

SUPERIOR-GREENSTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Section

Policy Name Anti-Racism

TBD

Board Approved: _____

Reviewed: _____

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POLICY

Superior-Greenstone District School Board (SGDSB) is committed to creating and maintaining harmonious learning and work environments, and equitable outcomes for all students in accordance with the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, *Ontario Human Rights Code*, *Calls to Action* from the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, and the *United Nations Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. Every student, employee, parent, community member and Trustee has the right to freedom from discrimination or harassment because of race, national or ethnic origin, citizenship, colour, religion, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, gender identification, age, ability, or socio-economic status.

SGDSB recognizes the need for specific action on racism in the school board and in Northwestern Ontario. Efforts to combat racism will prioritize the voices, experiences, and well-being of those who have been historically and presently marginalized by our system. The aim of anti-racism work is to affirm the identity and celebrate experiences of Indigenous and racialized students, staff, and community members.

PROCEDURES

1.0 DEFINITIONS

1.1 Race

Race is a socially constructed label based on observable characteristics (sometimes called phenotypes), as well as behavioural or cultural stereotypes. On the other hand, ethnicity is defined by a shared culture among people from a specific geographic area, encompassing their traditions, religions, customs, and language.

Racism is the belief that one racial group is inherently superior to another. It is not just about harmful or violent acts of individuals against each other. It is a multifaceted issue that manifests in various ways throughout society. It is deeply embedded in our society and the structures that support it, such as laws, policies, or institutional practices. These structures often benefit certain racial groups at the expense of others.

It's important to note that racism extends beyond overt slurs or violent acts. It is often manifested in subtle, exclusionary acts, known as microaggressions, which serve to express prejudiced attitudes towards racialized or marginalized groups.

2.2 Anti-Indigenous Racism

SGDSB is on segments of Robison-Superior Treaty (1850), a segment of Treaty 9, and acknowledges that many communities we serve are on unceded territory. SGDSB's

geographic location serves 13 First Nation communities, 3 Métis Councils with the acknowledgement that individuals from other communities may be attending SGDSB schools. SGDSB also acknowledges that we work closely with various Tribal Councils and the Anishinabek Education System.

Anti-Indigenous Racism in Canada specifically refers to the discrimination, stereotypes, and injustices that Indigenous Peoples face. This form of racism is deeply rooted in the country's history and is a result of longstanding colonial policies and practices, such as the Indian Act and the residential school system.

On the other hand, anti-racism is a broader concept that aims to fight all types of racism, including anti-Indigenous racism. It involves recognizing and addressing both systemic and individual biases that lead to racial inequality. This includes actions against all forms of racism, such as anti-Black racism, anti-Asian racism, and more.

While anti-racism efforts strive to combat all forms of racial discrimination, anti-Indigenous racism focuses on the unique experiences and challenges of Indigenous Peoples due to the historical and ongoing effects of colonization. In other words, anti-Indigenous racism education emphasizes the connection between colonialism and racism in today's context.

It is important to acknowledge that each community has their own unique perspectives and beliefs, and various Indigenous groups reside within these Treaties, Metis council areas, and unceded territories that SGDSB serves. The community perspectives, histories, and colonial impacts made known to us allows SGDSB to better align the educational experience for students and families.

2.3 Anti-Racism

Anti-Racism is different from simply "not-being racist". By being anti-racist, we are asking for individuals in our system to go beyond examining their own beliefs around racism and to be confident in actively confronting and addressing incidents that occur around them. Anti-racism is the expectation that personal commitments against race are coupled with specific actions.

3.0 **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The following principles shall inform all anti-racism and equity work throughout the SGDSB.

3.1 The Impacts of Racism & Honouring Indigenous Ways of Knowing

In discussing experience of racism, Indigenous partners and communities have emphasized the need to understand the multiplicity of impacts that racial-based discrimination has on students. In an effort to honour community voice and recognizing the importance of championing Indigenous ways of knowing and being, the SGDSB will plan anti-racism efforts that address the Intellectual, Spiritual, Emotional, and Physical realms of being.

3.2 Levels of Discrimination

Racism and racial discrimination occur in different forms, and as such, the Board must be prepared to consider anti-racism actions at several different levels. Individual racism refers to a single person's biases or beliefs that they hold. Interpersonal racism are instances of discrimination between two individuals. Systemic racism are broader

school policies and practices which create discriminatory barriers for Indigenous and racialized peoples.

3.3 Intersectionality

The impacts of racism and discrimination are felt differently depending on an individual's identity and experiences. The concept of intersectionality notes that different aspects of identity create unique experiences of disadvantage. The SGDSB aims to account for intersectional experiences in order to prevent further discrimination or marginalization in anti-racism work.

3.4 Community Voice and Input

Anti-racism work should be guided by community voice and input. The SGDSB will provide ample opportunity for voice to be represented at all phases of planning for anti-racism initiatives. In addition to Board reporting tools, the SGDSB will work with community partners to promote the use of alternative reporting routes or community-based reporting tools.

3.5 Research and Data

The SGDSB will collect identity-based data in accordance with the Anti-Racism Act (2017), supported by the Ontario Human Rights Code. Identity-based data will be used to look for disparity and successes in student achievement and experience, in order to provide the Board with information to tailor action plans. Identity-based disparity data will be held in confidentiality and will not be disclosed to perpetuate deficit narratives.

3.6 Prioritizing Voice & Experience

Anti-racism work at the SGDSB will focus more heavily on the impacts of discrimination to the individual and community, rather than on the intent of the perpetrator. It is the expectation that all employees and volunteers with the SGDSB will take a human-centered, trauma informed approach to responding to incidents of discrimination. Tenets of this approach include believing stories of discrimination, offering multiple ways of disclosure, and examining the ways that an individual racist incident can impact the community as a whole.

When hearing experiences of racism and discrimination, the SGDSB aims to listen openly with humility and respect.

4.0 **Action and Implementation**

This policy establishes a framework for action to address racism and is meant to be used in tandem with the Board *Policy 536 – Equity and Inclusive Education* and *Policy XXXX - Truth and Reconciliation* to establish specific action plans to promote well-being of Indigenous and racialized students.

Appendix A

Questioning Model for Policy Development

This questioning model is to be used to help guide policy and program review at SGDSB.

1. What barriers may Indigenous, Black and other racialized communities face as a result of systemic racism in the proposed initiative? What must we do to remove, prevent, and mitigate these systemic barriers in this initiative?
2. Are we meaningfully taking into account the multiple layers of identities and the ways in which they impact the effects of racism and other forms of oppression across the Board; it's organizational culture, policies, practices and services?
3. Does the Board's approach consider both the internal and external changes (individual, interpersonal, systemic) that are required to dismantle racism?
4. How will we engage the voices, knowledge, experience, talent, and expertise of Indigenous, Black and other racialized communities in the development of this initiative? Have we allocated resources to encourage and support engagement? What measures are in place to remove barriers to access and participation?
5. How will we use data to inform decision-making? Are our policies, programs or initiatives informed by the collection and analysis of race disaggregated data?
6. Is the individual and collective responsibility to ensure a safe, inclusive, equitable and representative learning and working environment for Indigenous, Black and racialized communities established in performance measurement of staff, and clearly communicated to everyone?
7. What mechanisms exist for Board students, staff, families, and stakeholders to give feedback on initiatives or raise concerns about racism? Are these mechanisms accessible, transparent and effective?
8. How is the Board providing on-going training across all sites in ways that respond to the varied needs of staff, students, families, and stakeholders?
9. Does this policy, program, initiative enable healing for Indigenous, Black and racialized communities?

Appendix B

Interrupting Racism & Discriminatory Language

The following step-model is to be modelled by employees and students of SGDSB to address discriminatory language.

1. **Stop & Identify** – Interrupt and be explicit about the language that was used.
2. **Explain** – Describe why the language is harmful and indicate what your expectations are for the future.
3. **Support** – Ensure the safety of the individual who experienced discrimination and ensure they feel valued as a part of the school community.
4. **Report** – Document the incident, speak with administration, and expect that administration will follow up.
5. **Accountability** – All staff, students, and members of SGDSB have an obligation to interrupt racism, create inclusive environments, and participate in ongoing learning about anti-racism.