



Procedure Section: **School Administration**

**500**

Procedure Name: **Indigenous Education**

**505**

## **PROCEDURE**

# Indigenous Education

## **Purpose**

Each student has the right to an education that is free from harmful dominant narratives, implicit bias, racism, and discrimination. As a public school board, Keewatin-Patricia District School Board believes in the inherent human dignity of all people. Accordingly, the Keewatin-Patricia District School Board (KPDSB) supports the following:

## **Rationale**

The KPDSB has a responsibility to act upon, reconcile, and be accountable to addressing the impacts of colonialism. The KPDSB has a responsibility to recognize and understand the deep impacts of colonialism and how it continues today.

Indigenous Peoples' rights are lawfully protected by:

- Charter of the United Nations
- International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
- United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC)
- Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (CCRF)
- The Constitution Act of Canada (section 35)
- Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC)
- Education Act / Ontario Regulations

### Cross References

#### Policies

101, Strategic Improvement Planning  
315, Voluntary and Confidential Self Identification for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Students  
316, Evaluation and Assessment of Student Achievement  
330, Character Development  
326, Curriculum Implementation and Review  
331, Instructional Practices  
503, Equity and Inclusive Education  
505, Indigenous Education  
502, Indigenous Education Advisory Committee

Date Adopted: 19/04/2021

Dates revised: 29/10/2023

Review by:2027

## **Definitions**

“**Anti-Indigenous Racism**” refers to the ongoing race-based discrimination, negative stereotyping, and injustice experienced by Indigenous Peoples within Canada. It includes ideas and practices that establish, maintain, and perpetuate power imbalances, systemic barriers, and inequitable outcomes that stem from the legacy of colonial policies and practices in Canada.

“**Colonialism**” is the historical practice of expansion into territories already inhabited by Indigenous Peoples for the purposes of acquiring new lands and resources. This expansion is rooted in the violent suppression of Indigenous Peoples’ governance, legal, social, and cultural structures. Colonialism attempts to force Indigenous Peoples to accept and integrate into institutions that are designed to force them to conform with the structure of the colonial state.

“**First Nation Peoples**” or “**First Nations**” refers to the Indian Peoples of Canada, both status and non-status, who are descendants of the original inhabitants of Canada who lived here for millennia before explorers arrived from Europe and can also refer to a community of people as a replacement for the term ‘band’. First Nation Peoples are one of the distinct cultural groups of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada.

“**Indigenous Education Advisory Committee (IEAC)**” is the advisory council for the Keewatin-Patricia District School Board. As mandated by the Ministry of Education (2007), all school boards must have an advisory body that includes representation from First Nations, community members, and local Indigenous service delivery organizations. The IEAC advises the school boards on matters that ensure the inclusion of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit histories and perspectives in schools, systems, and school communities.

“**Indigenous Peoples**” identify as being descended from the Original Peoples of what is currently known as Canada. In this context, Indigenous Peoples include people who may identify as First Nations (status and non-status), Métis, and/or Inuit and any related identities.

“**Inuit**” refers to Indigenous Peoples primarily living in Nunavut, Nunavik (Northern Québec), Nunatsiavut (Labrador), and Inuvialuit (Western Arctic). There are 65,000 Inuit in Canada with approximately 20,000 Inuit living outside of Nunangat (Inuit homelands). Inuit means “the people”. Inuit are not covered in the Indian Act.

“**Métis**” means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is distinct from other Aboriginal Peoples, is of Historic Métis Nation ancestry, and is accepted by the Métis Nation.

“**Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO)**” means the Métis Nation of Ontario Secretariat Inc., which is a legal entity incorporated under the Ontario 6 Corporations Act, and which the MNO Communities represented by the MNO has incorporated to act as its legal and administrative team.

“**Micro-Aggression**” is defined as a comment or action that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expresses a prejudiced attitude toward a member of a marginalized group.

“**Racism**” means ideas or practices that establish, maintain, or perpetuate the racial superiority or dominance of one group over another.

## **Self-Identification**

Students and families have the option to self-identify as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit through a confidential and voluntary process (see KPDSB Policy 315 – Voluntary & Confidential Self-Identification for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Students).

- An easily accessible, transparent self-identification process, either online or in text, is available.
- All school administrators, front office staff, guidance counsellors, and support staff are aware of the process and services provided to families who self-identify.
- Supports and connections to community services are provided to families who self-identify.

## **Awareness**

Indigenous Education Advisory Committee (IEAC) will meet regularly to advise on matters pertaining to Indigenous Education.

Land acknowledgments are used in schools and KPDSB meetings/events to create awareness, understanding, and action.

KPDSB will ensure there is adequate staffing for implementing the Board Action Plan for Indigenous Education.

## **Cultural Practices**

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 (United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples). This includes:

- Non-Indigenous staff refraining from replicating, reproducing, appropriating, and/or mimicking any Indigenous cultural practice(s); and/or
- Students who self-identify being provided with opportunities to learn, exercise, and participate in activities and Indigenous knowledge education experiences with and from authentic Indigenous voice(s) (i.e., Knowledge Keepers, Elders, and Guardians, etc.).

## **Resources and Professional Development**

KPDSB will ensure resources (including visual representations) reflect positive Indigenous role models in a variety of subject areas, and a balance of perspectives of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit.

Vetted resource lists will be available for staff.

Professional development is provided to support staff in implementing Indigenous content into the curriculum, including Indigenous rights, human rights, colonialism, and anti-colonialism practices.

Ongoing professional development is provided to support teachers in implementing the mandatory curriculum. This includes training on identifying harmful dominant narratives and implicit bias in order to create spaces that are culturally safe and trauma-informed.

## **Supporting Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Cultures, and Languages**

In order to support Indigenous knowledge systems and reconciliation for Indigenous staff and students, the KPDSB is committed to:

- Creating safe and supported opportunities to hear Indigenous student voice(s);
- Ensuring that the Indigenous Student Trustee sits on the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee;
- Developing reconciliatory programs that will support and foster Indigenous knowledge perspectives and language(s) restoration, and revitalization for schools, students, and staff; and
- Ensuring the Board's commitment to equitable hiring, mentoring, retention, promotion, and succession planning include Indigenous staff.

In order to support Indigenous content in the curriculum, the KPDSB is committed to:

- Consulting, collaborating, and co-developing with the IEAC and the KPDSB Indigenous Education Lead concerning Indigenous education initiatives; and
- An effective and efficient screening process for Indigenous education consultations and presentations.

## **Anti-Racism**

The KPDSB believes that every student deserves every opportunity to succeed in the classroom and in their school community. For students to be permitted to meet their full potential, there is a

requirement for an absence of systemic barriers and the ability for students to advance with respect, dignity, and opportunity.

As such, KPDSB commits to:

- Use an anti-oppressive lens to create a safe place for learning and growth, in which each student sees themselves reflected in their education and environment;
- Actively learning and acting to ensure that racism and discrimination of any kind, as set out in the Ontario Human Rights Code, is dealt with in an expedient and just manner;
- Ensuring that all feel welcome in schools, in part by nurturing partnerships with the communities KPDSB serves, including Grand Council Treaty #3, the Métis Council, Nishnawbe Aski Nation, community Tribal Councils, and all community agencies that intersect with the school community;
- Ensuring all staff will have training on anti-oppressive practices that teach cultural sensitivity/competency, implicit bias, and highlight the impacts that social injustice, racism, and discrimination have on individuals, families, and communities;
- Ensuring policy, procedure, program, guideline, practice, strategy, and curriculum does not in any way impede Indigenous student or staff success;
- Ensuring policy, procedure, program, guideline, practice, strategy, and curriculum does not in any way support systemic barriers or exclude any racialized, or other groups, in an intentional or unintentional way;
- Ensuring policy, procedure, program, guideline, practice, strategy, and curriculum moves us forward to proactively avoid barriers to Indigenous student or staff success;
- Ensuring staff and students have the knowledge, resources, and skills they need to be anti-racist and anti-discriminatory; and
- Ensuring schools monitor for, identify, and address any micro-aggressions that are unconsciously embedded in our school systems and ensure that racism is not present in any form.