

STUDENTS

Voluntary, Confidential First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Students Self-Identification

1.0 Objective

- 1.1 The purpose of this procedure is to outline the process the Durham District School Board (DDSB) has developed to provide the opportunity for parents/guardians of Indigenous students to voluntarily, confidentially self-identify as having First Nation, Métis and Inuit (Indigenous) ancestry and how this data is used to inform programming for Indigenous students.
- 1.2 The identification, collection and use of Indigenous student achievement data serves to identify, address, and eliminate anti-Indigenous racism and discrimination and develop, implement, and evaluate programs and strategies that increase Indigenous student well-being, and achievement.
- 1.3 All data collected will be used in agreement with the Municipal Freedom of Information, Privacy Act, Anti-Racism Act and other applicable legislation. All personal information is treated as confidential, and is collected, used, disclosed and disposed of only in accordance with relevant legislation and regulations. Individual data will not be reported and will be used to develop and implement supportive programming and to identify, prevent and address discriminatory barriers.

2.0 Definitions

In this procedure,

- 2.1 **Board:** The Board of Trustees for the DDSB.
- 2.2 **District:** the corporate entity of the Durham District School Board.
- 2.3 **School Leader:** any individual or group constituted under the Education Act and in a position of authority by the DDSB to implement, administer, or manage policies and procedures of the Ontario Ministry of Education and the DDSB.
- 2.4 **Indigenous Peoples:** Indigenous has become the more widely accepted general term to refer to First Nations, Métis and Inuit people.
- 2.5 **Colonialism:** Colonialism is a practice of domination, which involves the subjugation of one people to another. Settler colonialism - such as in the case of Canada - is the unique process where the colonizing population does not leave the territory, asserts ongoing sovereignty to the land, actively seeks to assimilate the Indigenous populations and extinguish their cultures, traditions and ties to the land.
- 2.6 **Anti-Colonial:** intentional and critical analysis of structures, processes and decision making to identify, challenge and address or change (and not perpetuate) the legacies and ongoing harmful impacts of colonialism.

- 2.7 **Inherent Rights:** derive from Indigenous peoples political, economic and social structures and from their cultures, spiritual traditions, histories and philosophies, especially their rights to their lands, territories and resources.
- 2.8 **Self-Identification:** A process that will allow students to voluntarily and confidentially declare their ancestry as First Nations, Métis or Inuit.

3.0 Responsibilities

All employees must comply with the Indigenous Education policy and this procedure within their job duties and responsibilities, including recognizing biases discriminatory structural barriers and inequities, responding to and addressing inequities, discriminatory structural barriers and actively engaging in anti-colonial approaches and practices within their sphere of responsibility, authority and influence.

- 3.1 **Director of Education** (and designates) is responsible for the operations of the DDSB and implementing (or overseeing the implementation of) initiatives, practices and measures to support all educators in complying with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the Ontario Human Rights Code and this procedure. In addition to the responsibilities set out in the Indigenous Education Policy and related procedures, the Director of Education is responsible for:
- Ensuring that self-identification for Indigenous students is available through the on-line registration process;
 - Allocating staff and resources to address and support Indigenous student, achievement and well-being; and
 - Ensuring accurate and timely reporting of assessment data related to Indigenous student achievement and well-being.

3.2 **School Leaders:**

In addition to what is set out in this procedure, School leaders are responsible for:

- Engaging in and providing opportunities for educators to engage ongoing learning and training in understanding the Inherent rights of Indigenous peoples and recognizing and understanding the deep impacts of colonialism and how it continues today;
- Identifying and removing the ongoing impacts of colonialism and oppressive structures within their schools; and
- Fostering a safe, welcoming, respectful, inclusive, equitable and accessible learning environment that encourages Indigenous students to self-identify.

4.0 Guidelines and Considerations

Indigenous Rights

- 4.1 Indigenous peoples have the inherent right to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations, which shall be appropriately reflected in education and public information. The DDSB "shall take effective measures, in consultation and cooperation with the Indigenous peoples concerned, to combat prejudice and eliminate discrimination and to promote tolerance, understanding and good relations among Indigenous peoples and all other segments of society." (UNDRIP- Article 15).
- 4.2 Indigenous Peoples are the guardians and interpreters of their civilizations, traditions, and knowledge systems. They have the right to exercise, control, and protect their culture, intellectual properties, and knowledge (UNDRIP).

- 4.3 The district is committed to providing services and workplaces that centre human rights and equity and are safe, welcoming, respectful, inclusive, equitable and accessible, and that are free from discrimination and harassment under the Ontario Human Rights Code. Indigenous students have the right the educational services free from discrimination based on ancestry and other Human Rights Code-protected grounds.

Data Standards

- 4.4 Data collection and analysis will be consistent with the Municipal Freedom of Information, Privacy Act, Anti-Racism Act and other applicable legislation.
- 4.5 Results are not reported publicly for fewer than 15 students because it might be possible to identify individual students.
- 4.6 Individual information is not communicated unless requested by the parent/guardian of/and for their children.
- 4.7 Information collected is used only as a part of a collection where individuals cannot be specifically identified.

5.0 Procedures

5.1 Data Collection Process:

- Voluntary confidential First Nation, Métis and Inuit student self-identification occurs annually within the online registration process and at any time throughout the course of the school year through the completion of the First Nation, Métis and Inuit Self-Identification Form (Appendix A) at their home school.
- School leaders will inform parent(s)/guardian(s) and families of Indigenous students and community members about the rationale and goals of self-identification through school-based annual communication to the school community.
- Schools will ensure the update of student records in the student information system following the completion of the First Nation, Métis and Inuit Self-Identification Form.

5.2 Data Analysis and Application:

The data acquired through voluntary, confidential First Nation, Métis and Inuit student self-identification will be analysed collectively and used by the DDSB to improve education opportunities for Indigenous students. The information gathered will enable the DDSB to develop comprehensive programs to:

- Address the demographics of the Indigenous population the DDSB services;
- Examine the structures, practices and resources within schools and classrooms to identify, prevent and address barriers and anti-Indigenous racism;
- Provide innovative practices and pedagogies to bridge gaps, eliminate existing barriers to well-being, student achievement to enable all students to thrive;
- Provide opportunities for Indigenous students and families to connect with Indigenous scholars in the community;
- Increase the retention and graduation rate of Indigenous students; and
- Promote effective, respectful working relationships and partnerships with Indigenous parents/guardians and their communities

6.0 Review Process

- 6.1 The policy will be reviewed as required for its effectiveness and need for continuation and will follow the cyclical review process.
- 6.2 The voluntary, confidential First Nation, Métis and Inuit student self-identification data will be collected annually to determine program modifications required to support student achievement.

7.0 Communications and Information Accessibility

- 7.1 The Voluntary, Confidential First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Students Self-identification Procedure, will be shared with system leaders, school leaders and educators.

8.0 Reference Documents

8.1 Policies

- Indigenous Education Policy
- Equity and Inclusion Policy
- Consultative Process Policy
- Voluntary, Confidential First Nation, Métis and Inuit Student Self-Identification Policy
- Human Rights Policy

8.2 Procedures

- Indigenous Education: Teaching and Learning
- Equity and Inclusion
- Positive School Climate
- Human Rights Procedures

8.3 Other Documents

- Anishinabek Education System
- Anishinabek Education System Master Agreement
- The Ontario First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework (2007)
- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action (2015)
- The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007)
- The Ontario Human Rights Code
- Anti-Racism Act
- Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
- Charter of the United Nations
- Constitution Act
- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
- Education Act and related policy and procedure memoranda professional obligations for educators and other DDSB employee
- Building Bridges to Success for First Nation, Métis and Inuit Students – Developing Policies for Voluntary, Confidential Aboriginal Student Self-Identification: Successful Practices for Ontario School Boards
- Strengthening Our Learning Journey. Third Progress Report on the Implementation of the Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework
- Ontario Human Rights Commission: Policy on preventing discrimination based on creed
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- Durham District School Board's Guidelines and Procedures for the Accommodation Creed in Schools: An Inclusive Approach
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)

- United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC)

Appendix:

Indigenous Self ID Brochure PRINT

Effective Date

2021-09-21

Amended/Reviewed

YYYY-MM-DD