

SUPERIOR-GREENSTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Section SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS

Policy Name EQUITY AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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POLICY

The Superior-Greenstone District School Board believes that the continuous improvement of our educational system requires the creation and maintenance of safe, fair, positive, supportive and respectful learning communities. To this end, the Superior-Greenstone District School Board supports quality education that is equitable and inclusive for all and that builds on the diversity of the cultures present in its school communities.

DEFINITIONS

“diversity” means the presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes within a group, organization, or society. The dimensions of the diversity include, but are not limited to, ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender identity, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation and socio-economic status.

“equity” means a condition or state of fair, inclusive, and respectful treatment of all people. Equity does not mean treating people the same without regard for individual differences.

“inclusive education” mean 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.

RATIONALE

The objective of the Equity and Inclusive Education strategy is to understand, identify and eliminate the individual and systemic biases, barriers and power dynamics that limit our students' prospects for learning, growing, and fully contributing to society.

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

The Superior-Greenstone District School Board recognizes, however, that various groups in our society have been treated inequitably and disadvantaged. Some of the discrimination has been based on race, ethnicity, faith, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, intellectual ability, physical ability, cultural ancestry, etc. While some of these barriers are considered prohibitive grounds of discrimination under the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, still others are considered barriers to student learning and achievement and their elimination is supported under the Ministry of Education's provincial Code of Conduct.

PROCEDURES

1. The principles of equity, valuing diversity and inclusion will be incorporated into all aspects of the board including the development, implementation and review of goals, policies, practices, programs and personal and professional interactions
2. A board wide Implementation Plan for Equity and Inclusive Education will be developed for implementation.
3. All professional development activities for staff will reflect and support equity and inclusion in school communities.
4. Contributions from our diverse communities to school life and to the promotion of equity and inclusive education are valued and encouraged.
5. School curriculum reflects the rich diversity of our communities in meeting and supporting the learning needs of all students.
6. All students are provided with equitable opportunities to be successful in our board in that institutional barriers to success are identified and removed.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. All members of the school community feel safe, comfortable, accepted and valued.
2. Equity of opportunity and equity of access to the board's programs, services and resources is central to enhancing educational excellence.
3. Diversity will be valued, reflected, and celebrated within the learning environments of the board through community partnerships.
4. Student achievement initiatives will focus on closing the gap and raising the bar for all students in an equitable and inclusive manner.
5. The qualities of equity, diversity and inclusivity will be fundamental to all current and future board programs and support initiatives.