ontario Ministry of Education. Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation 2009

PPM No. 119 Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies 2013

Board:

Board Policy No. GOV-01 Vision, Mission, and Values
Board Policy No. GOV-02 Strategic Directions for Rainbow Schools
Board Policy No. GOV-11 Learning and Working Environment: Equity and Inclusion
Administrative Procedure Code of Conduct
Administrative Procedure Equity and Inclusion Framework
Administrative Procedure Equity and Inclusion: Multicultural/Multiracial Understanding
Administrative Procedure Equity and Inclusion: Religious/Spiritual Accommodation
Administrative Procedure Equity and Inclusive Education
Administrative Procedure Personal Information of Students
Administrative Procedure First Nation, Métis, Inuit Education

Resources:

[The following resources are available on the board website.]

- Ontario Ministry of Education. (2007). Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework.
- Rainbow District School Board. Aanjiwin: Transition Supports for First Nation, Métis and Inuit Students. This document provides suggestions and strategies to help schools support First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students during transitions from a First Nation school to a Rainbow school; from elementary to secondary; from school to school within the board; and secondary to postsecondary education or the workplace.
- Rainbow District School Board. First Nation, Métis and Inuit Presence in Rainbow Schools. This document provides background information for teachers and administrators about First Nation, Métis, and Inuit heritage and traditions, cultural teachings, celebrations, treaties, terminology, and best practices.