

1. Rationale

Policy 3135 – Human Rights and Equity and its related procedures outline the Simcoe County District School Board’s (SCDSB) continued commitment to providing education and awareness, and to the promotion and protection of the human rights and equity of staff and students, in compliance with the *Ontario Human Rights Code* (OHRC), the *Education Act*, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHS Act). This policy should be read in conjunction with the SCDSB’s commitment to ensuring equitable and inclusive learning and working environments as set out in Policy 3120 – Employment Equity and Policy 3130 – Equity and Inclusive Education.

2. Policy

- 2.1 It is the policy of the SCDSB to continue to build and maintain a culture of respect for human rights and equity, including identifying and addressing systemic barriers and inequitable or discriminatory practices, to ensure human rights are protected in compliance with the OHRC.
- 2.2 It is the policy of the SCDSB to ensure human rights obligations are met by providing leadership, guidance, and assistance with the resolution of complaints in a confidential, fair, just, and equitable manner.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 [Human rights-related definitions](#) can be found on the Human Rights and Equity Office (HREO) page on the SCDSB website.

4. Guidelines

The SCDSB has a duty to maintain an environment respectful of human rights and free of harassment for all persons employed and served by it. Under the authority of the Director of Education, the SCDSB shall continue to take action to promote and protect the human rights of staff and students to eliminate harassment, discrimination, and reprisal in employment and education.

- 4.1 All SCDSB staff and students have the right to:
 - 4.1.1 meaningful access to equitable and inclusive employment and education free from discrimination and harassment based on any protected grounds under the OHRC; and,
 - 4.1.2 have their dignity and rights respected including in any disciplinary process.
- 4.2 Accommodations
 - 4.2.1 Where the need for an accommodation is substantiated, based on any protected grounds under the OHRC, the SCDSB will provide reasonable accommodations short of the point of undue hardship.

- 4.3 Discrimination, harassment, bullying, and hate-related behaviour
 - 4.3.1 Discrimination, harassment, bullying, and hate-related behaviour, on protected grounds under the OHRC in any form (e.g., by conduct, electronic, printed, or verbal) shall not be tolerated or condoned.

- 4.4 Complaints about policy violations
 - 4.4.1 Complaints about violations of Policy 3135 should be made in writing, and filed with the HREO for review, investigation, mediation, or other resolution by the Human Rights and Equity Manager (HREM) within the same academic year as the incident(s) for which the complaint is being filed.
 - 4.4.2 The HREM will determine whether a policy has been violated based on the findings in the investigator's report. If a policy has been violated, the HREM (in consultation, as appropriate, with Human Resource Services or the Director of Education or their designate) will determine the appropriate consequences for the person(s) who violated the policy. The HREM will be responsible for monitoring the outcome of the complaint.

- 4.5 Reprisal(s)
 - 4.5.1 Every person has the right to claim and enforce their right to be free of discrimination and harassment. No person shall be negatively treated or experience retaliation or reprisal for bringing forward a human rights or harassment concern or complaint, providing information related to a complaint, supporting a person involved in a human rights or harassment complaint, or helping to resolve a complaint. Complaints of reprisal should be brought to the attention of the HREO, as soon as reasonably possible, for investigation and resolution.

- 4.6 Anonymity and confidentiality
 - 4.6.1 Information about accommodations and accommodation requests shall be treated in a confidential manner by the SCDSB, subject to any requirements at law.
 - 4.6.2 Concerns and complaints with respect to the OHRC shall be treated in a confidential manner by the SCDSB, subject to any requirements at law.

- 4.7 Participation and inclusion
 - 4.7.1 The SCDSB shall prioritize engagement with staff and students to include and honour diverse voices, knowledge, identities, and experiences within the school community.
 - 4.7.2 The SCDSB shall create regular opportunities for dialogue with school communities to seek feedback and advance human rights-based organizational change.

- 4.8 Transparency and accountability
 - 4.8.1 The SCDSB shall ensure that staff, students, and parents/guardians are made aware of this policy and are held accountable for complying with this policy and all related procedures.

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4.8.2 The SCDSB shall review its policies, practices, and procedures as part of its commitment in identifying and removing barriers within the system to ensure that all students and staff are offered supportive, inclusive, and respectful learning and working environments.

4.9 System communication

4.9.1 The SCDSB Employment Equity Action Plan (EEAP) ensures that staff reflect diverse identities, lived experiences, and perspectives to assist the SCDSB in best serving our diverse community.

The SCDSB shall deliver ongoing professional development and outreach on human rights, equity, anti-oppression, anti-racism, anti-bias, and inclusion in support of the implementation of this policy, and to ensure everyone understands their rights and responsibilities.

5. Linkage to Employment Equity Action Plan

The SCDSB is committed to creating a culture of belonging, engagement, and success for all through deliberate actions and an intentional focus in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and Indigeneity, in alignment with the goals of the SCDSB EEAP. Current employment policies, practices, and protocols have been examined, and potential barriers have been removed to the hiring, advancement, and full inclusion of SCDSB employees. All SCDSB employees must have equal access to opportunities and participate fully in the workforce, inclusive of race, religion, ethnicity, ability, gender, and all of the protected grounds under the OHRC. All SCDSB employees are to engage in this work to create a human rights culture, free from systemic discrimination.

6. Administrative procedures

The Director of Education is authorized to provide the administrative procedures necessary to implement this policy.

**ADOPTED AUG. 31, 2022
REVISED APRIL 24, 2024**

[APM A1460](#)
[APM A4008](#)
[APM A4075](#)
[APM A7125](#)
[APM A7230](#)
[APM A7635](#)
[APM A9000](#)