



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS	
Effective:	October 15, 2014
Last Revised:	

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## FIRST NATION, MÉTIS, AND INUIT EDUCATION

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### 1. PURPOSE

Rainbow District School Board believes that all persons are entitled to learn and work in an environment that promotes human rights, equity of opportunity, and inclusion. This administrative procedure affirms the board's responsibility to provide a protected learning and working environment that is supportive of the dignity, self-esteem, and fair treatment of everyone taking part in board activities.

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.

### 2. DEFINITIONS

**Diversity:** Diversity is the presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes within a group, organization, or society.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**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.

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

### 3. APPLICATION

This administrative procedure applies to the shared responsibility of all members of the educational community to work collaboratively with the First Nation, Métis, and Inuit community to incorporate the principles of equitable and inclusive education into all aspects of school programs and practices, consistent with the principles of the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

## PROCEDURES

### 4. Guiding Principles

First Nation, Métis, and Inuit education in Ontario is based on the guiding principles set out in the Ontario Ministry of Education First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework:

- a) **Excellence and Accountability:** The academic achievement of every First Nation, Métis, and Inuit student is supported through the delivery of quality education. School supports and resources must be adapted to the specific needs of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students.
- b) **Equity and Respect for Diversity:** The academic environment for every First Nation, Métis, and Inuit 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 will acknowledge the diversity found in First Nation, Métis, and Inuit communities and include learning about FNMI cultures, histories, and perspectives.
- c) **Inclusiveness, Cooperation, and Shared Responsibility:** Cooperation among government, 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.
- d) **Respect for Constitutional and Treaty Rights:** All government institutions recognize constitutional and treaty rights protected by Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

### 5. Board Expectations

5.1. Rainbow District School Board is committed to building partnerships and effective working relationships with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit communities and organizations and to developing teaching strategies and resources to support the success of FNMI students.

5.2. Rainbow District School Board recognizes and appreciates the cultural and individual differences inherent within the children of the First Nation, Métis, and Inuit peoples and will

encourage FNMI students to become active participants in their own educational processes, and valued contributors to the enrichment of other students.

- 5.3. The board will embed First Nation, Métis, and Inuit perspectives, traditions, and culture in curriculum content areas.
- 5.4. The board expects all schools to use inclusive curriculum and assessment practices and effective instructional strategies that reflect the needs of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students and the learning pathways that they are taking. Schools will provide students and staff with authentic and relevant opportunities to learn about diverse histories, cultures, and perspectives.
- 5.5. The board provides the opportunity for FNMI students and their parents to voluntarily, confidentially, self-identify to improve learning outcomes.

## **6. Roles and Responsibilities**

### 6.1. Rainbow District School Board will:

- a) develop and implement strategies for voluntary, confidential, student self-identification, in partnership with local First Nation, Métis, and Inuit parents and communities;
- b) maintain a First Nation Advisory Committee that includes representation from the FNMI community and local service delivery organizations such as the Friendship Centre;
- c) engage in shared planning with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit families and communities with respect to student transitions, curriculum, resource materials, and student supports;
- d) create strategic partnerships with the FNMI community to help students make a smoother transition from schools in First Nation communities to the board's elementary and secondary schools;
- e) include the principles and expectations of this administrative procedure in all board planning; for example, the Special Education Plan, to highlight the board's commitment to inclusion;
- f) provide a curriculum that facilitates learning about contemporary and traditional First Nation, Métis, and Inuit cultures, histories, and perspectives among all students;
- g) provide quality programs, services, and resources to help create learning opportunities for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students that support improved academic achievement;
- h) ensure that First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students benefit from school-based early screening and intervention programs;
- i) offer training for teachers about First Nation, Métis, and Inuit histories, cultures, and perspectives;
- j) provide professional learning opportunities to increase the capacity of the staff to respond to the learning and cultural needs of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students, including students with special education needs;
- k) increase access to Native Language and Native Studies programming, particularly in areas where significant numbers of students have self-identified.

### 6.2. Rainbow schools will:

- a) increase knowledge of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit cultures, histories, and perspectives among all school staff;

- b) provide a supportive and safe environment for all First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students that builds their confidence and self-esteem;
- c) foster classroom environments that recognize that each FNMI student brings to the instructional setting a set of individual characteristics and a unique learning history based on his or her own environment and cultural values and expectations;
- d) implement best practices relating to First Nation, Métis, and Inuit student success;
- e) employ targeted learning strategies and instructional methods designed to enhance the learning of all First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students;
- f) use multiple criteria for student assessment and evaluation, and view all tests within the context of cultural and linguistic differences of FNMI students;
- g) support teachers in adopting a variety of approaches and tools to teach and assess FNMI students more effectively;
- h) promote Native Language and Native Studies programs;
- i) foster school-community projects with appropriate cultural components;
- j) ensure that the curriculum is extended and enriched to include current and recent success stories of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit people;
- k) in cooperation with the First Nation community, provide support for First Nation students making transitions from school to school within the board, transitions from elementary to secondary schools, and transitions from secondary schools to postsecondary institutions or the workplace; and
- l) implement specific strategies, including support networks, to increase First Nation, Métis, and Inuit parents' participation in their children's education and First Nation, Métis, and Inuit student participation in school.

## REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

### **Legal:**

*Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*

*Ontario Human Rights Code*

Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy 2009

*Education Act, Section 169.1 Inclusive and Accepting School Climate*

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

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

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

### **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 Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour

Administrative Procedure First Nation, Métis, Inuit Education: Self-Identification

**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 the following transitions:
  - First Nation School to Rainbow School
  - Elementary to Secondary
  - High Mobility (school to school)
  - Secondary to Postsecondary or 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.