

I Am Aboriginal – Voluntary Confidential Self-Identification

Hastings and Prince Edward counties



Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board
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AS SCHOOL BOARDS, WE ARE COMMITTED TO ENSURING that we are doing everything we can to support and encourage Aboriginal students in their education and in their participation in school life.

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Voluntary Confidential Self-Identification

WE WILL CONTINUE TO:

- Protect the rights of Aboriginal students.
- Support student success.
- Respect the privacy and dignity of all students and their families.
- Respect Aboriginal historical and current cultures and perspectives.
- Encourage all students to reach their full potential in a safe, respectful and effective learning environment.
- Be trustworthy in how we use information provided.
- Use the information only for the benefit of students by ensuring our programs meet their unique needs.
- Identify resources, including funding and staff, that are needed to provide the best education for Aboriginal students.
- Maintain respectful, positive and effective working relationships with Aboriginal communities, parents and students, to support student success.

First Nation, Métis and Inuit

BE PROUD OF YOUR ANCESTRY AND HERITAGE. Aboriginal community members are encouraged to participate in a voluntary, confidential, self-identification process.

Allow your voice to be heard

TWO SCHOOL BOARDS HAVE BEEN WORKING WITH LOCAL ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY LEADERS to develop a process for voluntary, confidential, self-identification. It is up to students over age 18 or parents of students under age 18 to decide whether to identify as having First Nation, Métis or Inuit ancestry.

BY SELF-IDENTIFYING, you will assist us to better program for Aboriginal students' progress and success.

TOGETHER WE CAN BETTER DESIGN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS and services to ensure First Nation, Métis and Inuit students have the opportunities and resources they need to reach their goals.

THROUGH THIS PROCESS, we will be better prepared to monitor and measure whether the educational programs offered are responding to all students' needs.

Confidentiality will be respected

OUR PRIORITY is to enhance programs for Aboriginal learners in keeping with Ontario's First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework. Voluntary, confidential self-identification is the first step in this process.

The two school boards will not release any information on individual students. Not only would this be illegal, but it is wrong. As publicly funded school boards, it is our duty to protect individual students, and to use the information to provide extra support where needed.

Our priority is to improve educational outcomes for Aboriginal students.

Stand up and be counted

- Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board and Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board are committed to helping all students succeed in learning and life.
- Both school boards are also committed to improving their educational programs and services by ensuring that the unique strengths and needs of all students are met, including students with First Nation, Métis and Inuit ancestry.

YOU CAN BE BETTER INFORMED about post-secondary pathways, such as apprenticeships, college, university or work, and funding support.

In early 2007, the Ontario Ministry of Education renewed the commitment to deliver quality education to First Nation, Métis and Inuit students in Ontario schools, as outlined in *Building Bridges to Success for First Nation, Métis and Inuit Students*.

All Ontario school boards must implement a voluntary, confidential, self-identification process. Many school boards have already done so.

Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board and Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board are partnering with local Aboriginal leaders on this initiative.