

TITLE: ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON EQUITY

Date Authorized: 30 January 1998

Last Revised:

Last Reviewed:

COMMITMENT TO INDIGENOUS RIGHTS, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND EQUITY

The Board recognizes its responsibility to ensure that the development of procedures and the associated work promotes and protects Indigenous rights, human rights, and equity. The Board will strive to address and eliminate discrimination and structural and systemic barriers for students, staff, and community.

1.0 OBJECTIVE-RATIONALE

To establish an Advisory Committee on Equity (ACE) to advise the Board of Trustees in fulfilling its commitment to providing an equitable and inclusive educational and work environments that support student achievement and well-being. **under Policy P.098.CUR Equity and Inclusive Education.**

2.0 DEFINITIONS

Please refer to Appendix A for a full list of definitions used in this policy.

3.0 POLICY GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 *The Board recognizes that individuals hold multiple identities which shape their experiences and acknowledges the unique and complex ways that people experience discrimination.***
- 3.2 *The Board believes an Advisory Committee on Equity can contribute to building equitable learning and working environments within the OCDSB for groups experiencing discrimination, honouring their district voices and working towards a better future for all.***

Mandate

- 3.3 *The Advisory Committee on Equity (the Committee) shall foster a culture of respect, recognizing the dignity of all, and commit to addressing discrimination***

and oppression through community partnership and collaboration with the groups directly impacted.

Terms of Reference

- 3.4 The Advisory Committee on Equity shall:
- (a) provide strategic policy and program advice and/or recommendations on matters of diversity which support equitable education access and outcomes, student learning and well-being, and the development of citizenship;
 - (b) advise the Board of Trustees on the review, development, implementation, and monitoring of all policies and its equity strategy and programs;
 - (c) advise the Board of Trustees on the identification and elimination of systemic barriers **contributing to disparities and disproportionality in student achievement and well-being** to providing bias-aware education, including power dynamics. **This includes outcomes of policies and programs that may result in systemic** discrimination and marginalization that may impact the lived experience of **for** members of the school community;
 - (d) liaise with community stakeholders **partners** by actively engaging parents/**guardians/caregivers** and other community partners to help create and sustain a safe and inclusive learning environment; and
 - (e) advise the Board on potential budget implications that may help or hinder its commitment to foster**ing** equitable and inclusive education.

4.0 SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES

Composition

- 4.1 The Committee shall be composed of **up to 19-17** members, including ~~eleven (11)~~ **thirteen (13)** voting members and up to ~~eight (8)~~ **four (4)** non-voting members.
- 4.2 The ~~eleven (11)~~ **thirteen (13)** voting members shall include:
- (a) seven ~~(7)~~ **(47)** individual **school community** members;
 - (b) four ~~(74)~~ **(74)** community members representative of community **equity** organizations, agencies, groups and/or associations; and
 - (c) **two (2) secondary school student representatives.**
- 4.3 The non-voting members shall include:
- (a) up to two (2) Trustees as appointed by the Board of Trustees;

- (b) one (1) Superintendent of Instruction or designate, **who will act as the designate for the Director of Education**;
- (c) one (1) Diversity & Equity Coordinator **representative of the central department responsible for Equity**;

and may include:

- ~~(d) one (1) representative appointed by the Student Senate;~~
- (e) one (1) representative appointed by Ottawa-Carleton Elementary Teachers' Federation; and
- ~~(f) one (1) representative appointed by Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation.~~
- ~~(g) one (1) representative of a local post-secondary institution.~~

4.4 Non-voting members of the Committee shall have all the rights and obligations of voting members except for moving, seconding, and voting on a motion, and counting for quorum.

Membership Criteria

- 4.5 ~~This list may be changed or expanded to reflect the District's demographic composition and its equity and inclusive education priorities.~~
- 4.6 All **prospective members of** the Committee, **including representatives of equity organizations**, shall **should** have a strong interest in and commitment to student achievement and well-being and have:
 - (a) knowledge and understanding of ~~the link between~~ how equity and inclusive education **supports student achievement and well-being**;
 - (b) experience in advancing and protecting equity and human rights;**
 - (c) the ability to work effectively and collaboratively with representatives from various communities who may have diverse opinions and perspectives;
 - (d) ~~tact, diplomacy and a respect for others;~~ **the ability to demonstrate and model dignity and respect;**
 - (e) an enthusiastic **a productive and professional** approach and ability to motivate and support others;
 - (f) **an understanding of the requirement** ~~the ability and willingness to attend~~ **regular** meetings during the school year.

4.7 Every effort shall be made to ensure that **In addition to the above**, the four **seven (47)** individual **school community** members are: **shall**:

- (a) **be directly connected to supporting students in an OCDSB school** parents/guardians with children enrolled in the OCDSB who represent the diverse demographic composition of the District;
- (b) including **be** membership in **of** groups protected from discrimination under the OCDSB Policy P.147.GOV Human Rights and the *Human Rights Code*. the following identities:
- (c) ~~members of the following identities:~~
 - (i) ~~Creed-based;~~
 - (ii) ~~Disability (e.g., physical, mental, and learning disabilities);~~
 - (iii) ~~First Nations, Métis or Inuit;~~
 - (iv) ~~Immigrants and newcomers to Canada;~~
 - (v) ~~LGBTQ2S+; and/or~~
 - (vi) ~~Racialized Groups.~~

4.8 Community **equity** organizations, agencies, groups and/or associations seeking membership on **the Committee** shall be **those whose mandate or purpose includes supporting** representative of communities experiencing systemic barriers and marginalization **or organizations with**, and have diversity, equity and inclusion-centered mandates.

- (a) ~~Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN);~~
- (b) ~~Children's Aid Society;~~
- (c) ~~Coalition of Community Health and Resource Centers of Ottawa;~~
- (d) ~~Family SerCos Ottawa;~~
- (e) ~~Lebanese and Arab Social SerCos Agency;~~
- (f) ~~Ottawa Chinese Community SerCo Center;~~
- (g) ~~Ottawa Community Immigrant SerCos Organization (OCISO);~~
- (h) ~~Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership (OLIP);~~
- (i) ~~Ottawa Police SerCo;~~
- (j) ~~Pathways to Education;~~

- (k) ~~Rainbow Alliance are en-ciel;~~
- (l) ~~Somali Center For Family SerCos;~~
- (m) ~~Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health ; and/or~~
- (n) ~~Youth SerCos Bureau.~~

Term of Office

- 4.9 The term of office for a voting member of the Committee shall **be two (2) years, beginning on November 15 and ending on November 14 of the second following year.**
- (a) **In order to assist with continuity, the Membership Sub-Committee will assign lengths of terms of office in a staggered approach, ensuring that no more than one-half of the members' terms will expire each year.**
 - (b) **School community** individual members may serve for no more than two (2) consecutive terms of office.
 - (c) Community **equity** organizations or agencies may serve multiple consecutive terms but an individual representative of the organization or agency may serve for no more than two (2) consecutive terms of office.
- 4.10 Non-voting members **shall be** ~~are determined~~ **confirmed** annually.

Appointment of Members

- 4.11 **The Committee** ~~ACE~~ shall review its membership needs as required and **annually** create a Membership Sub-Committee that includes the ~~Chair and Co-Chairs~~, plus up to three (3) **voting** members, as nominated by the Committee.
- 4.12 The Membership Sub-Committee shall,
- (a) **annually convene to review membership, including members whose terms are set to expire, and initiate a membership campaign to attract prospective members;**
 - (b) **identify** community agencies, ~~groups or associations~~ **equity** organizations that meet the criteria stipulated in section 4.7 of this policy **above** and best meet the needs of the ~~Committee~~;
 - (c) post a notice inviting applications for appointment of individual **school community** members **and community equity organizations;**
 - (d) **receive the results of the membership campaign run by Board Services and invite identified review the applications/submissions;**

- ~~(e) put forward the names of a representative and an alternate;~~
- (f) create a waiting list of both school community members and community equity organizations to be accessed when a vacancy arises during the term; and**
- (g) submit a recommendation to the Committee for the appointment of new **and returning individual and community organization** members using a fair, **transparent,** and equitable process.

Vacancies

- 4.13 A vacancy in the membership of the Committee shall not prevent the Committee from delivering on its mandate.
- 4.14 A member shall **vacate** ~~lose~~ their seat if absent from three consecutive regular meetings of the Committee without notice.
- 4.15 In the event that a voting member vacates their seat during the appointed term, the Committee **shall make every effort to** ~~may~~ fill the position for the remainder of the term. **To choose a new voting member, the** Committee shall use **a waiting list created by the Membership Sub-committee.**
- 4.16 To replace a non-voting member, the Board ~~Student Senate~~ or the District shall appoint another individual to the position, **as applicable.** ~~Where the non-voting member is a Trustee, the Board of Trustees shall make the appointment.~~

Roles and Responsibilities of Members

- 4.17 All members of the Committee shall:
 - (a) demonstrate a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusive education **in fulfilling the mandate of the Committee.** ~~in the work of the Committee and the District;~~
 - (b) participate in meetings and related activities **maintaining respectful behaviour throughout all forms of communication, ensuring that differences in positions or perspectives are discussed with care, compassion, and humanity;**
 - (c) review all relevant material prior to the Committee meetings;
 - ~~(d) participate in Committee and sub-committees work (as required);~~
 - (e) maintain the focus of discussions and decisions on the impacts on student well-being and achievement; and**

(f) maintain a District-wide focus in all discussions safeguarding the privacy of students and staff; and

(g) when representing the Committee at other committees or the Board, fairly represent the breadth of perspectives shared in Committee meetings.

(h) ~~as stipulated in provision 3.1 of this policy.~~

4.18 In addition to the above, **the** community agencies, **equity** organizations, ~~groups and/or associations,~~ and the student senator shall act as a liaison between **the Committee** and their respective community groups or organizations.

4.19 Community **equity** agencies, organizations, ~~groups and/or associations~~ with membership on the Committee shall appoint a representative and an alternate to replace the named representative if the representative is unable to attend a meeting.

(a) Temporary substitution of a representative by ~~an~~ duly authorized alternate during the course of a meeting **is allowed if approved by the Committee and the organization** shall be allowed.

4.20 The Committee shall elect **two** a Co-Chairs and a Vice Chair from amongst its eleven (11) voting members, **at least one of whom shall be a school community member.**

4.21 All **eleven** (11) voting members are eligible to run for the Co-Chair position.

4.22 The Chair **Co-Chair(s)** shall:

(a) plan the agenda, in consultation with the Superintendent;

(b) ~~preside over the Committee meetings~~ **lead the agenda during the Committee meetings and maintain the specific directives within this policy;**

(c) act as a spokesperson and representative for the Committee in communicating with the Director of Education, Board of Trustees, and the public;

(d) review the minutes before they are circulated to members; and

(e) share information and reports received from various stakeholders **partners** with the District, e.g., community organizations, individuals representing affected ~~minoritized groups, etc.~~

Meetings

4.23 The Committee shall meet ~~at least six (6) times in each school year.~~ **Any additional meetings shall occur only with the approval of the Chair and in recognition of the availability of staff and Board resources.**

4.24 A notice of each regular meeting shall be provided to all members of the Committee at least five (5) days before the meeting.

- 4.25 Committee members may participate in a meeting **electronically** remotely.
- 4.26 **A Co-Chair of the Committee and the Director's designate shall be physically present in the meeting room at every regular meeting of the Committee.**
- 4.27 **Notwithstanding the above, a Co-Chair may participate in a meeting of the Committee by electronic means if the other Co-chair will be physically present in the meeting room or if another member of the Committee, who is also a Board member, will be physically present in the meeting room.**
- 4.28 **When participating electronically, participants shall adhere to the OCDSB standards of electronic participation.**
 (a) ~~it will be recorded in the attendance for the meeting.~~
- 4.29 All meetings of the Committee will be open to the public and be held at a location that is accessible to the public.
- 4.30 The Committee shall establish practices **that provide for the participation of members of the public and the OCDSB community.** ~~welcome and encourage the participation of the public, at the discretion of the Chair.~~
- 4.31 Additional employees of the District may be invited to attend, participate, and act as a resource to the Committee in a non-voting and non-membership capacity, as determined on an as needed basis.
- 4.32 The rules of order for the conduct of meetings shall be consistent with the OCDSB By-Laws and Standing Rules.

Quorum

- 4.33 A meeting of the Committee achieves quorum when a majority of voting members are present. Majority is defined as fifty (50) percent plus one (1).
- 4.34 **Notwithstanding the above, a meeting of the Committee may proceed without achieving a quorum and will not include any formal decision making process or outcomes.**

Voting Decision Making

- 4.35 **The preferable decision-making model for ACE is consensus. However, it is recognized that, at the discretion of the Co-chair, voting may be required from time to time.**
- 4.36 **When a vote is taken,** each **individual** voting member **and community equity organization** is entitled to one (1) vote.

Sub-committees

4.37 The Committee may establish sub-committees as it deems appropriate to the achievement of its mandate. Sub-committees may include voting and non-voting members and non-members.

4.38 *Updates from the sub-committee discussion and work shall be shared during the next full Committee meeting and will be included in the minutes of the Committee meeting.*

Reporting **Accountability**

4.39 The Secretary records of **Committee meeting** minutes and reports **shall be maintained and posted publicly on the District website.**

(a) ~~distribute Agendas and Minutes of all meetings to Board SerCos and committee members at least five (5) business days prior to the next meeting; and~~

(b) ~~ensure the minutes are provided to Board Services for distribution to the Board of Trustees and for posting on the District website.~~

4.40 The Committee shall provide an annual report to the Board of Trustees which summarizes its activities and achievements during the past year and its plans for the upcoming year.

4.41 The Director of Education shall have the authority to establish procedures that are consistent with this policy.

5.0 APPENDICES

Appendix A: Policy Definitions

6.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

[The Education Act, 1998, section 8.1 \(29.1\)](#)

[OHRC Policy on ableism and Discrimination based on disability](#)

[OHRC Policy on accessible education for students with disabilities](#)

[OHRC Policy and guidelines on racism and racial Discrimination](#)

[OHRC Policy and guidelines on Discrimination on the basis of family status](#)

[OHRC Policy on preventing Discrimination on the basis of creed](#)

[OHRC Policy on preventing Sexual and gender-based harassment](#)

[OHRC Policy on Discrimination because of pregnancy and breastfeeding](#)

[OHRC Policy on Discrimination against older persons because of age](#)

[OHRC Policy on preventing Discrimination because of gender identity and gender expression](#)

[OHRC Policy on Discrimination and Harassment because of sexual orientation](#)

[Ontario's Equity Action Plan](#) , 2017

Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119, "[Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools](#)", ~~June 24, 2009~~ **2013**

[Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, 2009](#)

[OCDSB By-Laws and Standing Rules](#)

OCDSB Policy [P.001.GOV: Policy Development and Management](#)

OCDSB Policy [P.010.GOV: Community Involvement on Board Standing Committees](#)

OCDSB Policy [P.018.GOV: Electronic Meetings of the Board and Committees](#)

OCDSB Policy P.048.GOV: Board Guiding Principles

OCDSB Policy [P.065.GOV Advisory Committees to the Board](#)

~~OCDSB Policy P.086.CUR Religious Accommodation~~

OCDSB Policy [P.098.CUR: Equity and Inclusive Education](#)

OCDSB Policy [P 147 GOV - Human Rights](#)

APPENDIX A: POLICY DEFINITIONS

In this policy,

Board means Board of Trustees.

Community Agencies or Equity Organizations mean entities focused on serving youth and families with a diversity, equity, low income or inclusion lens or ~~Community groups or associations~~ mean groups representative of communities that experience systemic barriers and marginalization.

Creed means a religious or non-religious belief system, *including Indigenous spirituality and cultural practices*, which influences a person's identity, worldview and way of life. A creed:

- is sincerely, freely and deeply held;
- integrally linked to a person's identity, self-definition and fulfillment;
- is a particular and comprehensive, overarching system of belief that governs one's conduct and practices;
- addresses ultimate questions of human existence, including ideas about life, purpose, death, and the existence or non-existence of a Creator and/or a higher or different order of existence; and
- has some "nexus" or connection to an organization that professes a shared system of belief.
- ~~According to the Human Rights Code, creed includes the spiritual beliefs and practices of indigenous cultures.~~

Diversity refers to 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, creed, sex, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status.

Discrimination means any form of unequal treatment based on a Protected Ground, whether imposing extra burdens or denying benefits. It may be intentional or unintentional. It may involve direct actions that are discriminatory on their face, or it may involve rules, policies, practices, procedures, or systems that appear neutral, but disadvantage certain groups of people.

Discrimination may take obvious forms or it may happen in very subtle ways. Even if there are many factors affecting a decision or action, if discrimination is one factor, that is a violation of this policy.

Discrimination may happen because of perceptions about a person based on a Protected Ground or because of association with a person or group with characteristics that are a Protected Ground.

Engaging in a Hate-related Behaviour and Harassment are types of discrimination.

District means the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB).

~~Equity goes beyond treating people the same and takes into account their individual needs and differences.~~ **Equity** means the fairness of treatment and processes by the removal of systemic Barriers, disparity, and disproportionality between groups using extra and positive measures to bring about equal access to opportunities and benefits in society. It does not mean treating everyone the same.

Inclusive Education refers to 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.

LGBTQ2S+ 2SLGBTQI+ means Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning, Two-Spirit, and additional sexual and gender identities.

School-OCDSB Community refers to students, parents/guardians, trustees, staff, contractors and service providers, volunteers and community members. **OCDSB Community** means trustees, committee members, council members, staff members, students, parents/guardians/caregivers, permit holders, vendors, service providers, contractors, volunteers, visitors, and all other persons learning, working, or accessing services in the OCDSB environment.

Systemic barriers are policies, practices or procedures that result in some people or groups of people receiving unequal access and/or outcomes or being excluded. **Systemic Discrimination** means patterns of behaviour, policies, or practices that are part of the social or administrative structures of an organization, which create or perpetuate a position of relative disadvantage for groups because of a Protected Ground.