

4075 Diversity and Inclusion

Policy 4075 STATUS: In Development

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Board Approved:

Last Revised:

Description:

Diversity and Inclusion practices in SD 59 Peace River South are based on the principles of respect, acceptance, safety and equity. This policy complies with district policies, codes of conduct, the BC Human Rights Code and the School Act.

The Board of Education of SD 59 recognizes that visible and invisible minorities exist and the Board of Education is committed to creating an inclusive and equitable environment for all who learn and work here.

The Board of Education recognizes that there needs to be specific planning in order to ensure equity for the following students:

- Aboriginal (Indigenous) Students and other visible and invisible minorities that experience inequity;
- Students with Diversities (significant learning needs, English Language Learners);
- Students with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions.

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All members of SD 59 Peace River South have the right to expect that policies, regulations, processes, programs and communication are inclusive and respectful. Consideration will be given to visible and invisible diversities including but not limited to: race, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, culture and socio-economic status.

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions will apply:

Aboriginal (Indigenous) Students: students who self-identify as aboriginal

Visible Minorities: persons, other than aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour

Invisible Minorities: A group whose minority status is not always immediately visible, i.e. whose members are not known to each other is unorganized minority group having same thoughts, culture, creed race etc.

Students with Diversities: Students who have significant difficulties in accessing the regular curriculum and need targeted support in order to reach their personal potential. This includes students with significant difficulties in the following domains: intellectual, physical, social & emotional, behaviour, communication, self-determination and for new English language Learners.

Gender Identity: refers to lived gender: this is the gender that the student expresses publically while at school, socializing, accessing services, and in the broader community. One's gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth.

Gender Expression: the way in which a person expresses their gender identity, typically through their appearance, dress, and behavior.

Sexual Orientation: is an enduring pattern of romantic or sexual attraction (or a combination of these) to persons of the opposite sex or gender, the same sex or gender, or to both sexes or more than one gender.

There is an expectation that all members of the school community will:

- Adhere to a code of conduct that is educative, preventive and restorative in practice and response;
- Foster school cultures that are responsive to the diverse social and cultural needs of individuals and groups;
- Understand how the characteristics of diversity impact the access to, and outcomes of, education;
- Recognize the injustice of marginalization and promote human rights; and
- Participate in the ongoing development of practices that promote equitable treatment for everyone, cultivating mutual respect and a sense of belonging.

There is an expectation that specific and intentional planning occurs in order to ensure equity for the following students:

- Aboriginal (Indigenous) Students and other visible and invisible minorities that experience inequity:
 - As we strive to create racism free environments in our schools we must recognize that racism is pervasive in our society and present in our schools. Without that recognition, we deny the lived experience of aboriginal (indigenous) students and other students, staff and community members. We must ensure that our practices in the district do not perpetuate stereotyping, discrimination, or inequality. Creating a racism free environment requires:
 - Knowledge of the stereotype assumptions and practices which can operate in the classroom, hallways and school grounds (explicit bias);
 - Self -awareness of the ways in which we, as individuals, may perpetuate these stereotype assumptions and how they impact our decisions and actions (implicit bias)
 - Development of skills necessary to challenge racism through the honoring of diversity;
 - School district personnel will acknowledge Treaty 8 Territory at the opening of important functions;
 - The district will ensure that the Aboriginal Education Department continues to provide a program that is above and beyond K-12 education and constantly monitors achievement data to address any areas of inequity:
 - Partnerships are maintained between Saulteau First Nation, Moberly First Nation, the Metis community and all of our aboriginal families.
- Students with Diversities:
 - Advocate for each student's success through respectful support, recognition of individual learning needs in all domains and preparation for life-long learning in the development of individual educational or learning plans;
 - Placement in the learning environment that best supports growth to independence;
 - Ensure a collaborative planning model as a means to align our practices to support student learning.

- Students with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions will have:
 - Right to privacy;
 - Rights to determine their own name and pronouns;
 - Choices for gender specific (traditional) washrooms as well as gender neutral washrooms. Students may choose to use a traditional bathroom based on their lived gender as defined in this policy;
 - Support and advocacy;
 - Education: provide information, resources etc.