

Title: Teaching and Learning Policy

Adopted: October 19, 2026

Effective: October 22, 2026

Amended/Reviewed: N/A

1.0 RATIONALE

The Durham District School Board is committed to advancing student achievement and well-being, understood as the continuous growth of every learner across all stages of their development and strengthened through respectful partnerships with families and communities. This policy provides consistent system-wide direction for instruction, assessment, and communication, aligned with provincial legislation, Ministry expectations, and the Board's commitments to Indigenous rights, human rights, dignity, and belonging.

2.0 OBJECTIVE

The objective of this policy is to define the Board's expectations for teaching and learning so that students experience fair, responsive, and meaningful opportunities to learn, demonstrate growth, and pursue pathways for success.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Dignity: The recognition that every student is capable and must be treated with respect, fairness, and care, within learning environments that are free from discrimination and harm.

Inclusive Design: The intentional design of learning environments, instruction, and assessment to reduce barriers and support participation and growth.

Conditions for Learning: The environments, relationships, expectations, and practices that shape how students experience school. In this policy, conditions for learning include physical and emotional safety, belonging, high expectations, inclusive design, Universal Design for Learning, ethical assessment, and access to meaningful learning opportunities.

High Expectations: The shared belief and practice that all students are capable of meaningful learning, growth, and achievement when provided from the onset with appropriate support, opportunities, and conditions for success.

Ethical Assessment: Assessment practices that are fair, transparent, and responsive, using multiple sources of evidence to accurately reflect student growth and learning.

Evidence-Based Instruction: Teaching practices that draw on research, curriculum expectations, assessment information, professional judgment, and student input to improve learning outcomes.

Educator: An adult who contributes to student learning, growth, well-being, and belonging through instruction, support, guidance, relationships, or the creation of conditions for learning. Educators may include classroom teachers, educational assistants, early childhood educators, professional support staff, school leaders, and other staff who directly support students and learning.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITY

The **Board of Trustees** are responsible for the adoption, revision, or rescinding of this policy.

The **Chief Executive Officer** is responsible for the implementation, administration, and communication of this policy and may delegate operational responsibilities to appropriate staff.

5.0 APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This policy operates alongside applicable legislation, Ministry direction, and collective agreements. It does not replace or override legislated requirements related to curriculum, assessment, or employment obligations.

6.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Teaching and learning in the Durham District School Board begins with the recognition that every student is a capable learner whose dignity and rights must shape how learning is designed and experienced. Students must be supported to bring who they are and what they know into learning, encounter perspectives beyond their own, take intellectual risks, and demonstrate growth in meaningful ways. The core objective of teaching and learning in the DDSB is to provide students with the skills, knowledge and capacity to develop personal agency and maximize their potential to realize their future goals. The Board will establish and maintain the conditions necessary for this learning by identifying and addressing barriers and discriminatory practices, supporting responsive instructional and assessment practices, and using evidence, professional judgment, and students' experiences to guide improvement across the system.

7.0 POLICY DIRECTIVES

To support consistent system-wide implementation, the Chief Executive Officer directs that the following expectations are met:

7.1 Student Input, Family Partnership, and Community Connection

Structures must be in place to support reciprocal relationships among students, families, and educators, ensuring that their perspectives meaningfully inform classroom instruction.

7.2 Instructional Design and Delivery

Educators must design and deliver instruction that is inclusive, engaging, and responsive to student strengths, identities, and learning needs. Instructional practices must align with curriculum expectations, Ministry guidance and reflect current research on evidence-based approaches that support student achievement and well-being.

7.3 Ethical Assessment and Evidence of Learning

Assessment and evaluation practices must be fair, transparent, and aligned with Ministry direction. Assessment must support student learning, reflect multiple sources of evidence, and provide meaningful opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding and growth. Evaluations of student achievement must be defensible, grounded, in appropriate evidence, and based on reasonable, consistent measures of learning.

7.4 Innovation, Technology and Tools

The use of technology and innovative tools in teaching and learning must support student achievement and reflect ethical, evidence-informed practice. Their use must align with Board expectations related to privacy, data use, and equitable access to learning.

7.5 Professional Learning and Capacity Building

Professional learning must support educator capacity in effective instructional and assessment practices, inclusive design, and the responsible use of technology, and align with system priorities for student achievement and well-being. Education professionals, have a responsibility for continuous learning and improvement.

7.6 System Coherence and Alignment

Teaching and learning across the district must be informed by the Multi Year Strategic Plan, Milestones for Success, the Student Achievement Plan, and Board Policies on Indigenous education and human rights. This alignment ensures coherence, shared responsibility, and consistently high expectations across schools.

7.7 Monitoring, Accountability, and Continuous Improvement

The system will establish and maintain processes for monitoring the implementation and impact of this policy. This includes alignment with system and school-level planning, regular review of student achievement and well-being data, and responsiveness to student experience data.

Monitoring and reporting will align with Board and Ministry accountability frameworks, including the Student Achievement Plan.

8.0 EVALUATION

This policy shall be reviewed every five years to ensure continued relevance, effectiveness, alignment with strategic priorities, and compliance with legislation.

9.0 COMMUNICATION

All policies will be published on the Durham District School Board's public website in an accessible format and shared with relevant community members and education partners.

10.0 APPENDICES

N/A

11.0 REFERENCES

- 11.1 Education Act, R.S.O. 1990
- 11.2 Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
- 11.3 Ontario Human Rights Code
- 11.4 Ministry of Education Direction
 - Growing Success - Assessment, Evaluating and Reporting in Ontario Schools (2026)
 - Reporting Student Learning - Guidelines for Effective Teacher-Parent-Student Communication (2010)
- 11.5 DDSB Multi Year Strategic Plan
- 11.6 DDSB Indigenous Education Policy
- 11.7 DDSB Human Rights, Anti-Discrimination, and Anti-Racism Policy