

## BUSINESS – SCHOOL OPERATIONS

### Land Acknowledgement

#### 1.0 Objective

- 1.1 The Durham District School Board (DDSB) is committed to reconciliation and providing learning environments and workplaces that are welcoming, respectful, safe, inclusive, equitable, accessible, and free from harassment and discrimination. This procedure must be carried out in a manner that is consistent with this commitment as it aligns with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's (TRC) Calls to Action, the United Nations Declaration of the Rights on the Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and the Ontario Human Rights Code

#### 2.0 Definitions

- 2.1 Acknowledgement of the land on which we are situated is an important sign of respect, presence, assertion, and recognition of Indigenous self-determination. The Land Acknowledgement aims to:
- Bring Indigenous presence and voice to Canadian society and its institutions (e.g., schools);
  - Create an opportunity for Indigenous students and staff to begin their day within their cultural context;
  - Create an opportunity for all students and staff to acknowledge the land and waters they benefit from; and
  - Foster mutual respect and reconciliation.
- 2.2 The reconciliation framework is one in which Canada's political and legal systems, educational and religious institutions function in ways that are consistent with the principles set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), which Canada has endorsed. Together, Canadians must do more than just talking about reconciliation; we must learn how to practice reconciliation in our everyday lives—within ourselves and our families, and in our communities, governments, places of worship, schools, and workplaces. To do so constructively, Canadians must remain committed to the ongoing work of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships.
- 2.3 Acknowledging the traditional and treaty territory is one way to express our respect, gratitude, and appreciation for the Indigenous people who have inhabited and continue to live on the land we share. It is recognition of their presence both in the past and in the present. We want to take every appropriate opportunity to acknowledge the traditional and treaty territory of the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation and the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation, the traditional territories upon which the DDSB resides.
- 2.4 Treaties are legal agreements made between two or more Nations. Treaties outline the terms, relationships and conditions of settlement in Indigenous Territories. Both Settler and Indigenous Nations have a responsibility for knowing and upholding the Treaty obligations.
- 2.5 Recognition helps to create a welcome, respectful, and inclusive environment for Indigenous students, their families, and community members.

#### 3.0 Responsibilities

- 3.1 All DDSB Schools will begin each day with the Land Acknowledgement (Appendix A)
- The Land Acknowledgement is to be used at the start of the school day, prior to the playing of "O Canada".
- 3.2 All Formal DDSB Meetings will begin with the Land Acknowledgement
- Board and Committee Meetings
  - All school and system level meetings with a formal agenda
  - Official school ceremonial and milestone celebrations

- Assemblies
- School Community Council Meetings

#### **4.0 Procedures and Protocols**

- 4.1 The Land Acknowledgement is read prior to O Canada.
- 4.2 The Land Acknowledgement is read in its entirety and is not altered. It has been co-created alongside our Treaty Partners/local First Nations and we are entrusted to ensure we honour this relationship.
- 4.3 The person leading the meeting/assembly should acknowledge the land.
- 4.4 The Land Acknowledgement should be the first agenda item at all meetings and large events.
- 4.5 If a person from our Local First Nation is present at a meeting, and an integral part of the meeting/content being delivered, we would invite them to welcome us to their territory.
- 4.6 Ensure that the delivery of the land acknowledgement is shared live and that it is meaningful, consistent and authentic.
- 4.7 Ensure students/participants/attendees are attentive and respectful when the land acknowledgement is being shared.

#### **5.0 References**

- 5.1 Board Policies
  - Business – School Operations
  - DDSB Equity and Inclusion Document Policy 4107
- 5.2 Board Procedures
  - Opening and Closing Exercises (Business – School Operations)
- 5.3 Other Documents
  - Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s Final Report (2008)
  - Ontario First Nations, Metis and Inuit Education Policy Framework (2007)
  - Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action (2015)
  - United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) (2007)
  - “To Dream Together: Indigenous peoples and human rights dialogue report (2018)
  - PPM No. 119- Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusion Education Policies in Ontario Schools (2013)
  - Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982)

#### **Appendix:**

Appendix A: Land Acknowledgement (English and French)

#### **Effective Date:**

2020/11/02

#### **Amended:**