

**MOOSE FACTORY ISLAND  
DISTRICT SCHOOL AREA BOARD**

BOARD POLICY NO. GOV-07	
Approved	
Last Revised	
Board Motion	

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**LEARNING AND WORKING ENVIRONMENT:  
EQUITY AND INCLUSION**

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## 1. PURPOSE

This governance policy reflects the values of Moose Factory Island District School Area Board that all persons are entitled to learn and work in an environment that promotes human rights and equity of opportunity, free from discrimination and harassment. This policy affirms the Board's responsibility to provide a protected learning and working environment that is supportive of the dignity, self-esteem, and fair treatment of everyone taking part in district activities.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

**Equity:** Equity is the provision of opportunities for equality, ensuring that personal or social circumstances are not an obstacle to achieving potential. Equity of treatment is not the same as equal treatment because it includes acknowledging historical and present discrimination against identified groups and removing barriers, eliminating discrimination, and remedying the impact of past discrimination.

**Discrimination:** Discrimination is differential treatment which negatively affects the status of a person based upon a prohibited ground under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

**Harassment:** Harassment is defined in the *Ontario Human Rights Code* as "engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome".

**Prohibited Grounds:** The *Ontario Human Rights Code* defines prohibited grounds as: race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status, or disability.

## 3. POLICY

### 3.1 Equity and Inclusion

- a) Moose Factory Island District School Area Board is committed to the following guiding principles:
- promoting a culture of inclusion;
  - valuing differences and accepting individuals as they are;

- showing respect for self and others;
  - providing opportunities for all to participate actively and develop to their full potential;
  - promoting the dignity of all; and
  - treating all members of the education community with fairness.
- b) Moose Factory Island District School Area Board is committed to providing a learning and working environment in which all individuals treat each other with respect and dignity, free from objectionable conduct or harassment.
- c) The Board is committed to an education system that upholds the principles of equitable and inclusive education in order to enable each student to learn effectively, to reduce achievement gaps, and to improve learning outcomes for all, regardless of race, class, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, family status, religious and linguistic differences, and other historical forms of marginalization.
- d) The Board recognizes that equity of opportunity and equity of access to a full range of programs, the delivery of services, and resources are critical to the achievement of successful educational and social outcomes for those served by the school system as well as those who serve the district.
- e) The Board will implement positive employment practices that support equitable hiring, mentoring, retention, promotion, and succession planning.
- f) The Board is dedicated to serving the staff, students, and families in diverse communities by incorporating the principles of equitable and inclusive education into all aspects of its operations, structures, policies, programs, procedures, guidelines, and practices, consistent with the principles of the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.
- g) The Board will investigate in a thorough and timely manner any claims of discrimination and harassment and take appropriate action, consistent with the principles of the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

### **3.2 Partnerships with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples (FNMI)**

- a) Fulfilling a commitment to equity and inclusion requires a focus on effective educational programs for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students and strong partnerships with FNMI parents and communities. The Board is committed to building partnerships and effective working relationships with FNMI communities and organizations and to developing teaching strategies and resources to support the success of these students.
- b) Moose Factory Island District School Area Board recognizes and appreciates the cultural and individual differences inherent within the children of the FNMI peoples and will encourage these students to become active participants in their own educational progress and valued contributors to the enrichment of other students.
- c) The Board will embed First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives, traditions, and culture in curriculum content areas.

- d) The Board provides the opportunity for FNMI students and their parents to voluntarily self-identify to improve learning outcomes.

### 3.3 Accommodations

- a) Moose Factory Island District School Area Board will make every reasonable effort to ensure that all policies, procedures, and practices are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration, and equality of opportunity for all.
- b) The Board makes particular accommodations for persons with disabilities. The Board is committed to making services and facilities accessible to people in its communities in accordance with the provisions of the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, and the *Ontario Building Code*.
- c) The Board acknowledges each individual's right to follow or not follow religious/spiritual beliefs and practices free from discriminatory or harassing behaviour and is committed to taking all reasonable steps to provide religious/spiritual accommodation to students and the staff.
- d) Religious accommodation will be in accordance with the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, the requirements in Policy/Program Memorandum No. 108 Opening or Closing Exercises, and in sections 27-29 of Ontario Regulation 298 regarding religion in schools.

## 4. APPLICATION

- 4.1 This policy applies to all members of the Board's community including, but not limited to, students, staff, trustees, contractors, parents, volunteers, permit holders and all other persons who are invited to or who work on Board property. All employees, students, and persons invited to or visiting Board property will strive to maintain the highest level of professional and personal courtesy when interacting with Board employees and students.
- 4.2 This policy also applies to any communication or activity which may take place outside of Board property but which has the effect of or results in adversely affecting the Board's working and learning environment.

## 5. BOARD EXPECTATIONS

- 5.1 The Board expects that all students will be provided with positive role models, a sense of human worth, and the opportunity to develop their abilities and aspirations.
- 5.2 The Board expects that each staff member will have the opportunity to develop abilities and aspirations, and that the leadership potential of all staff members will be recognized and developed.
- 5.3 The Board is committed to providing administrators, staff, students and other members of the school community with opportunities to acquire the knowledge,

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skills, attitudes, and behaviour needed to identify and eliminate discriminatory biases and systemic barriers under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

- 5.4 The Board is committed to assessing and monitoring district progress in implementing Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, and to communicating these results to the community.

## REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

### **Legal:**

*Education Act, para. 8 (1) 29.1 Need for Board Equity and Inclusion Policy*

*Education Act, Section 169.1 Board Powers and Duties: School Climate*

*Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*

*Ontario Human Rights Code*

*Occupational Health and Safety Act*

*Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005*

*Ontario Building Code.*

Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy 2009

PPM No. 119 Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies 2013

Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation

PPM No. 108 Opening or Closing Exercises

PPM No. 128 The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct

Ontario Regulation 298, Sections 27-29 Religion in Schools

### **Board:**

Board Policy GOV-01 Vision, Mission, and Values

Board Policy GOV-02 Strategic Directions

Board Policy GOV-08 Learning and Working Environment: Safe Schools

Board Policy GOV-09 Safe Schools: Board Code of Conduct

Administrative Procedure 147 Staff and Student Use of the Internet

Administrative Procedure 151 Accessibility Standards and Practices

Administrative Procedure 152 Accessibility Standards: Training and Communication

Administrative Procedure 307 Accessibility Standards: Student Transportation

Administrative Procedure 376 Progressive (Student) Discipline

Administrative Procedure 419 Accessibility Standards: Individualized Emergency Response Information

Administrative Procedure 436 Accessibility Standards for Employment

Administrative Procedure 493 Workplace Conflict and Harassment