

Section:	District Administration
Title:	Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Purpose

To outline expectations for equity, diversity, and inclusion within the Mission School District environment.

Policy

The Board supports and endorses the values and objectives contained in the *Canadian Human Rights Code*, *British Columbia Human Rights Code*, the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, the *British Columbia Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People’s Act*, the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act*, the *British Columbia Multiculturalism Act*, and the *British Columbia Accessibility Act*.

Mission Public Schools is committed to a policy of respect, embracing the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion, considering the many cultures and diverse abilities within its schools where people:

- a) develop an awareness of and question our personal biases and their potential impact on others, and using this awareness to make unbiased decisions,
- b) recognize and eliminate even the subtlest inequities in the learning and working environments,
- c) respond with understanding by addressing systemic inequities,
- d) make decisions and take action while embracing the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion, and
- e) sustain commitment, especially in the face of discomfort or resistance.

The Board is committed to an equitable, diverse, and inclusive school environment, creating equitable learning and working opportunities using the principles of non-discrimination set out in the *Canadian and British Columbia Human Rights Codes*. The Board is also committed to:

- a) reconciling inequities for Indigenous children and youth by operating consistently with the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the *United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, the *BC Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, the *BC Tripartite Education Agreement (BCTEA)*, the *Local Education Agreements (LEAs)*, and
- b) operating consistently to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by persons with disabilities, and promote respect for their inherent dignity, consistent with the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and the *Accessible B.C. Act*.

The Board is committed to eradicating oppression, ethnocentrism, prejudice, stereotyping, discrimination, hate and racism in any form.

Specifically, Mission Public Schools will:

- a. Fulfill the commitments of the Equity Scan:

- Q’pethet Ye Tel:exw, Gathering to Understand: A Framework for Creating a Culture of Equity:
 - 1. Sp’óq’es, The Eagle: Honouring Relationships and Kin Connections.

2. Swep'áth', The Sunrise: Creating and Maintaining Safe Learning Environments.
 3. Sq'émél, The Paddles Raised: Supporting Student Success in Equitable Ways.
 4. Sléxwelh, The Canoe: Honouring the Past, Being in the Present, Strengthening the Future.
- b. Include the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion in the District's policies, procedures, and relations with staff, students, parents, and the larger community.
 - c. Develop knowledge, understanding, and sensitivity of the history of Saint Mary's Residential School and its ongoing impacts, including intergenerational trauma on the children, youth and families of Indigenous peoples in Mission, British Columbia.
 - d. Work to heal the historical wrongs and harm to Indigenous peoples in Mission, British Columbia, and Canada.
 - e. Work to increase awareness of, and appreciation for the racial, cultural, spiritual, religious, and linguistic diversity of Mission, and more broadly British Columbia and Canada.
 - f. Incorporate policies, operating and hiring practices, procedures, and structures, free of all forms of discrimination, inequities, and racial bias, that support an inclusive and equitable working and learning environment.
 - g. Ensure every student, employee, volunteer, and community partner understands their responsibility for creating a climate where all members of the school community feel they are welcome and that they belong.
 - h. Seek to identify, remove, and prevent barriers that inhibit the ability of students to participate respectfully, culturally safe, and completely, in learning, socializing and gathering.
 - i. Create an environment where the respectful participation of all students is valued.
 - j. Develop systems that encourage choice, collaboration, and self-agency.
 - k. Work to achieve educational and employment equity, eradicating assumptions regarding success or failure that correlate with personal qualities, attributes, and characteristics, such as race, ethnicity, linguistic background, economic class, gender, sexual orientation, spirituality, beliefs, religion, physical, cognitive ability, disabilities, or any other socio-political identity markers.

Definitions:

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| Agency | The ability to choose actions that are self-generated. |
| Bias | An inclination for or against something. |
| Equity | The fair and respectful treatment of all people, where there is no differentiation that results in an advantage or disadvantage from others due to personal dimensions, qualities, attributes, and characteristics;

Equity involves the creation of opportunities and reduction of disparities in |

opportunities and outcomes for diverse communities, as well as overcoming discrimination due to differentiation, prejudice or biases. Equity acknowledges that these disparities are rooted in historical and contemporary injustices and disadvantages.

Discrimination	The structure, perspective, treatment, or behaviour directed towards others, that negatively or unfairly impacts them; discrimination is often based on prejudicial differentiation considering personal dimensions, qualities, attributes, and characteristics.
Diversity	A demographic mix of people with a wide spectrum of personal dimensions, qualities, attributes, and characteristics, such as race, culture, ethnicity, linguistic background, economic class, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical and cognitive ability, disability, and diverse ability.
Ethnocentrism	The evaluation of other cultures according to preconceptions originating in the standards and customs of one's own culture.
Implicit Bias	A form of bias that occurs automatically and unintentionally that affects thoughts, judgements, decisions, and behaviour.
Inclusion	An environment with a collective culture that welcomes, embraces, respects, accepts and values everyone and all worldviews, with authentic and empowered participation resulting in a true sense of belonging.
Neurodiversity	The natural range of differences in human mental or neurological function.
Oppression	Unjust treatment or control, preventing people from having opportunities and freedom.
Prejudice	An unjustified, typically negative, attitude towards others.
Racism	The discriminatory treatment of others due to race or racial bias.
Racism of low expectations	A form of racial discrimination where certain racial groups are held to lower standards because of an implicit belief that they are less capable.
Stereotype	A pervasive overgeneralized belief about a particular group.
Systemic Inequity	The system of privilege and inequality created and maintained by interlocking societal institutions that perpetuate inequities and racism.

Guidelines:

1. The work of Mission Public Schools will operate to ensure:

- 1.1. That race, ethnicity, linguistic background, economic class, religion, gender, sexual orientation, physical and cognitive ability, disability, diverse ability, or any other personal quality, attribute, or characteristic is not a predictor or determinate of a child's educational experiences or outcomes.
- 1.2. That race, ethnicity, linguistic background, economic class, religion, gender, sexual orientation, physical and cognitive ability, disability, diverse ability, or any other personal quality, attribute, or characteristic is not a predictor or determinate of an employee's experience or advancement.
- 1.3. The rights of Indigenous peoples are supported, consistent with the following:
 - a. the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, including but not limited to:
 - i. Call to Action 62.
i – Make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students (expand to include adult learners).
iii – Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect.
 - b. The United Nations Declarations on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including but not limited to:
 - i. Article 8.1 - *Indigenous peoples and individuals have the right not to be subjected to forced assimilation or destruction of their culture.*
 - ii. Article 14.2 - *Indigenous individuals, particularly children, have the right to all levels and forms of education of the State without discrimination.*
 - iii. Article 15.1 - *Indigenous peoples have the right to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories, and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in education and public information.*
 - c. the *British Columbia Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, including, but not limited to:
 - i. *Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including in the area of education; and*
 - ii. *Indigenous peoples have the right to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories, and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in education; and*
 - iii. *Indigenous peoples have the right not to be subjected to any discriminatory conditions of labour, and inter alia, employment or salary.*
- 1.4. All students are supported through the Professional Standards for BC Educators:
 - i. 1| Educators value the success of all students. Educators care for students and act in their best interest.
 - ii. 3| Educators understand and apply knowledge of student growth and development.

Educators recognize the importance and connection of cultural identity, ways of being, and worldviews to student learning.

- iii. 6| Educators demonstrate a broad knowledge base and an understanding of areas they teach.

Educators teach curricula from Canadian, First Nations, Inuit, Metis, and global perspectives.

- iv. 9| Educators respect and value the history of First Nations, Inuit and Métis in Canada and the impact of the past on the present and the future. Educators contribute towards truth, reconciliation and healing. Educators foster a deeper understanding of ways of knowing and being, histories, and cultures of First Nations, Inuit and Métis.

- 1.5. There is a culture of equity for children, meaning that every child:
 - a. receives every day what they need to thrive social-emotionally, culturally, and academically,
 - b. is fully included in, and valued by, the school community,
 - c. has a right to feel loved and cared for and to feel that they belong to the school community,
 - d. is seen and valued for who they truly are as a growing person, and their unique interests and gifts are nurtured and cultivated,
 - e. has access to a high-quality education with an extensive range of learning opportunities, activities, and materials, including authentic Indigenous learning resources, and
 - f. is provided with the opportunity to challenging educational opportunities, contrary to the racism of low expectations.
 - g. has access to engage in meaningful, challenging learning experiences.
- 1.6. The social-emotional well-being of every child, which is as important as their academic progress, achievement, and success, is supported and nurtured.
- 1.7. There is a culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion for employees, meaning that the school district will actively work to achieve an inclusive work environment, where diverse employees are provided equitable opportunities for meaningful work, and where the school district works to remove the barriers to support equitable opportunities.
- 1.8. There is a culture of equity-based learning, meaning that people:
 - a. are aware of their personal implicit biases and how their beliefs, attitudes, and stereotypes may impact how they perceive and respond to Indigenous, Black, and Persons of Colour (IBPOC) disabilities and/or diverse abilities,
 - b. work to actively suspend their personal biases in all interactions with and when making decisions, that impact students, and
 - c. are aware of, and work to eliminate, systemic racism and the ways in which systems of education, employment, transportation, housing, health care, and criminal justice produce racialized outcomes for IBPOC,
 - d. are aware of, and work to eliminate, practices that uphold systemic inequities.

- 1.9. There is a culture of inclusiveness, consistent with the principles of non-discrimination set out in the *Canadian and British Columbia Human Rights Codes*, to promote a climate of understanding and mutual respect where all are equal in dignity and rights.

- 1.10. There is a commitment to the guiding principles of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)*:
 - a. Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one’s own choices, and independence of persons,
 - b. Non-discrimination,
 - c. Full and effective participation and inclusion in society,
 - d. Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity,
 - e. Equality of opportunity,
 - f. Accessibility,
 - g. Equality between men and women (among all genders including men, women, nonbinary, of all ages etc), and
 - h. Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities.

- 1.11. Equality rights are at the core of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and they are intended to ensure that everyone is treated with the same respect, dignity and consideration (without discrimination), regardless of personal qualities, attributes, or characteristics, such as race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, age, mental or physical disability, neurodiversity, residency, marital status or citizenship.

Guidelines for Learning Opportunities, Resources, and Curriculum:

With respect to human rights, equity, inclusion, and cultural diversity, the District will commit to:

- a. The provision of intentional learning opportunities for staff and students, including the use of inclusive and appropriate language.
- b. The examination of resources to identify and remove resources with racial bias and stereotypes.
- c. The creation and acquisition of authentic, appropriate, current, and relevant recommended learning resources, including own voice stories that amplify the authors' own experiences that are written from their own perspective.
- d. The examination and revision of planning, teaching and assessment strategies.

Date of Original Board Approval:	April 18, 2023	Approval in Principle, Amended
	June 19, 2023	Amended
	June 20, 2023	Approved

Date Amended:

Cross Reference:

<i>District Administration:</i>	<i>Sexual Orientation and Gender Identify Policy</i>
<i>School Administration:</i>	<i>Safe, Caring, and Respectful Schools Policy</i>
	<i>Safe, Caring, and Respectful Schools Procedure</i>
<i>Human Resources:</i>	<i>Safe, Caring, and Respectful Workplaces:</i>
	<i>Workplace Bullying, Harassment, &</i>
	<i>Discrimination Complaint Procedure</i>
<i>Students and Instruction:</i>	<i>Learning Resources Policy</i>
	<i>Selection of Resource Materials Procedure</i>
	<i>Challenge of Learning Resource Materials Procedure</i>

Resources: Diversity - <https://ccdi.ca/our-story/diversity-defined/>
BCTF Professional Standards for BC Educators