



**1. Rationale**

The Simcoe County District School Board is committed to excellence in education and equitable educational outcomes for all students and to the elimination of discrimination as outlined in Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy and Ontario Ministry of Education Policy / Program Memorandum No. 119, "Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools". The board upholds the principles of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms outlined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Constitution Act, 1982 and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

**2. Policy Statement**

The Simcoe County District School Board is committed to an equitable education system that upholds and reflects the principles of fair and inclusive education which permeates policies, programs, practices and operations. The board recognizes that equity of opportunity and equity of access to the full range of programs, the delivery of services and resources are critical to the achievement of successful educational and social outcomes for those served by our school system as well as for those who serve our system.

**3. Definitions**

- 3.1 Equity is 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.
- 3.2 Inclusive Education 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.
- 3.3 Diversity is 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, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation and socio-economic status.

**4. Guidelines**

The board regards the following eight areas of focus as important in an equitable and inclusive educational environment:

**4.1 Board policies, programs, guidelines and practices**

The board is committed to serving students, families and staff in diverse communities by including the principles of equity and inclusion into all aspects of its operations, structures, policies, procedures, guidelines, practices and programs consistent with the principles of the Code.

**4.2 Shared and committed leadership**

The board is committed to establishing and maintaining collaborative relationships with diverse communities so that the perspectives and experiences of all students, are recognized to help meet their needs.

**4.3 School – community relationships**

The board is committed to establishing and maintaining collaborative relationships with diverse communities so that the perspectives and experiences of all students, families and staff are recognized and addressed.

**4.4 Inclusive curriculum and assessment practices**

The board is committed to implementing an inclusive curriculum and to reviewing resources, instruction, and assessment and evaluation practices in order to identify and address discriminatory biases so that each student may maximize his or her learning potential.

**4.5 Religious accommodation**

The board acknowledges each individual's right to follow or not to follow religious beliefs and practices free from discriminatory or harassing behaviour and is committed to taking all reasonable steps to provide religious accommodation to students and staff.

**4.6 School climate and the prevention of discrimination and harassment**

The board is committed to the principle that every person within the school community is entitled to a respectful, positive school climate and learning environment, free from all forms of discrimination and harassment.

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4.7 Professional learning

The board is committed to providing administrators, staff, students and other members of the school community with opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviour needed to identify and eliminate discriminatory biases and systemic barriers under the Code.

4.8 Accountability and transparency

The board is committed to assessing and monitoring progress in implementing the Strategy; to embedding the principles into all board policies, guidelines, practices and programs and to communicating these results to the community.

5. **Administrative Procedures**

The Director of Education is authorized to establish administrative procedures to implement this policy, which shall be considered guidelines pursuant to the Education Act.

**ADOPTED: JUNE 23, 2010**