

**CODE**

Council of Ontario Directors of Education

# EQUITY AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: GOING DEEPER

A TOOL TO SUPPORT ONTARIO SCHOOL  
BOARDS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF  
EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Working Document

A PROJECT OF  
THE COUNCIL OF ONTARIO DIRECTORS OF EDUCATION

2014





# Introduction

Since the release of the provincial Equity and Inclusive Education (EIE) policy in 2009, Ontario school boards have established equity and inclusive education policies, and have developed approaches to implementation based on their own internal organizational frameworks, processes and local contexts.

This document, entitled *Equity and Inclusive Education: Going Deeper*, is a project of the Council of Ontario Directors of Education, with the support of the Ministry of Education. Its purpose is to provide system leaders of Ontario school boards with a tool for:

- a) supporting current implementation of their equity and inclusive education policy through more intensive applications;
- b) assessing progress made in their equity and inclusive education policy in order to enhance implementation; and
- c) determining their own pathways towards full integration of equity and inclusive education into school and board improvement, and multi-year strategic planning.

Presented in the form of a rubric, this tool establishes a set of policy outcomes. A description of critical performance indicators is provided for each outcome, organized into three phases of development along a continuum: Planning, Effective Practices, and Integration.

This working document will assist school boards in supporting the best academic and social outcomes among all students in their school districts. It builds on the positive work that has been done to date in equity and inclusive education across Ontario’s schools and boards. It also provides an opportunity for boards to look to the future and take steps to support continued implementation so that all students can reach their full potential, regardless of background or personal circumstances.

In fall 2013, the Ministry of Education held discussions with individuals and organizations across the province to identify the skills and knowledge that Ontario’s children and youth will need in the future. As a result of these discussions, the ministry released *Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario* (2014).

This renewed vision, which builds on the three current priorities of increasing student achievement, closing gaps in student achievement and increasing public confidence, sets out four renewed goals. One of these four goals is ensuring *equity*, so that all children and students will be inspired to reach their full potential, with access to rich learning experiences that begin at birth and continue into adulthood.

The fundamental principle on which this work is based is that:

**“every student has the opportunity to succeed,  
regardless of ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity,  
language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion, sex,  
sexual orientation, socio-economic status or other factors”**

*(Achieving Excellence, Ministry of Education, p. 8).*

The four renewed goals – achieving excellence, ensuring equity, promoting student well-being and enhancing public confidence – are interconnected. Success in one contributes to success in the others. This renewed vision further strengthens collaboration, continuous learning and improvement at the school, board and provincial levels to support the success and well-being of all students.

### **Why is this called a “working document”?**

To further assist boards as they employ the rubric contained in *Equity and Inclusive Education: Going Deeper*, CODE will be working with representative boards to identify effective practices, strategies and lessons learned. The aim is to deepen and extend implementation of the principles of Equity and Inclusive Education into multi-year school and board improvement plans. The information and suggestions gathered through this collaboration will be added to the document throughout 2015 and shared with all district school boards.

# Background

The Ontario Ministry of Education has provided Ontario school boards with the following documents to support equity and inclusive education:

- The *Education Act* (1990, c. 8, s. 29.1) requires school boards to develop and implement an Equity and Inclusive Education policy.
- *Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy* (2009) sets out a vision for an equitable and inclusive school system in which all students, parents, and members of the school community are welcomed and respected; and every student is supported and inspired to succeed in a culture of high expectations for learning.
- *Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation* (2009) provides directions to schools boards for the development and implementation of their policy on equity and inclusive education, and for religious accommodation (Appendix A).
- *Policy/Procedures Memorandum (PPM) 119* (2009, revised 2013) provides specific direction to school boards on the review, development, implementation, and monitoring of equity and inclusive education policies to support student achievement and well-being.
- *The Comprehensive Action Plan for Accepting Schools* (2013) includes amendments to the Education Act that require all school boards to develop and implement an Equity and Inclusive Education policy, and to provide safe, inclusive, and accepting learning environments for all students.
- *Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario* (2014) builds on the provincial education priorities to identify four renewed goals: achieving excellence, ensuring equity, promoting well-being and enhancing public confidence.

To support an aligned and integrated approach to implementation, the principles of equity and inclusive education are also being embedded across Ministry of Education initiatives (e.g., student achievement, curriculum and assessment, safe schools, healthy schools, special education, mental health, leadership development, teaching policy and standards, Aboriginal education, and French-language education initiatives).

# Areas of Focus for Equity and Inclusive Education Policy

In order to achieve the goals of equity and inclusive education, Policy and Procedures Memorandum (PPM) 119 specifies eight Areas of Focus to guide implementation of the EIE policy in each school board. These areas of focus are as follows:

1. Policies, Programs, Guidelines and Practices
2. Shared and Committed Leadership
3. School Community Relationships
4. Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment Practices
5. Religious Accommodation
6. School and Board Climate and Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment
7. Professional Learning
8. Accountability and Transparency

The Ministry expects boards to have in place and sustain programs, procedures and practices which reflect the principles of equity and inclusive education in all eight areas of focus. Further, boards should have procedures to measure progress made over time, and such progress should be reported to stakeholders on a regular basis. In their implementation of the policy, boards are expected to “demonstrate continuous improvement, so that progress is evident on an annual basis towards the goal of embedding the equity and inclusive education policy into all operations of the board” (PPM 119, 2013, p. 8).

The school boards’ Equity and Inclusive Education Policy is expected to comply fully with the requirements of PPM 119, and with the Education Act, Ontario Human Rights Code (“the Code”), Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Municipal Freedom of Information and Personal Privacy Act (MFIPPA), Ontarians with Disabilities Act, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, Youth Criminal Justice Act and other relevant legislation, Provincial and Board Codes of Conduct (per PPM 128), the board’s Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy (per PPM 144), and other relevant board policies.

For Roman Catholic and French-language boards, development and implementation of equity and inclusive education policies will take place within the context of the denominational rights of Roman Catholic schools as set out in section 93 of the Constitution Act (1867) and the Education Act, and the language rights of French-language rights-holders as set out in section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Education Act. Boards should refer to Ontario’s *Aménagement linguistique Policy for French-language Education*.

The Ministry recognizes that school boards are at different stages in the implementation of their Equity and Inclusive Education Policies, and that boards have the flexibility to adapt their equity and inclusive education policy to their particular circumstances. The expectations for implementation of the boards’ Equity and Inclusive Education Policy are contained in Appendix A, adapted from *Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation*, 2009.

## Integrating Equity and Inclusive Education into Improvement Planning

The planning processes for the school effectiveness framework, school improvement, district reviews, board improvement, student success initiatives, safe and accepting schools activities, and the boards’ multi-year strategic planning processes, all provide important opportunities to integrate equity and inclusive education approaches to impact student outcomes and close gaps in student achievement.

In addition, the boards’ approaches to addressing parent engagement, student engagement, workforce diversity, succession planning, professional learning, and religious accommodation, also provide opportunities to raise awareness and build capacity, and to implement strategies which promote success for students of all backgrounds and circumstances.

Staff leading the school and board improvement planning process are encouraged to work in collaboration to ensure consistency in the approaches to equity and inclusive education across all functional areas. This will help to ensure that the guiding principles for equity and inclusive education are shared and applied consistently and uniformly throughout all areas of school and board improvement planning.



# Guiding Principles for Equity and Inclusive Education (EIE)

The following guiding principles are specified in the Ministry document, *Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation*:

## Equity and Inclusive Education

1. Is a foundation of excellence;  
*In a diverse society, equity is a fundamental requirement for educational excellence and high standards of student achievement.*
2. Meets individual needs;  
*Equity does not mean treating all students in the same way but, rather, responding to the individual needs of each student and providing the conditions and interventions needed to help him or her succeed.*
3. Identifies and eliminates barriers;  
*All students are supported equitably through the identification and removal of discriminatory barriers that limit their ability to achieve to their full potential.*
4. Promotes a sense of belonging;  
*Equity and inclusive education contribute to every student's sense of well-being.*
5. Involves the broad community;  
*Effective and meaningful school community partnerships are an essential component of an equitable and inclusive education system.*
6. Builds on and enhances previous and existing initiatives;  
*Sound research and analysis of successful policies and practices form the basis for the development and sharing of resources*
7. Is demonstrated throughout the system;  
*The Ministry, school boards, and schools will incorporate principles of equity and inclusive education throughout their policies, programs, and practices.*

# The Equity and Inclusive Education Rubric

The EIE Rubric is a tool organized in chart form containing the following elements:

- a) The eight Areas of Focus (AOF) for implementation of the Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy according to PPM 119;
- b) Desired outcomes for each Area of Focus, to reflect the expectations of PPM 119 (See *Appendix B: Summary of Rubric Outcomes*);
- c) Three stages of implementation reflecting a continuum of development: Planning, Effective Practices, Integration;
- d) A description of key indicators related to outcome for the individual AOFs at each of the three stages of development:

### Planning:

The stage of implementation which includes preparation and program and activity planning as part of a continuous improvement cycle (including ongoing planning);

### Effective Practices:

The stage where key activities of the board and its schools and departments are initiated, shaped, adapted, monitored, evaluated and reported to create desired change in the educational environment;

### Integration:

The stage where effective and evidence-informed practices are embedded and integrated into the organizational and operational culture of the board, its schools and departments, and into its planning, priorities, decisions and implementation.

It is important to note that throughout the board planning and implementation processes, these stages may overlap and intersect with one another.



## APPENDIX A

# Implementation Guidelines for Equity and Inclusive Education Policy

### BASED ON

#### *Realizing the Promise of Diversity:*

#### *Revised Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation*

In accordance with amendments to the Education Act, school boards are required to develop and implement an Equity and Inclusive Education (EIE) policy. School boards must also have a guideline on religious accommodation and an implementation plan in place. Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) 119 outlines eight areas of focus to guide board EIE policy implementation as part of school and board improvement planning, board policy review cycles, and the board’s multi-year strategic plan to support student achievement and well-being.

### **A Model of Continuous Improvement**

The Ministry expects all boards and schools to continue their progress in meeting the needs of a diverse student population. The EIE implementation Rubric can be used to assist boards in developing indicators and planning next steps in deeper implementation of their EIE policy. The Ministry expects a board to demonstrate continuous improvement such that, wherever a board starts, progress is evident on an annual basis towards the goal of embedding the equity and inclusive education policy in all board and school operations and learning environments. The indicators should be in place to measure and evaluate progress.

### **Board EIE Policy Alignment and Integration**

Boards are encouraged to make use of existing planning and review processes to support alignment and effective implementation of their EIE policy and to further embed the principles of equity and inclusive education in all aspects of board and school operations and learning environments. The effective implementation of board EIE policies can assist boards in effective implementation of key initiatives across the board to support

student achievement and well-being (e.g., curriculum implementation, supports for students with special education needs, teacher and leadership appraisal and capacity building, fair and equitable hiring practices, etc.).

### Cyclical Review Process

The cyclical review process provides an opportunity for boards to embed the principles of equity and inclusive education in all board policies and procedures (e.g., bullying prevention and intervention, staff hiring, etc.) in alignment with their EIE policy.

### Board Multi-Year Strategic Plan

The Education Act requires that school boards include “promoting a positive school climate that is inclusive and accepting of all students” and “promoting the prevention of bullying” as goals in their multi-year strategic plans. The Act also requires boards to have an EIE policy in place. There should be clear alignment between the board’s multi-year strategic plan and its EIE policy to support integration and the embedding of EIE principles across school and board operations and learning environments.

### Board and School Improvement Planning

Board and school improvement planning processes, including the goals and action steps identified through these processes, should be undertaken using an equity and inclusive education perspective. These processes should align with the board’s EIE policy.

Boards are required to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of board policies aimed at achieving these goals (e.g., the board’s EIE policy), review the multi-year plan annually, and make the plan available to supporters and employees of the board. The EIE rubric can be of assistance in supporting boards in meeting these requirements.

### Board Leadership Development Strategy

The Board Leadership Development Strategy (BLDS) can be used to address systemic barriers that may impede fair practice with respect to hiring, talent development, promotion, and succession planning. A focus on equity is incorporated throughout the BLDS Impact Assessment and Planning Tool. This assists districts as they continue to refine their practices in attracting, developing, and retaining school and system leaders who collectively reflect Ontario’s diversity.

## EIE Policy Implementation Plans

Board EIE Policy implementation plans need to be aligned with the EIE Strategy and with PPM No. 119 (April 22, 2013), and should be developed and updated or revised in consultation with the full range of education and community stakeholders, including parents, staff, and students. The plan should span up to three years and include clear goals, performance measures, indicators, and anticipated outcomes. A board may establish a committee, or use an existing equity committee, that is representative of the community to assist in reviewing, revising and supporting implementation of the board’s EIE policy.

The implementation plan should include:

- ongoing policy review, revision, and refinement;
- the board’s vision and mission statements;
- clearly stated annual goals and measurable outcomes at both the system and school levels;
- procedures and indicators for annually measuring and evaluating progress;
- a description of active and ongoing partnerships; and
- concrete steps towards integrating the board’s EIE policy by embedding the principles of equity and inclusive education in all aspects of board and school operations and learning environments.

## Making Connections

A board is expected to have and maintain an equity and inclusive education lead to liaise with the ministry and with other boards to share resources, challenges, and effective practices e.g., through involvement in regional or provincial Equity and Inclusive Education (EIE) Network activities.

## APPENDIX B

# Outcomes for Equity and Inclusive Education Policy

### Based on Areas of Focus (AOF) as outlined in Ontario’s EIE Strategy Implementation Guidelines

1. The board has an Equity and Inclusive Education Policy (EIEP) and implementation plan which addresses the eight Areas of Focus as required by Policy and Procedures Memorandum (PPM) 119 (*AOF 1: Policies, Programs, Guidelines and Practices*);
2. The board’s Equity and Inclusive Education Policy and implementation plan are monitored and results are shared with school and board communities (*AOF 1: Policies, Programs, Guidelines and Practices*);
3. Equity and inclusive education principles are embedded in all policies, programs, procedures and practices (*AOF 1: Policies, Programs, Guidelines and Practices*);
4. Discriminatory biases and systemic barriers to recruitment, hiring, talent development, career mentoring, promotion, retention and succession planning are identified and removed (*AOF 1: Policies, Programs, Guidelines and Practices*);
5. The board supports senior leadership in the implementation and oversight of the Equity and Inclusive Education Policy (*AOF 2: Shared and Committed Leadership*);
6. System leaders are committed to identifying and removing discriminatory biases and systemic barriers to learning (*AOF 2: Shared and Committed Leadership*);
7. Discriminatory biases and systemic barriers are identified and removed in all instruction and support services to students (*AOF 2: Shared and Committed Leadership*);
8. All parents and families are encouraged and have the opportunity to be engaged in the school system (*AOF 3: School Community Relationships*);
9. Information about the board, its schools, programs and services is available in a variety of formats for all parents, families and communities (*AOF 3: School Community Relationships*);
10. Diverse communities are engaged in the school system and receive support to become engaged (*AOF 3: School Community Relationships*);







**Culturally Responsive Curriculum:** A curriculum that accurately reflects and uses the variety of knowledge of all peoples as the basis for instruction; that acknowledges and respects the diverse social backgrounds, identities and experiences of all students, and places them at the centre of the learning environment. The curriculum provides opportunities for students to understand the similarities, differences and connections between people of diverse communities. The curriculum helps students to acquire the skills and knowledge that enable them to challenge unjust practices and to build positive human relationships among their peers and among all members of the society.

**Culturally Responsive Teaching:** Teaching that recognizes that all students learn differently, and that uses the social and cultural backgrounds and identities of the students, their prior knowledge, and their experiences and interests, to build, extend and share knowledge among students. Culturally responsive teachers establish a positive emotional connection with each student in order to build trust, and consistently communicate high expectations for success to each student and to the parent or caregiver.

**Differentiated Instruction:** Differentiated instruction is any instructional strategy that recognizes and responds to the interests, current abilities, prior experiences, preferred learning styles, and specific learning needs of individual students while maintaining expected curriculum standards for those students. It is based on the premise that, since students differ in all of these areas, teaching strategies, materials, and pace should vary accordingly. The teacher uses differentiated instruction to create learning situations that match students' current abilities and preferred learning styles while stretching their abilities and encouraging them to try new ways of learning.

**Diversity:** The presence of a wide range of social characteristics within a group, organization, or society. The dimensions of diversity include, but are not limited to, age, ancestry, colour, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion or faith, sex, sexual orientation, and socio-economic circumstance.

**Equity (in education):** A condition or state of fair, inclusive, and respectful treatment of all students, families and staff regardless of social and cultural backgrounds, social identities, or personal life circumstances. Equitable treatment of students means removing discriminatory barriers to teaching and learning, and to ensuring proportionate levels of support to those who need it the most, in order to improve student achievement and well-being and to close achievement gaps. Equitable treatment is not the same as equal treatment.

**Inclusive Education:** Education that is based on the principles of acceptance and inclusion of, and respect for, students of all social and cultural backgrounds, social identities, or personal life circumstances. Through inclusive education, students see themselves reflected in their total learning environment in positive empowering ways. Each student is given fair and equal consideration in the school’s priorities and plans, and has equal opportunity to participate in all school activities, and to contribute to the learning environment.

**School Effectiveness Framework:** A support mechanism for school improvement and student success which identifies evidence-based indicators of successful practice in a number of components of effective schools. The indicators, with samples of evidence, assist educators in building coherence and aligning practices across an entire school. Key components of the K-12 School Effectiveness Framework are: assessment of and for learning; school and classroom leadership; student engagement; curriculum, teaching and learning; pathways, planning and programming; and home, school and community partnerships.

**School Improvement Planning:** School improvement planning is a process through which schools set goals for improvement, and make decisions about how and when these goals will be achieved. The ultimate objective of the process is to improve student achievement levels by enhancing the way curriculum is delivered, creating a positive environment for learning, and increasing the degree to which parents are involved in their children’s learning at school and in the home. A school improvement plan is a road map that sets out the changes a school needs to make to improve the level of student achievement, and shows how and when these changes will be made. A school improvement plan is also a mechanism through which the public can hold schools accountable for student success and through which it can measure improvement.

**System Leaders:** Staff who have responsibility for supervision and management of departmental functions, schools and families of schools. These include supervisory officers, central department supervisors, managers and co-ordinators, and school administrators.

## APPENDIX D

# Equity and Inclusive Education Implementation Rubric

### Working Document

1. **Policies, Programs, Guidelines and Practices**
2. **Shared and Committed Leadership**
3. **School Community Relationships**
4. **Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment Practices**
5. **Religious Accommodation**
6. **School and Board Climate and Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment**
7. **Professional Learning**
8. **Accountability and Transparency**

## EIE AREA OF FOCUS 1: Policies, Programs, Guidelines and Practices

OUTCOME	PLANNING	EFFECTIVE PRACTICE	INTEGRATION
<p><b>1. The board has an Equity and Inclusive Education Policy (EIEP) and implementation plan which address the eight areas of focus as required by PPM 119 (AOF1).</b></p>	<p>The board has in place an EIEP.</p> <p>The policy is developed in consultation with all internal and external stakeholders, and complies with relevant legislation, regulations and policies.</p> <p>The EIEP addresses the eight areas of focus required by PPM 119.</p> <p>The board has established an EIEP implementation plan.</p> <p>The implementation plan is developed in consultation with the full range of education and community stakeholders, and includes clear goals, action steps and measureable outcomes.</p>	<p>The board has established a cross-functional, team-based approach to support EIEP implementation (e.g., EIE implementation team or committee).</p> <p>The EIEP is reviewed and updated as part of the board's cyclical policy review process, in consultation with stakeholders.</p> <p>The rationale for the EIEP is linked directly to improving student achievement and well-being for all students.</p> <p>The EIEP implementation plan is reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis, in consultation with stakeholders.</p> <p>Schools and departments establish goals and plans for implementation of the EIEP.</p>	<p>The board EIE team or committee serves as an ongoing system advisory group to support effective implementation of the board's EIEP and implementation plan.</p> <p>The board receives regular updates on the implementation and impact of EIEP on student achievement, well-being and achievement gaps, and is committed to providing direction and support for equity and inclusive education across the board.</p> <p>Ongoing consultations with stakeholders are held at school and system levels as part of the implementation process of the EIEP.</p> <p>The board's EIEP and implementation plan demonstrate continued progress and advancement towards achieving equity and inclusive education across the board and its schools.</p>



OUTCOME	PLANNING	EFFECTIVE PRACTICE	INTEGRATION
<p>4. Discriminatory biases and systemic barriers to recruitment, hiring, talent development, career mentoring, promotion, retention, and succession planning are identified and removed (AOF1).</p>	<p>The Board Leadership Development Strategy (BLDS) and related Impact and Assessment Planning Tool indicators are used to help identify and address discriminatory biases and systemic barriers that may impede fair practice with respect to hiring, talent development, career mentoring, promotion, and succession planning.</p> <p>Plans are made for the collection of data that will assist boards in measuring progress.</p> <p>All procedures for recruitment, hiring, promotion, talent development, career mentoring, retention, succession planning, and performance appraisal for staff and leaders at all levels are reviewed to determine where discriminatory biases and systemic barriers may exist.</p> <p>Plans are made to provide professional learning for all school and system leaders to develop skills in non-discriminatory recruitment, hiring, promotion, talent development, career mentoring, retention, succession planning, and performance appraisal.</p>	<p>Boards continue to refine their practices and monitor progress (based on indicators in the BLDS Impact and Assessment Tool) in attracting, developing and retaining school and system leaders who collectively reflect Ontario's diversity.</p> <p>Data is gathered and used to identify gaps in workforce diversity and to support human resource planning.</p> <p>All procedures for recruitment, hiring, promotion, talent development, career mentoring, retention, succession planning, and performance appraisal for staff at all levels reflect non-discriminatory criteria to help ensure equitable employment practices.</p> <p>Professional learning is provided for all school and system leaders to develop and enhance skills in non-discriminatory recruitment, hiring, promotion, talent development, career mentoring, retention, succession planning, and performance appraisal.</p>	<p>There is evidence of improvement in the identification and removal of discriminatory biases and systemic barriers to recruitment, hiring, talent management, career mentoring, promotion, retention and succession planning.</p> <p>School and system leaders actively work to prevent systemic barriers and discriminatory biases from developing in their human resources processes.</p> <p>Data demonstrates improvement related to equitable employment practices.</p> <p>All procedures for recruitment, hiring, promotion, talent development, career mentoring, retention, succession planning, and performance appraisal for staff at all levels are conducted according to non-discriminatory criteria to help ensure equitable employment practices, and improve workforce capacity to serve a diverse community of students and families.</p> <p>The observed impact of professional learning on equitable practices and on workforce diversity goals is evident, continually assessed, and used as a basis for ongoing human resource planning.</p>

OUTCOME	PLANNING	EFFECTIVE PRACTICE	INTEGRATION
<p>4. Discriminatory biases and systemic barriers to recruitment, hiring, talent development, career mentoring, promotion, retention, and succession planning are identified and removed (AOF1). <i>(Continued)</i></p>			<p>The observed impact of professional learning on equitable practices and on workforce diversity is used to assist in making modifications to future professional learning programs.</p>

EIE AREA OF FOCUS 2: **Shared and Committed Leadership**

OUTCOME	PLANNING	EFFECTIVE PRACTICE	INTEGRATION
<p>5. The board supports senior leadership in the implementation and oversight of the Equity and Inclusive Education Policy (AOF2).</p>	<p>Trustees and senior system leaders are updated on requirements for policy development and implementation of equity and inclusive education.</p>	<p>Trustees and senior system leaders participate in professional learning opportunities on equity and inclusive education practices.</p>	<p>School and system leaders have the achievement and well-being of all students at the core of their decision making.</p> <p>The board receives progress reports on implementation of EIEP.</p> <p>The board makes decisions which support implementation of the EIEP.</p> <p>Trustees connect boardroom deliberations and decisions to the board's policy commitment to equitable and inclusive schools.</p>



OUTCOME	PLANNING	EFFECTIVE PRACTICE	INTEGRATION
<p><b>6. System leaders are committed to identifying and removing discriminatory biases and systemic barriers to learning (AOF2).</b></p>	<p>The board's EIE committee reviews the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement (BIPSA) to identify any discriminatory biases and systemic barriers that may have a negative impact on student learning, and provides advice to system leaders on steps that could be taken.</p> <p>System leaders establish goals and plans in their schools and departments for equity and inclusive education.</p>	<p>System leaders draw upon the leadership practices and personal leadership resources as described in the Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF) to influence positive school and board practices.</p> <p>System leaders monitor, support and provide feedback to staff on implementation of equitable and inclusive practices in schools and departments.</p> <p>System leaders facilitate the sharing of effective practices in equity and inclusive education among schools and departments.</p>	<p>A demonstrable reduction in discriminatory biases and systemic barriers in relation to student learning is evident across schools within the board.</p> <p>School and system leaders actively work to prevent discriminatory biases and systemic barriers from developing in the learning environment.</p> <p>System leaders support risk-taking and innovation in equity and inclusive education.</p> <p>System leaders recognize staff for their leadership in demonstrating equitable and inclusive school practices.</p> <p>System leaders actively promote a culture of openness and receptivity to diverse opinions and perspectives among staff, students, parents, families and community.</p>

OUTCOME	PLANNING	EFFECTIVE PRACTICE	INTEGRATION
<p>7. Discriminatory biases and systemic barriers are identified and removed in all instruction and support services to students (AOF2).</p>	<p>Strategies are developed at the classroom, school and department levels, and take into account the perspectives and experiences of students, staff and community.</p>	<p>Plans are implemented at the classroom, school and department levels to identify and remove discrimination and systemic barriers.</p>	<p>System leaders guide, monitor and assess actions taken to remove discrimination and systemic barriers in all instruction and support services to students.</p> <p>Actions taken to remove discrimination and systemic barriers are shared among staff in schools and departments.</p> <p>School and system leaders actively work to prevent new discriminatory biases and systemic learning from developing in all instruction and support services to students.</p>

### EIE AREA OF FOCUS 3: **School Community Relationships**

OUTCOME	PLANNING	EFFECTIVE PRACTICE	INTEGRATION
<p><b>8. All parents and families are encouraged, and have the opportunity, to be engaged in the school system (AOF3).</b></p>	<p>Schools and their councils set guidelines regarding how all parents and families are to be made welcome in the school.</p> <p>System leaders discuss and develop strategies to encourage diverse parent and community involvement in the school system.</p> <p>Schools consult with their school parent council to provide input and inform planning related to equity and inclusive education.</p> <p>The board consults with its Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) and other community committees, where relevant, to provide input into equity and inclusive education planning.</p> <p>Schools and boards review and share resources to support implementation and build capacity (e.g., Parent Involvement Committee Handbook, CODE Parent Engagement Toolkit).</p>	<p>The school improvement plan includes strategies for engaging all parents and families in the school and for making them feel welcome.</p> <p>School councils reflect the diversity of the community and address matters related to equity and inclusive education in their meetings.</p> <p>School councils support outreach activities to engage parents who may face barriers to engagement.</p> <p>Schools have programs and resources to assist all parents to become involved in the school and in their children’s education.</p> <p>Procedures for consultation with parents, families and community are followed when matters of public interest are considered by schools and the board.</p>	<p>All schools and departments encourage, value and support parent, family and community engagement in the school system.</p> <p>All committees and forums for parent and community engagement at the school and board level reflect diversity of community participation.</p> <p>All procedures for parent and community engagement in school and system activities are understood, and are regarded as friendly and welcoming by all parents, families and members of the community.</p> <p>Feedback on parent and community engagement in school and system activities is regularly collected and used for future planning.</p>

OUTCOME	PLANNING	EFFECTIVE PRACTICE	INTEGRATION
<p><b>9. Information about the board, its schools, programs and services is available in a variety of formats for all parents, families and communities (AOF3).</b></p>	<p>Plans are in place to ensure effective communication of instructional activities, school and board policies, programs, procedures and services with parents, families and communities.</p>	<p>Information for parents, families and communities about instructional activities, school and board policies, programs, procedures and services is provided in clear language, in a timely manner, and translated where necessary into the diverse languages of the community.</p> <p>Interpreters are provided for parent teacher conferences, school community meetings and board consultation forums, where needed.</p>	<p>Parents, families and communities have regular opportunities to provide response to the information provided to them by schools and the board.</p> <p>A variety of oral, written, and electronic communication methods are used to facilitate two-way communication with parents, families and communities.</p>
<p><b>10. Diverse communities are engaged in the school system and receive support to become engaged (AOF3).</b></p>	<p>Resources to support engagement and partnerships with diverse parents and communities are identified and made available to schools and departments.</p>	<p>Programs and resources are provided to help diverse parents and communities become engaged in the school system.</p> <p>Schools draw upon parent, family and community leadership in schools and at the board level; participation and engagement reflect the diversity of the community.</p>	<p>Schools and community agencies work together to establish support programs for parents, families and communities.</p> <p>School and system leaders know and understand the diversity within the school and board communities, and support staff in reaching out to these communities to develop partnerships with the school that meet the needs of all students.</p>

## EIE AREA OF FOCUS 4: **Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment Practices**

OUTCOME	PLANNING	EFFECTIVE PRACTICE	INTEGRATION
<p><b>11. An inclusive curriculum is in place to support all students to reach their full potential in the context of high expectations (AOF4).</b></p>	<p>The school explains to the community its plans and procedures for ensuring that all teaching and learning activities and materials are inclusive and free of negative bias and discrimination.</p> <p>Criteria and procedures are developed to identify negative bias and discrimination in teaching and learning activities and materials.</p> <p>Educators learn about the characteristics of culturally responsive teaching, along with strategies for using this approach in all teaching and learning activities.</p> <p>Professional learning for all staff includes opportunities to build understanding of how attitudes, beliefs and behaviours are reflected in discriminatory practices and affect the experiences of students in multiple ways.</p> <p>Procedures are in place in each school to support inclusive teaching and learning activities.</p>	<p>The school involves parents, families and the community in discussions about how inclusive curriculum supports students’ learning.</p> <p>Procedures are in place to identify and remove negative bias and discrimination in all teaching and learning activities and materials.</p> <p>Educators use culturally responsive teaching and inclusive curriculum materials in all learning activities.</p> <p>Students’ learning needs are supported through Differentiated Instruction.</p> <p>Educators use a Collaborative Inquiry approach to meet the needs of students by engaging them in personally relevant learning.</p> <p>Students learn about the authentic histories, cultures, perspectives and experiences of diverse people.</p> <p>Students see themselves positively reflected in the learning environment.</p> <p>Students learn skills in critical thinking, active learning, problem solving, and global education.</p>	<p>The school provides parents and families with advice and assistance to enable them to support inclusive learning at home and in the community.</p> <p>Educators regularly use existing procedures to identify and remove negative bias and discrimination in all teaching and learning activities and materials.</p> <p>Culturally responsive teaching and the use of inclusive curriculum strategies and materials are embedded into all teaching and learning activities, and into all school and board improvement plans.</p> <p>A culture of high expectations permeates the school environment and is reflected in the relationship between all adults and the students.</p> <p>All teaching and learning activities are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are free from negative bias and discrimination.</p> <p>Peer-to-peer learning models are in place to enhance the sharing of inclusive instruction and assessment practices.</p>



## EIE AREA OF FOCUS 5: Religious Accommodation

OUTCOME	PLANNING	EFFECTIVE PRACTICE	INTEGRATION
<p><b>13. Staff and student requests for religious accommodation are considered and addressed on an individual, case-by-case basis (AOF5).</b></p>	<p>The board has a Religious Accommodation guideline in place.</p> <p>Professional learning seminars on religious observances, beliefs and practices are provided for all staff; seminars include the protocols and processes for requesting and determining appropriate accommodations.</p>	<p>The board's Religious Accommodation guidelines are reviewed and updated as necessary as part of a cyclical review process.</p> <p>Information about procedures for requesting accommodations is provided to students and parents through student handbooks and parent newsletters.</p> <p>The board and its schools work with students and their families to identify appropriate and reasonable accommodations.</p> <p>Accommodations are considered on a case-by-case basis, based on individual or group requests. Examples may include: modification of student exam schedules and activities; wearing of religious attire and symbols; private space for prayer or meditation; and modesty requirements in physical education and other activities.</p> <p><i>(Note: Please refer to the Ontario Human Rights Commission's Policy on Creed and the Accommodation of Religious Observances.)</i></p>	<p>The board and its schools demonstrate through its religious accommodation practices that it recognizes and values religious diversity within its community.</p> <p>The board and its schools provide religious accommodation in a safe, culturally respectful way.</p> <p>The board and its schools provide learning environments that are free from all forms of discriminatory or harassing behaviours based on religion.</p> <p>The board receives and considers regular updates on the implementation of religious accommodation as part of progress reports on Equity and Inclusive Education Policy.</p> <p>Schools and departments make religious accommodations without undue disruption to their learning or workplace routines and activities.</p> <p>Students, staff, parents and families understand and comply with rules for requesting religious accommodation (e.g., adequate advance notice).</p>

OUTCOME	PLANNING	EFFECTIVE PRACTICE	INTEGRATION
<p>13. Staff and student requests for religious accommodation are considered and addressed on an individual, case-by-case basis (AOF5). <i>(Continued)</i></p>		<p>Students and their families work with the board and its schools to identify appropriate and reasonable accommodations.</p> <p>School leaders build school-wide understanding and acceptance for diverse religious observances, practices and related accommodations.</p>	<p>Reasonable and timely steps are taken to address unresolved issues raised by affected persons, including the provision of a dispute resolution mechanism.</p> <p>New construction or renovations to board buildings and facilities take into consideration possible options for private space for prayer, devotion or meditation activities for staff and students.</p>



## EIE AREA OF FOCUS 6: **School and Board Climate and Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment**

OUTCOME	PLANNING	EFFECTIVE PRACTICE	INTEGRATION
<p><b>14. All schools have a positive and inclusive school climate where all students, staff, parents, families and other members of the school community feel safe, welcome, valued and respected (AOF6).</b></p>	<p>The school forms a Safe and Accepting Schools Team made up of at least one student, one parent, one teacher, one non-teaching staff member, one community partner, and the principal. The chair of the Team must be a staff member (required by PPM 144).</p> <p>Anonymous school climate surveys of students, staff, and parents are conducted at least once every two years (required by Education Act). These surveys must include questions on bullying and harassment related to sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, as well as questions on sexual harassment.</p> <p>The school community discusses and identifies positive character values and behaviour attributes which it wants reflected in the school culture and climate.</p>	<p>The results of the school climate survey are used as the basis for determining the plan to improve the school climate in all areas of school activity.</p> <p>Survey results are shared with the Safe and Accepting Schools Team to help inform planning and recommendations.</p> <p>The school Code of Conduct addresses all forms of discrimination and is understood and supported by all members of the school community.</p> <p>Creation of “safe spaces” in each school where students who are feeling troubled, intimidated or are vulnerable can find support and comfort.</p> <p>Procedures exist for reporting of incidents of discrimination, bullying and harassment without fear of intimidation or reprisals.</p> <p>The school has a variety of activities which encourage healthy relationships (e.g., Gay/Straight Alliances or anti-racism clubs).</p> <p>Students who experience personal or emotional stress or challenges in their school or home lives have ready access to a caring adult in the school for support.</p>	<p>All members of the community take responsibility for supporting the plan to maintain a positive school climate, and for providing feedback as needed.</p> <p>The school climate survey is conducted at least once every two years to assess the state of the school climate, and to inform future changes.</p> <p>Complaints about incidents of discrimination, bullying and harassment are dealt with fairly and in a timely manner.</p> <p>Exemplary acts of kindness, compassion and caring among peers are recognized and celebrated within the school community.</p> <p>Students are actively engaged in efforts to promote equity, inclusiveness, anti-discrimination and various forms of social justice in classrooms and schools.</p>

OUTCOME	PLANNING	EFFECTIVE PRACTICE	INTEGRATION
<p>14. All schools have a positive and inclusive school climate where all students, staff, parents, families and other members of the school community feel safe, welcome, valued and respected (AOF6). <i>(Continued)</i></p>		<p>Students are encouraged and supported in their efforts to promote equity and inclusiveness and in the school.</p> <p>Images and symbols in teaching and learning activities, and in the physical environment of the school, reflect diversity and a welcoming atmosphere.</p>	
<p>15. All board departments have a positive and inclusive climate where all staff, students and visitors feel safe, welcome and respected (AOF6).</p>	<p>Each department reviews its operations and services to determine the need for improvement in its workplace climate.</p>	<p>A positive workplace climate plan that reflects the EIE principles is in place through consultation with all staff in the department.</p> <p>A procedure exists for reporting of incidents of discrimination, bullying or harassment by staff without fear or intimidation.</p> <p>The workplace climate plan is monitored, and feedback on its progress by all staff members is encouraged.</p>	<p>The workplace climate plan is reviewed systematically and modified as needed.</p> <p>Successful practices in positive workplace climate are shared among departments.</p>

## EIE AREA OF FOCUS 7: Professional Learning

OUTCOME	PLANNING	EFFECTIVE PRACTICE	INTEGRATION
<p>16. All staff have the knowledge and skills required for effective implementation of the EIEP, and receive support for their professional growth (AOF7).</p>	<p>Boards and schools establish a plan to provide annual professional learning for teachers and other staff about bullying prevention and strategies for promoting positive school climates (per The Education Act). This may include building awareness and understanding of discrimination issues: racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, discrimination against persons with disabilities, faith discrimination and gender-based violence.</p> <p>School and department staff participate in seminars to review and understand the Ministry’s requirements for boards concerning equity and inclusive education.</p> <p>Internal and external resource persons are identified and engaged to provide professional learning in equity and inclusive education.</p> <p>System leaders include equity and inclusive education in their professional growth plans, using a variety of resources (e.g., Safe@Schools, OHRC policies).</p>	<p>Staff at all levels receive ongoing professional learning in equity and inclusive education.</p> <p>Schools and departments draw on the experience and expertise of each other to enhance their knowledge, skills and practices in equity and inclusive education.</p> <p>New Teacher Induction Programs (NTIP) provide professional learning in equity and inclusive education.</p> <p>Student leaders engage in learning opportunities in equity and inclusive education.</p> <p>System leaders encourage and facilitate professional growth opportunities for staff to develop knowledge and skills in equity and inclusive education.</p>	<p>Schools and departments establish a learning community approach to support shared learning among members of the school community.</p> <p>Staff at all levels receive ongoing, staff-driven, and more intensive professional learning in specialized areas of diversity and inclusion and capacity building of individuals and of the system.</p> <p>Schools and departments within a board identify and draw upon the experience and expertise of schools and departments of other boards to enhance their knowledge, skills and practices.</p> <p>Students participate in leadership opportunities in equity and inclusive education to acquire the skills to serve as mentors and role models with their peers.</p>





Notes

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