



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE STUDENTS, PARENTS, COMMUNITY	
Effective:	
Last Revised:	June 05, 2018

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## EQUITY AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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### 1. PURPOSE

This administrative procedure reflects the values of Rainbow District School Board that all persons are entitled to learn and work in environments that promote human rights and equity of opportunity, free from discrimination and harassment. This procedure affirms the board's responsibility to provide a protected learning and working environment that is supportive, nurturing, welcoming, respectful and inclusive for everyone taking part in Rainbow District School Board activities.

The Rainbow District School Board is committed to upholding fundamental human rights as described in the *Ontario Human Rights Code* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The board strives to provide a respectful and inclusive learning and working environment for all members of its community, without discrimination, harassment, or other adverse impact on the basis of any personal or social circumstances described as protected grounds in the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

### 2. DEFINITIONS

**Bias Free:** Without inclination of prejudice for or against a person or group especially in a way considered unfair.

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

**Discrimination:** Discrimination is differential treatment which negatively affects the status of a person based upon a protected ground under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

**Diversity:** Diversity is the presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes within a group, organization, or society. The dimensions of diversity include, but are not limited to, ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status.

**Harassment:** Harassment is defined in the *Ontario Human Rights Code* as "engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome".

**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.

**Protected Grounds:** The *Ontario Human Rights Code* defines protected grounds as: race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status, or disability.

### 3. APPLICATION

- 3.1 This administrative procedure applies to all members of the educational community, including but not limited to students, board employees, trustees, members of committees, clients, parents, volunteers, permit holders, contractors, and employees of other organizations. It provides the framework for the review and/or creation of district procedures, initiatives, and practices that seek to ensure equitable and inclusive learning and working environments.
- 3.2 This procedure provides a framework for procedures, protocols, and practices that address incidents of discrimination or harassment which occur during interactions with the Rainbow District School Board.

## PROCEDURES

### 4. Guiding Principles

Equity and Inclusive Education:

- Rainbow District School Board is committed to providing a learning and working environment in which all individuals treat each other with respect and dignity, free from objectionable conduct, discrimination, or harassment.
- The Board respects and values the diverse perspectives of the Rainbow District School Board community and actively promotes a bias-free working and learning environment.
- The Board is committed to an education system that upholds the principles of equitable and inclusive education in order to enable each student to succeed personally and academically regardless of background, identity or personal circumstances
- The Board identifies and seeks to eliminate or mitigate barriers facing students and any other members of the Rainbow District School Board community;
- The Board promotes well-being which contributes to a sense of belonging for every student and all members of the education community;
- The Board involves the broader community and recognizes that school-community partnerships are an essential component of equitable and inclusive education;

### 5. Areas of Focus

#### 5.1 Shared and Committed Leadership

- 5.1.1 The board provides informed leadership to improve student achievement and to close achievement gaps for students by identifying, addressing and removing discrimination consistent with the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.
- 5.1.2 District strategic plans and school improvement plans will include equity and inclusive education as priorities for student achievement and well-being. These plans are designed to uphold our commitment to equity and inclusive education.

## 5.2 School-Community Partnerships

- 5.2.1 Staff will work with all educational partners to provide leadership that is responsive to the diverse nature of the Rainbow District School Board community by identifying and removing discriminatory biases and/or systemic barriers.
- 5.2.2 Staff will increase the involvement of diverse communities in district initiatives.
- 5.2.3 Staff will establish and maintain collaborative relationships with all communities so that the perspectives and needs of all students, families, trustees, and employees are recognized and addressed.

## 5.3 Inclusive Education

- 5.3.1 Staff will ensure the implementation of an inclusive curriculum supported by resources and instructional strategies and assessment practices that reflect and respond to the needs of the diversity of learners.
- 5.3.2 Staff will review curriculum, resources, instruction, and assessment practices in order to identify and address discriminatory biases and to ensure equity of opportunity and access for each student.

## 5.4 Religious/ Spiritual Accommodation

The Board acknowledges each individual's right to follow or not follow religious/spiritual beliefs and practices free from discriminatory or harassing behaviour and is committed to providing religious/ spiritual accommodation to students, staff, and volunteers. While the Board and its staff will take reasonable steps to ensure such freedoms, students and their families are expected to help the Board understand their religious needs, and work with the Board and its schools to determine appropriate and reasonable accommodations.

## 5.5 Gender Identity and Gender Expression

The Board acknowledges each individual has a right to live according to their gender identity and gender expression and makes accommodations based on gender identity and gender expression in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

## 5.6 School Climate

The Board is committed to the principle that every person is entitled to work and/or learn in a respectful, positive working and learning environment, free from all forms of discrimination, harassment and exclusion.

## 5.7 Professional Learning

Professional learning opportunities will be provided to staff and students to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviours needed to identify and eliminate discriminatory biases and systemic barriers under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

## 5.8 Accountability and Transparency

The implementation of equity and inclusive education will be assessed and monitored through the Rainbow District School Board Equity Action Plan.

## REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

### **Legal:**

*Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.*

*Ontario Human Rights Code*

*Employment Standards Act*

*Education Act, para. 8 (1) 29.1 Equity and Inclusive Education*

*Education Act, Section 169.1 Positive School Climate*

*Education Act, Part XIII Behaviour, Discipline and Safety*

Ontario Regulation 298, Sections 27-29 Religion in Schools

Ontario Regulation 474/00 Access to School Premises

PPM No. 108 Opening or Closing Exercises

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

PPM No. 128 The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct

PPM No. 144 Bullying Prevention and Intervention

PPM No. 145 Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour

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

Ontario Ministry of Education *Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy 2009*

Ontario's Education, Equity Action Plan

### **Board:**

Board Policy No. GOV-11 Learning and Working Environment: Equity and Inclusive Education

Board Policy No. GOV-12 Learning and Working Environment: Safe Schools

*Strategic Directions for Rainbow Schools*

Rainbow District School Board *Code of Conduct*

Administrative Procedure Acceptable Use of Information Technologies