



SECTION 1000: STUDENTS AND SCHOOLS

POLICY 1020: DIVERSITY IN SCHOOLS

- *Date Adopted: February 20, 2013*
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POLICY STATEMENT

Diversity among people is one of the most prominent features of British Columbia's society and our schools. The Board is firmly committed to recognizing and honouring the diversity of all members of the school community.

RATIONALE

The rationale for this policy comes from the handbook: *Celebrating the Mosaic: A Handbook and Guide to Resources for Diversity in Education*, Consortium on Diversity in Education (CODE), March 2000.

Educators are increasingly aware of how the characteristics of race, culture and ethnicity; sex and gender; sexual orientation; and physical and mental ability-characteristics that are fundamental to the identity of an individual-impact the access to and outcomes of education.

These are also the characteristics that are the most likely to make an individual the target of discrimination, harassment and violence.

Developing policy and programs specific to promoting acceptance and understanding of these characteristics will support a positive, respectful school culture where other diversities are honoured, diversities such as economic or social status, language, religion, or age.

In order to achieve the purpose of the British Columbia school system, as articulated in the *School Act*, the school system must strive to ensure that differences among learners do not impede their participation in school, their mastery of learning outcomes, or their ability to become contributing members of society.

This policy draws from information and guidelines included in the Ministry document: *Diversity in BC Schools: A Framework* and complements two other Board policies: *Safe, Caring, Orderly Schools (Policy 1015)* and *Code of Conduct (Policy 1025)*.



LEGISLATION/REGULATIONS

- *School Act*: Preamble, Sections 2, 6(1), 75(1), 76(2)(3), 85(1)(2), 169(3)
- *Mandate for the School System*, Province of British Columbia (OIC 1280/89)
- BC Regulation 265/89
- Ministerial Order 276/07: *Provincial Standards for Codes of Conduct Order*
- Ministry Document: *Safe, Caring, and Orderly Schools*
- Ministry Document: *Diversity in BC Schools: A Framework*
- Ministry Document: *Developing and Reviewing Codes of Conduct*
- *Celebrating the Mosaic: A Handbook and Guide to Resources for Diversity in Education*, Consortium on Diversity in Education (CODE), March 2000
- *The Constitution Act* (1982), Part I: The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; Part II: Rights of the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada
- *Official Languages Act* (1985)
- *Multiculturalism Act* (1996)
- *BC Human Rights Code* (1996)
- *Employment Equity Act* (1995)

POLICY

The Board will strive to create and maintain conditions that foster success for all students and that promote fair and equitable treatment for all.

These conditions include:

- equitable access to and equitable participation in quality education
- school cultures that value diversity and respond to the diverse social and cultural needs of the communities they serve
- school cultures that promote understanding of others and respect for all
- learning and working environments that are safe and welcoming, and free from discrimination, harassment, and violence
- decision-making processes that give a voice to all members of the school community
- policies and practices that promote fair and equitable treatment.



POLICY *(continued)*

The Board is committed to:

- creating an environment in the school district which is consistent with the *Human Rights Code*
- hiring employees on the basis of merit consistent with *Human Rights Laws*
- providing students with educational programs that will assist them in participating in and contributing to a diverse society
- reducing language and cultural barriers
- communicating effectively with all students, parents, employees and other partner groups in our diverse community.

REGULATIONS

1. Conduct

1. All students, employees, contractors, visitors, and other users of school district facilities shall be required to conduct themselves in accordance with Board policies on Diversity in Schools (Policy 1020); Safe, Caring, Orderly Schools (Policy 1015); and Code of Conduct (Policy 1025). Conduct which is not consistent with Board policy shall not be tolerated by the Board.
2. In order to support the Board's commitment to creating an environment which is consistent with the *Human Rights Code*, the Board will ensure that:
 - i. All facility users shall be informed of these policies.
 - ii. All schools shall include in their School Code of Conduct clear statements and rules reflecting the Board's commitment as expressed in its policies.
 - iii. Conduct consistent with this policy is considered to be an expectation of employment for all staff.
 - iv. Allegations of discrimination will be reported to the school principal in the case of students, and to the immediate supervisor in the case of employees.



REGULATIONS *(continued)*

2. Personnel Hiring and Promotion

1. The Board is committed to providing equal employment opportunities consistent with the *B.C. Human Rights Code*. The Board also recognizes that promoting diversity in the hiring of its employees provides positive modelling for students and the community.

3. Curriculum

1. The Board endorses curricular goals and learning objectives that provide students with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to contribute to a society that is free of discrimination, and which will allow students to deal constructively with intolerance and discrimination that they may encounter in their daily life experiences.
2. The district is committed to the development and use of instructional resources which reflect the history and contributions of minority groups in Canada.
3. The district shall support education programs which are directed toward the elimination of racism and discrimination in the school district by promoting and encouraging universal recognition of and respect for basic human rights and fundamental freedoms for all.
4. The district shall support multicultural, anti-racist and human rights education integrated into curricula.
5. The district will continue to review new and existing curricula, curriculum materials, and other resources for bias.
6. The district shall support, as appropriate, the learning and use of heritage language in schools.
7. The district shall provide students with appropriate guidance and career counselling which recognizes the particular needs of diverse community groups.
8. Teachers are responsible for ensuring that the curriculum resources they use have received appropriate approval, and do not promote discrimination or intolerance contrary to the *B.C. Human Rights Code*.



REGULATIONS *(continued)*

4. In-service: Diversity in Schools

1. The Board and employees need to be challenged to find ways to achieve the continuing goal to eliminate racism and discrimination.
2. In-service should include both teaching and non-teaching staff. When appropriate, parents and the community should participate.
3. Where feasible, in-service regarding a specific culture should be provided by a person of that culture.
4. In-service programs should include such topics as Multicultural Education, Anti-Racism, Cross-Cultural Issues, Human Rights, Valuing Diversity and Intervention Strategies.
5. Newly hired employees should receive in-service on multiculturalism and human rights.

5. Assessment and Placement of Students

1. The Board expects that decisions regarding student assessment and placement will be based upon bona fide consideration of a student's educational needs, aptitudes and abilities, and it will not tolerate discrimination in the provision of instructional programs and services contrary to the *B.C. Human Rights Code*.
2. Students from minority groups require particular consideration with respect to assessment, evaluation, reporting, placement, and communications with parents.
3. All assessment and placement practices and procedures should be free from ethno-cultural bias.
4. All parents should be made aware of the appeal procedures available to them regarding student assessment and placement decisions.

6. Home, School, and Community Relations

1. The Board is committed to effective communications among parents/guardians, school and community members. Concerted efforts will be made to consult, inform and involve parents and communities of diverse ethnicities and languages.



REGULATIONS

6. Home, School, and Community Relations *(continued)*

2. Schools shall include strategies for improving communications and involvement of diverse groups in their school goals.
3. The district will provide, as feasible, appropriate interpretation and translation services.