



KEEWATIN-PATRICIA DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

# Equity Action Plan





## ABOUT THE KEEWATIN-PATRICIA DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

The Keewatin-Patricia District School Board is a progressive and proud public school board that serves the communities of beautiful Northwestern Ontario. Our operating area is 75, 000 square km, which provides us with a rich diversity of student, families and communities we serve. We have schools in the communities of Kenora, Sioux Narrows, Vermilion Bay, Ear Falls, Red Lake, Dryden, Sioux Lookout, Ignace, Pickle Lake, Savant Lake and Upsala as well as serving the educational needs of many neighbouring and far north First Nation communities.

Students in a KPDSB school always come first, and programming options are continually expanding to meet the needs of a diverse student population. Many of the programs offered are the first of their kind in an Ontario school, a testament to the innovation of our staff and their dedication to our students.

Our students come from a wide variety of backgrounds, they live in houses, apartments, shelters, hostels, foster homes, group homes, hotels, and boarding homes. They each bring with them their own story, they come from urban communities, rural areas, and First Nations Communities near and far. They express themselves in their own ways, some as male/female binary and some on a fluid

continuum. Our students are cared for by different people, some are same-sex parents, some are not, some are foster families, or boarding homes, or grandparents, aunts, uncles or siblings, some students live independently. All of our students come to our schools and receive support from our caring staff.

Our staff learn from our students each day, we value the history, culture and diversity of personal stories that our students share with us. Some of our students come from the ancestral land that we are situated upon or other traditional lands in Canada. Some are descendants of historical settlers, some have migrated here from other countries, and some have come as refugees. Each student brings their own experiences with culture, faith and spirituality, or do not follow a faith or creed, and we value this diversity.

Our students are children, adolescents, young adults or adults. They experience different degrees of health and well being, they speak many languages and have a wide range of skills and talents. We try to foster these skills and help our students see the bright future ahead of them. Here at the KPDSB, we put our students first!

# RECONCILIATION IN KPDSB

*“To become this society, we need to bear witness to the past and join in a vision for the future. This must be the goal of reconciliation.”*

*~ Senator Murray Sinclair, 2015*

The Keewatin-Patricia District School Board is committed to being a leader of reconciliation in each of the communities we serve. We recognize our duty to working with Indigenous communities and partners to provide an education system that is built on equity and a commitment to respond to the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Report. Over the past year, the KPDSB has continued to demonstrate this commitment with the elimination of tuition agreements and continues to work with our partner communities to provide services, staff development and support for every child to ensure equal access to quality education.

The KPDSB has developed a variety of programs and measures in order to ensure equitable outcomes for all students in our Board. There are now Four Directions First Nations, Métis and Inuit Graduation Coach programs in nearly all of our secondary schools; designed exclusively to support Indigenous students in high school, and meant to keep graduation outcomes on track and in support of closing the outcome gap. KPDSB also continues to provide secondments for teaching and administrative staff in numerous remote First Nations schools, as part of our agreement with the Nishnawbe Aski Nation.



**“Ontario schools need to be places where everyone can succeed in a culture of high expectations. They need to be places where educators and students value diversity, respect each other, and see themselves reflected in their learning. It is particularly important to provide the best possible learning opportunities and supports for students who may be at risk of not succeeding. . . The fundamental principle driving this work is that every student has the opportunity to succeed, regardless of ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic status or other factors.”**

*(Achieving Excellence, 2014, p. 8)*

### Diversity

The presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes within a group, organization or society. The dimensions of diversity include, but are not limited to, ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation and socio-economic status.

### Equity

A condition or state of fair, inclusive, and respectful treatment of all people. Equity does not mean treating people the same without regard for individual differences.

### Inclusive Education

Education that is based on the principles of acceptance and inclusion of all students. Students see themselves reflected in their curriculum, their physical surrounding, and the broader environment in which diversity is honoured, and all individuals are respected.

## **ONTARIO'S EQUITY AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION STRATEGY: GOALS OF THE EQUITY AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION STRATEGY (AS OUTLINED IN PPM NO. 119)**

1. Shared and committed leadership by the ministry, boards, and schools to eliminate discrimination through the identification and removal of biases and barriers
2. Equity and inclusive education policies and practices to support positive learning environments that are respectful and welcoming to all
3. Accountability and transparency with ongoing progress demonstrated and communicated to the ministry and the community

Along with these goals, there are eight focus areas, each supported by KPDSB policy and procedure #503. The KPDSB is committed to achieving these equity goals, and we continue to reflect and refine our approach as we learn more about our students, families and communities. We are committed to continuing to focus on meeting the needs of each individual student and promoting success and well being for all.

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

## 8 AREAS OF FOCUS IN THE EQUITY AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION ACTION PLAN:

1 BOARD POLICIES, PROCEDURES, GUIDELINES AND PRACTICES

2 SHARED AND COMMITTED LEADERSHIP

3 SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP

4 INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

5 RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

6 SCHOOL CLIMATE AND PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

7 PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

8 ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

### Equity & Inclusive Education

- Is a foundation of excellence
- Meets individual needs
- Identifies and eliminates barriers
- Promotes a sense of belonging
- Involves the broad community
- Builds on and enhances previous and existing initiatives
- Is demonstrated throughout the system



*Equity and inclusive education aims to understand, identify, address, and eliminate the biases, barriers, and power dynamics that limit students' prospects for learning, growing, and fully contributing to society. Barriers may be related to sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, race, ethnic origin, religion, socio-economic background, physical or mental ability, or other factors. It is now recognized that several factors may intersect to create additional barriers for some students. These barriers and biases, whether overt or subtle, intentional or unintentional, need to be identified and addressed.*

# KPDSB EQUITY IN ACTION



# KPDSB EQUITY IN ACTION

## 1 BOARD POLICIES, PROGRAMS, GUIDELINES AND PRACTICES

### THE BOARD WILL:

- Commit to increasing the number of Self-Identified Indigenous staff.
- Seek further partnerships to participate in actively training future staff from within our communities, so students see more staff who are reflective of their diverse backgrounds.
- Develop an “official statement on reconciliation.”
- Create a formal policy on Land Acknowledgements.

### SCHOOLS WILL:

- Review staff and student handbooks to ensure that the principles of equity are present.
- Increase the number of land-based teaching lessons and FNMI Course credit options.
- Develop and implement strategies to engage students, parents, and the broader community actively in the review, development, and implementation of initiatives to support and promote equity and inclusive education.
- Have an equity goal in School Improvement Plans

### KPDSB IS:

- Reviewing board policies and procedures with an equity lens.
- Participating in the keeping students in school initiative with the Ministry of Education to evaluate our suspension data, policies and practices.
- Ensuring KPDSB Leadership domains include competencies for promoting equity and inclusive education.



## 2 SHARED AND COMMITTED LEADERSHIP

### THE BOARD WILL:

- Provide early identification and support for aspiring leaders for succession planning based on the KPDSB leadership Competencies.
- Identify to the Ministry and stakeholders the contact person for the Equity portfolio.

### SCHOOLS WILL:

- Demonstrate commitment through actions and resource allocation to decreasing the achievement gap for KPDSB students and the province on standardized testing.

### KPDSB IS:

- Committing at all levels of leadership to identify and remove barriers to student well being.
- Providing a shared commitment to equity in a portfolio overseen by Senior Administration in its entirety.
- Making decisions through collaborative professionalism by engaging federations, staff, and stakeholders.
- Partnering with community agencies, service organizations, colleges and universities to provide rich learning opportunities for student and staff.



### 3 SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

#### THE BOARD WILL:

- Review our existing partnerships and continue to outreach to other groups, organizations and communities who can provide new expertise and support resource sharing in new innovative ways.
- Add an Indigenous Student trustee to the KPDSB board of trustees.

#### SCHOOLS WILL:

- Actively engage students, parents, caregivers and community partners in decision making and programming decisions.
- Continue to seek partners to further enhance the learning and wraparound services provided to students and families.
- Implement strategies to review existing community partnerships so that they reflect the diversity of the broader community.
- Determine and implement strategies to increase the representation

#### KPDSB IS:

- Creating and fostering extensive partnerships with a variety of organizations to create and sustain positive school climates that support student achievement and well being.



### 4 INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

#### THE BOARD WILL:

- Review assessment, evaluation and reporting policies and procedures through an equity lens.
- Ensure that assessment, evaluation and reporting policies incorporate the principles of inclusive design.

#### SCHOOLS WILL:

- Incorporate mental health and well-being within curriculum content.
- Work with schools to increase the number of land-based teaching lessons and FNMI credit course options.

#### KPDSB IS:

- Offering Four Directions Graduation Coaches in four secondary schools.
- Providing literacy and speech support for early years learners.
- Supporting local GSA groups and school-based GSA groups.
- Integrating technology to support differentiated learning.
- Engaging SAT positions to support staff in creating and sustaining learning environments with the principles of inclusive design.
- Offering Hockey Canada Skills Academy programs across the KPDSB.



## 5 RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

### THE BOARD WILL:

- Review and revise as necessary existing religious accommodation guidelines and communicate these guidelines to the school community.
- Work with local knowledge keepers and elders to identify First Nations and Metis traditional times and include these in our religious accommodation guidelines.

### SCHOOLS WILL:

- Uphold the religious accommodation guidelines of the KPDSB.

### KPDSB IS:

- Adhering to religious accommodations as outlined in procedure 503.



## 6 SCHOOL CLIMATE AND THE PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

### THE BOARD WILL:

- Determine a school climate survey to be used Board wide and implement on a bi-annual basis starting in the spring of 2020.

### SCHOOLS WILL:

- Support implementation and analysis of data from school climate surveys.
- Use data from school climate survey to support setting equity goals for each school.
- Increase the visibility of safe spaces and inclusive environments that reflect our diverse student population.

### KPDSB IS:

- Using an anonymous bullying reporting portal, which is available on the board website and all school websites.
- Supporting administrators with the use of restorative practices as part of the progressive discipline process.
- Working with schools and the Ministry of Education as part of the keeping students in school pilot project.
- Supporting secondary schools in partnership with the University of Waterloo and the Northwestern Health Unit for participation in the Compass Healthy Schools Survey



## 7 PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

### THE BOARD WILL:

- Commit to having all staff receive cross-cultural competency training.
- Increase professional development for staff regarding equity and trauma.

### SCHOOLS WILL:

- Embed training around topics such as anti-racism, anti-discrimination, and gender-based violence as part of annual school professional learning plans.

### KPDSB IS:

- Partnering with KAIROS to train facilitators of the KAIROS blanket exercise as part of KPDSB's staff cultural competency training plan.
- Providing all staff with trauma-informed training.



## 8 ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

### THE BOARD WILL:

- Provide information about equity and inclusive education policies, procedures, and practices to students, administrators, teachers, parents, school staff, school councils, and volunteers, and make efforts to assist parents whose first language is not the language of the board.
- Establish processes that include performance indicators to monitor progress and assess the effectiveness of policies, programs, and procedures.

### SCHOOLS WILL:

- Develop school improvement plans that are aligned with Ontario's equity and inclusive education strategy;
- Review and establish self-assessment processes to determine the effectiveness of the school's equity and inclusive education plans and procedures.

### KPDSB IS:

- Including a specific reconciliation goal on the 2019-2024 Strategic Plan.
- Including principles of equity and inclusive education throughout the KPDSB's continuous improvement plan and reports on this progress annually.
- Ensuring the Director's Annual Report highlights programs and successes within the KPDSB that are supported by our foundational belief in equity.
- Promoting, and reporting on, the KPDSB Indigenous Education Action Plan, Mental Health Strategic Plan, Early years Strategic Plan and Special Education Strategic Plan.



# VISION STATEMENT: The Keewatin-Patricia District School Board puts students first by creating a culture of learning.

## 2019-2024 Strategic Plan

**Student Achievement: Ensure the necessary resources are provided to all students to increase their individual achievement.**

### Indicators:

- Improved attendance through tracking and reengagement strategies
- Success in Alternative Programs that meet individual student needs
- All students will be reading at identified targeted reading levels and beyond
- The student achievement gap will decrease between the board and the province on standardized assessments
- Community partnerships support student achievement and well-being
- Student leavers and graduates participate in exit interviews
- Modern learning approaches using technology are implemented
- Teachers participate in self-directed professional development to support student engagement and achievement

**Safe and Supportive Schools: Ensure all students and staff have safe learning and working environments, where the academic and mental health needs of the child are met.**

### Indicators:

- All students and staff feel safe, supported, accepted and ready to learn and work as evidenced by reduced suspensions, violent incident reports, and staff absenteeism
- Increased use of restorative practices
- Appropriate programming/educational accommodations are in place for students requiring individualized support
- Increased professional development for staff regarding equity and trauma informed practice/awareness
- Increased visibility of safe spaces and inclusive environments that reflect our diverse student populations
- Incorporating mental health and well-being within curriculum content



**Innovative Practice: Demonstrate effective "Change Ready" leadership.**

### Indicators:

- Early identification and support of aspiring leaders for succession planning based on the KPDSB Leadership Competencies
- Increased access to professional learning through virtual learning environments
- Increased opportunities for staff to collaborate on real-world student inquiry and critical thinking
- Increased access to K-12 entrepreneurship and Grades 7-12 experiential learning and trades programming

**Reconciliation: Ensure all schools and staff are actively engaged in responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.**

### Indicators:

- All KPDSB staff receive cross-cultural competency training
- Increased understanding of the legacy of inter-generational impacts of the Canadian residential school system
- The Board and schools develop an "Official Statement of Reconciliation"
- Development and implementation of a Reconciliation Strategic Plan
- Addition of an Indigenous Student Trustee to the KPDSB Board of Trustees
- Creation of a formal policy on "Land Acknowledgement" for each respective Treaty Area in the appropriate jurisdiction
- Every KPDSB school and board office have a framed formal "Government of Canada Statement of Apology for the Residential School System"
- An increase in the number of Self-Identified Indigenous staff
- An increase in the number of land based teaching lessons and First Nation, Metis and Inuit credit course options



## 2018-2019 KPDSB Continuous Improvement Plan (BCIP)



### VISION

All stakeholders create a culture of learning so that students come first.

### MISSION

The Keewatin-Patricia District School Board accepts all students and is committed to providing an excellent education that prepares each student to be a successful individual and a responsible member of society.

Using the lenses of excellence, equity, well-being and public confidence, and in response to our schools' and students' needs, and targeted areas of growth, we commit to:

- Determine targeted, evidence-based strategies and actions that will deliver gains for student achievement.
- Allocate resources, including professional learning needed to implement the targeted, evidence-based strategies and activities.
- Assign monitoring actions related to implementation.
- Evaluate the system-wide progress in meeting identified qualitative and quantitative improvement goals.

### PRIORITY #1

**Engaged, healthy, and successful students.**

**For K12 and Adult learners to grow, succeed in Literacy and Mathematics, and graduate, we need them to be physically and emotionally ready, and actively engaged in their learning.**

### GOALS:

- All students feel safe, supported, accepted and ready to learn.
- Literacy: All students will be reading at identified targeted reading level and beyond
- Numeracy: The gap between KPDSB and the province for those students performing at or above the provincial standard.
- Graduation: All secondary students will graduate within five years; All Adult and Alternative Education students will graduate on target on EQAO math assessment will be narrowed.

### PRIORITY #2

**Engaged and supported staff.**

**We are committed to building the capacity of all educators, leaders, and staff to help meet the needs of learners and keep up with technological changes.**

### GOALS:

- All staff feel safe, supported, accepted and ready to learn graduate on target on EQAO math assessment will be narrowed.
- Professional learning needs for all staff will be met.

### PRIORITY #3

**Culture of inclusion, innovation, and creativity in our schools and workplaces.**

**This is a time of 'Reconciliation' and consolidation of our work. We welcome all learners and strive for equitable and inclusive school and classroom cultures with the support of community partners, Elders and the Indigenous Education Lead and Trustee.**

### GOALS:

- Work with Indigenous partners to implement TRC Calls to Action: Education for Reconciliation #62 and #63.
- Ongoing monitoring of 2017-2020 Learning Technologies Strategic Plan.
- Maintain and grow the number of authentic and experiential learning opportunities for students.
- All new and existing partnerships will enhance opportunities for students.