



TITLE: ANTIRACISM AND ETHNOCULTURAL EQUITY

Date issued: 30 April 2001

Last revised:

Authorization: Senior Staff: 10 January 2001

1.0 OBJECTIVE

To provide guidance for the implementation of the Board's Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity Policy throughout the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

In this procedure,

2.1 **Equity** does not mean treating everyone the same. It is the approach which consists of using extra and different measures to bring about the condition of same status, which is a state of equality.⁶ For a formal definition of this and other terms associated with this procedure, see Glossary of Sample Definitions (Attachment 1).

3.0 RESPONSIBILITY

The Director, supervisory officers, school principals, central managers, supervisors and division heads

4.0 PROCEDURES

4.1 Curriculum and Learning Materials

As well as referring to learning materials, course content, or subject matter, the term **curriculum** encompasses all school learning experiences. These experiences include such aspects of school life as the general school environment, interactions among students, staff and the community, and the values, attitudes and behaviors conveyed by the school.

- a) Staff will continue to support the inclusion of the principles and practices of antiracism and ethnocultural equity in the review, development, modification and implementation of the Ontario curriculum.

- b) Curricula will continue to be developed to reflect in an equitable way the perspectives, experiences, values and achievements of Canada's culturally and racially diverse society.
- c) Curriculum policies, programs, practices, learning and evaluation materials will be reviewed for bias and discriminatory barriers on an on-going basis. Conditions of bias or discriminatory barriers will be discussed, removed, or modified as the content and context would judiciously demand.
- d) To support appropriate evaluation, assessment and program placement decisions, schools are encouraged to seek out assessment tools that are free of racial and/or ethnocultural bias.

4.2 School Practices

- a) Schools are encouraged to acknowledge and celebrate the variety of Canadian religious and cultural traditions as it is an important part of building a positive and inclusive school community, and fostering religious and cultural understanding. This recognition should take place regardless of the ethnocultural homogeneity or heterogeneity of the school.
- b) Schools are encouraged to promote educational practices focused on identifying and challenging stereotyping, bias and discrimination in the curriculum.

4.3 Employment Practices

- a) In accordance with the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, all practices and procedures for recruitment, interviewing, selection, training and promotion will be bias-free and equitable.
- b) The Board will seek to hire staff who are sensitive to the values of our diverse ethnocultural society, and who reflect the composition of this society.
- c) Staff will have the opportunity to seek redress from racial or ethnocultural discrimination and/or harassment in accordance with Board Policy P.053.HR: Alleged Harassment/Abuse, and the accompanying procedure.

4.4 Racial and Ethnocultural Harassment

- a) As outlined in the Board's procedures with respect to Alleged Harassment/Abuse (see Section 6.0 of this procedure for references), racial harassment is harassment based on racial background or skin colour, and ethnocultural harassment is harassment based on an individual's place of origin, ancestry, language, dress, citizenship or religion. Incidents which constitute racial and ethnocultural harassment may include:
 - (i) unwelcome remarks, jokes, slurs;
 - (ii) overt or covert ridiculing;
 - (iii) shunning or exclusion;
 - (iv) degrading or derogatory pictures, materials or behaviour;
 - (v) the expression of hatred, or the production and/or dissemination of hate literature;
 - (vi) discrimination, bullying or intimidation; and
 - (vii) offensive gestures or threatening physical behaviour.

- b) Administrative supervisors/managers and school principals will communicate to their staff and/or students, that exchanges involving racially and ethnically derogatory terms are not acceptable under any circumstances. In addition, these exchanges will not be tolerated and will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action under Board policy and procedures.
- c) Any staff member who becomes aware of, or is witness to, racial and/or ethnocultural harassment will intervene sensitively and inform his or her immediate supervisor, and reference the procedures for dealing with reported occurrences or complaints, filing, and initiating appropriate disciplinary actions as outlined in the Board's Alleged Harassment/Abuse and Safe Schools procedures.
- d) Should conflict resolution and/or behaviour management strategies to resolve conflict be deemed necessary by the responsible staff member (principal, manager, supervisor or division head), he/she should consult the School and Community Resource Section of the OCDSB resource document on antiracism and ethnocultural equity.

4.5 Community Relations

- a) The Board will encourage the active participation of community members from a variety of racial and ethnocultural backgrounds to provide support and act as a resource for committees and programs at both system and school level, where appropriate.
- b) To improve communications with parents and communities concerning school programs, the Communications Office staff will make use of such information sources available in Ottawa as the racial and ethnocultural minority press, radio and television networks.
- c) All volunteers will be made aware of the Board's policies and procedures with respect to Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity and Alleged Harassment/ Abuse.

5.0 APPENDICES

Attachment 1: A Glossary of Sample Definitions

6.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Policy/Program Memorandum 119: Development and Implementation of School Board Policies on Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity

Bill 81: Safe Schools Act, 2000

Ontario Human Rights Code

MOET Violence Free Schools Policy, 1994

Board Policy P.098.CUR: Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity

Board Policy P.086.CUR: Religious Holy Days

Board Policy P.031.CUR: Learning Resources

Board Policy P.053.HR: Alleged Harassment/Abuse

Board Policy P.067.SCO: Volunteers

Board Policy P.083.CUR: Student Achievement and Evaluation

Board Procedure PR.511.SCO: Student Suspension
Board Procedure PR.520.CUR: Learning Resources
Board Procedure PR.521.SCO: Safe Schools
Board Procedure PR.541.HR: Alleged Harassment/Abuse of an Employee
Board Procedure PR.542.HR: Alleged Harassment/Abuse of a Student under 18 by an Employee
Board Procedure PR.543.HR: Alleged Harassment/Abuse of a Student 18 or over
Board Procedure PR.544.HR: Alleged Harassment/Abuse of a Student by a Student
Board Procedure PR.586.CUR: Religious Holy Days
Board Resource Document on Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity (forthcoming, spring 2001)

A Glossary of Sample Definitions

The meanings given to the following terms are generally accepted in the area of Race Relations and Race and Ethnocultural Equity.

- Bias**⁴: A special perspective; an inaccurate and limited way of perceiving the world. A negative bias towards members of a particular gender or a particular cultural, racial, religious, and linguistic group expressed through language, materials, and other media harms the recipients in a multiplicity of ways.
- Discrimination**⁴: The denial of equal treatment, civil liberties, or opportunity to individuals or groups with respect to education, accommodation, health care, employment or access to services, goods or facilities. Discrimination may occur on the basis of race, nationality, gender, age, religious, political or ethnic affiliation, marital or family status, physical, developmental or mental handicap.
- Equity**⁴: Equality of opportunity, access, and outcome; recourse to principles of justice to correct or supplement law; a system of justice supplementing or prevailing over common and statute law. A program designed to remove barriers to equality by identifying and eliminating discriminatory policies and practices, remedying the effects of past discrimination.
- Ethnic**⁴: A term used to describe a person's cultural heritage in the broadest sense. It can include national affiliation, language and religious background. Everyone belongs to an ethnic group. Individuals who are members of the same ethnic group can experience and express their ethnicity in a variety of ways.
- Ethnocultural**³: Every Canadian belongs to some ethnic group and shares some cultural heritage particular to people of a certain national, religious, and/or language background. There are a wide variety of ethnocultural groups among people of African, Asian, European and indigenous North, Central and South American backgrounds in Canada. Some Canadians may experience discrimination because of ethnocultural background (ethnicity, religion, nationality, language), others because of race, and others because of both race and ethnocultural background.
- Multiculturalism**⁵: The existence within one society or nation of two or more non-homogeneous, but equally recognized, ethnic, racial, cultural linguistic, or religious groups.
- Prejudice**²: Hostile and irrational beliefs, feelings, opinions and actions directed toward particular individuals or groups on the basis of generalized stereotypes of group characteristics.
- Racial Incident**¹: A verbal or physical expression of racial or ethnic bias which exhibits a negative attitude, disparagement, or hatred toward a person's or group's race, colour or ethnocultural heritage (including racial/ethnic slurs, jokes and stereotyping as well as threats, abuse, intimidation or assault).

- Race**³: A social category used to classify humankind according to common ancestry or descent and reliant upon differentiation by general physical characteristics such as colour of skin, hair texture and facial features.
- Race Relations**²: The nature and quality of interactions between different racial groups within one society or nation. The term also refers to explicit policies and programs used to promote interracial and cross-cultural understanding, integration or communication.
- Racism**²: A set of implicit or explicit beliefs, assumptions and actions based upon an ideology that one racial or ethnic group is superior to another and which is evident in organizations or institutions and their programs as well as in individuals and individual behaviours.
- Stereotype**²: A false generalized misconception about race, age, ethnicity, language, religion or social, marital or family status or physical, developmental or mental attributes etc., held about a group of people, which results in unconscious or conscious categorization of each member of that group.

The above glossary definitions were taken from the following sources:

¹ *Toronto Board of Education Handling Racial Incidents*, Advisor on Race Relations, Equal Opportunity office, Toronto Board of Education, 1989.

² *Race and Ethnic Relations and Multicultural Policy*, Guidelines and Procedures, condensed edition, Metropolitan Separate School Board, 1986.

³ *“The Development of a Policy on Race and Ethnocultural Equity” Report of the Provincial Advisory Committee on Race Relations*, Ministry of Education, 1987.

⁴ *“Our Cultural Heritage” A Curriculum Resource Guide for Racial and Ethnocultural Equity, Grades 7,8,9, Draft*, Ministry of Education, 1990.

⁵ *Race Relations, Ethnic Relations and Multicultural Policy*, The Scarborough Board of Education, 1987.

⁶ *Making Equity Explicit-A Conversation With Educators*, Enidlee Consultants – (Workshop Notes) Nov. 1st, 2000.