



Equity and Inclusive Education

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Policy Statement

The St. Clair 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 that supports and enables diversity within its Catholic community.

The Board recognizes that any form of social or cultural discrimination is incompatible with Catholic moral principles and is in violation of the Ontario Human Rights Code. The Board recognizes that the school system gives pre-eminence to the tenets 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 Goals

1. Embed the principles of equity and inclusive education through cyclical policy reviews in all Board policies, programs, curriculum, guidelines, operations, practices, and Board Improvement Plans.
2. Provide leadership that is committed to identifying and removing discriminatory biases and systemic barriers to learning and promote the development of collaborative environments in which participants share a commitment to equity and inclusive education principles and practices.
3. Build capacity with the active engagement of parents and school community partners to create and sustain a positive school climate that supports student achievement and well-being.

4. Use inclusive curriculum, assessment practices, and effective instructional strategies that reflect the diverse needs of all students and their learning pathways that they are taking.
5. Include a religious accommodation guideline which prohibits discrimination on the grounds of creed (e.g., religion) and impose a duty to accommodate, in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code and the requirements stated in Policy/Program Memorandum No. 108 and Regulation 298.
6. Support a positive and inclusive school climate where all members of the school community feel safe, included, welcomed, and accepted.
7. 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.
8. Engage in regular school and Board monitoring of school climate through school climate surveys, as outlined in Policy/Program Memorandum No. 144, "Bullying Prevention and Intervention", to help identify inappropriate behaviours, barriers, or issues that should be addressed.
9. Provide opportunities for students, administrators, teachers, support staff, and trustees to participate in equity and inclusive education initiatives.
10. Engage in ongoing and open communication to keep all stakeholders informed of the Board's goals and progress through the yearly monitoring and reporting on the Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan and by posting the Equity and Inclusive Education Policy on its website.
11. Provide opportunities for the diverse Catholic school community, including students, staff, parents, trustees, and community members, to provide input into Board policies on an ongoing basis.

Definitions

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).