



ALGONQUIN AND LAKESHORE CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

POLICY STATEMENT

EQUITY AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Rationale

The Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board recognizes that each person is unique, created in the image and likeness of God, and as such, possesses an inherent dignity that must always be respected. As Pope Francis reminds us, “May the Church be the place of God’s mercy and love where everyone can feel themselves welcomed, loved, forgiven and encouraged...”

The Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board believes that all students can learn and the Board mission is to enable each and every student to learn effectively, to reduce achievement gaps and to improve learning outcomes for all, regardless of race, class, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation and other historical forms of marginalization¹.

The Board upholds the principles of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms enshrined in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the *Constitution Act, 1982* and confirmed in the *Ontario Human Rights Code* (the “Code”). The Board and its staff are also committed to the elimination of all types of discrimination as outlined in *Ontario’s Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy* (the “Strategy”) and the Ontario Ministry of Education (the “Ministry”) Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119. The Board recognizes that equity of opportunity and equity of access to the 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 system. The Board is therefore committed to an equitable education system that upholds and reflects the principles of fair and inclusive education which should permeate all policies, programs, practices, and operations.

Guiding Principles

- Students and staff are welcomed and respected.
- Every student is supported and inspired to succeed in a culture of high expectations for learning and their individual needs are met.
- This policy takes place within the context of the denominational rights of Catholic School boards as set out in Section 93 of the Constitution Act, 1867 and the Education Act.
- This policy will identify and eliminate discriminatory barriers that limit students’ ability to achieve to their full potential.

- Equity and Inclusive education contributes to every students' sense of well-being
- Effective and meaningful school-community partnerships are an essential component of an equitable and inclusive education system.

References

Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board Mission Statement

The Education Act

The Ontario Human Rights Code¹

Ontario's Equity Action Plan, 2017

The Promise of Diversity: Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy and Implementation Guide Policy Program Memorandum No. 119 (2009)

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Constitution Act, 1982

Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

Religious Accommodation Guideline – Appendix 1 (Equity and Inclusive Education Administrative Procedures A-2010-06-1)

Respecting Difference, OCSTA, 2012

Keeping Our Kids Safe at School, Bill 157, 2010

Administrative Procedures

Equity and Inclusive Education

¹ The Ontario Human Rights Code identifies the following prohibited discrimination grounds: race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed (religion), sex (includes gender identity and pregnancy), sexual orientation, age, record of offences, marital status, family status, and/or disability (includes perceived disability). (From *Human Rights at Work, Third Edition*, p 14)

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