

Title: The Maxwell B. Nelson Leadership Award

Adopted: October 29, 2024

Effective: October 29, 2024

Amended/Reviewed: June 16, 2026

This procedure must be interpreted, applied, and implemented in ways that uphold Indigenous and human rights and responsibilities, promote accessibility, and prevent and address (and do not reinforce) discrimination/discriminatory barriers.

1.0 RATIONALE/OBJECTIVE

- 1.1** The Chief Executive Officer's (CEO) annual Maxwell B. Nelson Leadership award recognizes outstanding leadership demonstrated by Principals and Vice Principals.
- 1.2** Mr. Nelson was a DDSB Vice Principal from 1975-1989. In 1989, he filed a human rights complaint about his experiences of racism in the DDSB. In 1996, the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario (formerly the Board of Inquiry) found that the DDSB discriminated against Mr. Nelson based on race. Details of Mr. Nelson's journey, experiences, and impact are outlined in *Nelson v. Durham Board of Education and Don Peel*, BOI 98-014 https://archive.org/details/boi98_014.
- 1.3** This award was developed in partnership with Mr. Nelson's family members to honour his leadership, courage, vision, and the many sacrifices he made for generations that followed.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 Administration** refers to Principals and Vice Principals, who are individuals 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.
- 2.2 District** refers to the corporate entity of the Durham District School Board
- 2.3 School** community refers to students, staff, and stakeholders specifically affiliated with an individual school.
- 2.4 Staff** refers to any individual who is employed by the DDSB.

3.0 PROCEDURE

- 3.1** Nomination details will be advertised on the DDSB website, on Instagram, by

email to DDSB staff, and shared with families and community no later than April 1st each year. Nominations could be made by anyone from the school community. The nomination form will be made available online. The names of nominators may be shared with nominees. The DDSB Leadership Department will be operationally responsible for administering the nomination process, maintaining records, and coordinating communications.

3.2 Eligibility

Nominees are current, permanent members of DDSB Administration, or retired DDSB Administrators within the last 12 months of the nomination closure date. A retired nominee must not be employed by another school board. Previous recipients may be re-nominated, and self-nominations and posthumous nominations are also permitted.

3.2.1 Anyone who does not meet the eligibility criteria will be considered ineligible, and if they have previously been awarded, the award would be rescinded.

3.3 The deadline for nominations shall be near the end of April each year, unless otherwise determined by the Selection Committee.

3.4 Nominations will be considered only in the year submitted. In a year where no submissions are received by the stated deadline, the Superintendent of Leadership can allow the selection committee to review the previous year's nominees.

3.5 Criteria for Selection

- Leadership demonstrating Vision, Courage and Sacrifice;
- Disruption of current structures and typical practices to create systemic transformation;
- Courage and showing up above and beyond and giving one's self;
- Demonstrated actions/sacrifices that have led to better outcomes for others;
- Collegial networking to support more productive school systems;
- Leadership in development and implementation with a focus on Indigenous Education, Human Rights, and Safe and Respectful Workplace and Harassment Prevention;
- Collaboration with community/provincial partners to foster systemic change;
- Achievement and/or serving on DDSB or other education related committees.
- Uplifting the work of addressing anti-Black racism

3.6 Selection Committee

The Chairperson of the Selection Committee may include any of the following individuals as members of the Selection Committee:

- A family member of Maxwell B. Nelson or designate (non-voting)
- DDSB Chief Executive Officer or designate
- Superintendent as selected by the DDSB Chief Executive Officer (also Chairperson of the Committee and separate from a designate)
- Communications Manager or designate
- The recipient of the previous year's award may serve as a member of the Selection Committee for one year following receipt of the award.
- System Lead(s)
- Administrator(s)
- Facilitator(s)
- Community and Partnership Development Manager or designate

3.6.1 The chairperson shall refrain from voting unless there is a tie. Members of the selection committee cannot be nominees. Selection committee members must declare any conflicts of interest to the Chair. Depending on the nature of the conflict, the chair may excuse the member from the selection committee.

3.6.2 The result of the selection process is pending approval by the Administrative Council (AC).

3.7 Members of the selection committee are informed by the Chair that the nominee names, details of the process, and outcome are strictly confidential.

3.8 Notification The recipient(s) will be notified and invited to record video footage to celebrate their work. All nominees and their nominators will be notified of the results of the consideration of their nominations by email. Communications will notify the system by email of the award winner after the System Leadership meeting.

3.9 Recognition

The Maxwell B. Nelson Leadership Award Trophy may be presented to the winning recipient(s) by the DDSB Chief Executive Officer as part of a System Leadership meeting. A plaque commemorating the recipient's achievement and legacy will be displayed at the DDSB Education Centre.

4.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

- [Email Sample to System Announcing the Award](#) (includes Nomination form)
- [Maxwell B. Nelson Leadership Award Website Link](#)
- [Sample Award Certificate](#)