

INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

Background

The Board of Education “Board” is committed to inclusion where children and youth of all abilities can participate meaningfully in educational environments.

We value all unique differences that make us individuals including race, language, ethnicity, culture, gender, socioeconomic levels, range of abilities and physical and/or health care needs.

We are committed to modeling inclusion in all educational environments and to maintaining an inclusive environment with equitable access, support, and participation for all children. All School District No. 5 programs support the individual strengths and needs of each child. All children are welcomed, supported, and valued, which allows them to participate meaningfully. In inclusive programs, children of all abilities have equitable access to quality education.

Definitions

1. **Inclusion:** Supporting all people to participate fully within society regardless of their abilities. People of all abilities have equal access to, and the supports needed to fully participate.
2. **Inclusive Language:** Inclusive language is free from words and tones that reflect prejudiced, stereotyped, or discriminatory views of people. It ensures that people feel included and accepted by others.
3. **Diversity:** An overarching concept that reflects a philosophy of equitable participation and an appreciation of the contributions of all people. It is a concept that refers both to our uniqueness as individuals and to our sense of belonging or identification within a group or groups. Diversity refers to the ways in which we differ from each other. Some of these differences may be visible (e.g. race, ethnicity, gender, age, ability), while others are less visible (e.g. culture, ancestry, language, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, socio-economic background). Goals or purposes for Diversity include:
 - 3.1 taking into account the different beliefs, customs, practices, languages, behaviours and physical differences of individuals and cultural groups
 - 3.2 encouraging understanding, acceptance, mutual respect and inclusion, in order to make school communities and society as a whole more equitable for all people.
4. **Equity/Equitable:** A value or goal that recognizes individuals and groups have different circumstances which may require different treatment. An equitable system strives to reduce barriers so that everyone may access resources, opportunities, power, and responsibility to lead full and healthy lives. This provides support when needed so that individuals and groups can participate fully in society.

Procedures

1. To provide inclusive education and child care, the District:
 - 1.1 has the responsibility to support and promote positive experiences that recognize the diverse nature of our District;
 - 1.2 will provide opportunities (literature, training, PLC, etc.) to increase awareness of the impact of discriminatory conduct on individuals.
 - 1.3 will respect and value the history of First Nations, Inuit and Metis and contribute towards truth, reconciliation and healing.
 - 1.4 will consider the unique needs of all children in the set up of the physical environment, to provide full and meaningful participation.
 - 1.5 will foster belonging for all children. The District priority is for students to feel welcome, safe, and connected to their school and community. This involves nurturing belonging for all children, allowing them to develop respect for diversity, dignity, and equity.
 - 1.6 will engage and collaborate with families when making decisions about supporting their children. Positive relationships between staff and parents/guardians help to create a link between home and education and child care, while promoting inclusion of all children.

The District will inform all employees that an inclusion Administrative Procedure (AP) is in operation, and they are obligated to comply with the requirements and promote inclusion across the District. The District will inform all stakeholders that an inclusion AP is in operation. Each member of the school community will share the responsibility of modelling respectful conduct and will refuse to tolerate any form of discrimination. This AP will be reviewed annually to ensure that inclusion is continually promoted in the District.

The right to confidentiality will be respected in accordance with the [Freedom of information and Protection of Privacy Act](#).

Reference: [AP 170 – Non-Discrimination](#)
[Policy 19 – Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity](#)
[Policy 22 – Provision of Child Care Programs](#)
[AP 543 – Access to Buildings](#)
[Legislation and Policy Glossary - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)
[Professional Standards for BC Educators](#)
[FESL](#)

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