

Anti-Black Racism and Black Excellence Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

The Durham Catholic District School Board (the Board) recognizes that an equitable, inclusive education system will always be fundamental to achieving its mission and evolving core priorities. The Board recognizes that any form of overt or covert racism and discrimination is incompatible with Catholic values and is in violation of the Ontario Human Rights Code (the Code).

The Board acknowledges the legacy of colonialism and biases rooted in privileged dominant culture which create barriers that continue to negatively impact racialized persons. Different racialized groups experience systemic racism in different ways such as anti-Indigenous racism, anti-Black racism, anti-Asian racism, Islamophobia, and antisemitism. Ontario's Anti-Racism Act, 2017 states: "Systemic racism is often caused by policies, practices and procedures that appear neutral but have the effect of disadvantaging racialized groups."

In accordance with Catholic values and Catholic Social Teaching, the Board upholds the dignity of all persons, emphasizes shared rights and responsibilities to protect and uphold the vulnerable, and calls on the collective stewardship of the community for the common good. The Board is committed to identifying and eliminating discriminatory practices, systemic barriers, and biases from our schools, and seeks to create spaces where all racialized persons are seen, heard, respected, and supported to succeed as fully contributing members of the Board community. This is congruent with the protection afforded in the Code and confirmed in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Cultivating an authentically safe and inclusive space also requires a recognition of the role that racism, which is historically and systemically embedded, has in working against these goals and outcomes. Such spaces demand an understanding of how anti-Black racism has thrived as a particularly aggressive form of racism that impacts Black learners, Black professionals, and Black communities.

The Board is committed to listening to its diverse communities and to addressing disparities with a view to cultivating a learning community that promotes human rights, equity, anti-racism, and inclusion. In collaboration with the Board, the Anti-Black Racism and Black Excellence Advisory Committee (the Committee) will work to effectively address and dismantle disadvantages and discrimination experienced by Black students, staff, and families.

2. Mandate

2.1 The Committee will:

2.1.1 provide guidance, feedback and advice about system-level matters and those

issues impacting the Board's goal of creating a positive school climate that supports students' feelings of belonging and safety at the school and board level.

- 2.1.2 provide input on policies in development and/or under review.
- 2.1.3 provide advice on strategies to enhance communication with the community in respect to policies, procedures, initiatives, programs, and identified systemic barriers.
- 2.1.4 provide input and feedback on the development and implementation of system-level plans and frameworks to address issues of equity and inclusion.
- 2.1.5 identify trends based on lived experience and assist in problem-solving system level issues and prioritizing community needs for the Board's attention.
- 2.1.6 advise on and advocate for practices, processes and organizational initiatives throughout the Board that identify and address anti-Black racism through evidence-based and asset-based consultation.
- 2.1.7 recommend ways to collaborate with key stakeholders (including students, employees, organizational partners, parents/guardians, and volunteers), to promote a Board community that is free from discrimination and harassment based on race and other intersectional identification markers.
- 2.1.8 provide recommendations regarding strategies for boosting Black talent, scholarship, and advancement.
- 2.1.9 provide feedback on gaps, needs, and impacts, and ensure on-going engagement with key stakeholder communities. Feedback from the committee will be used to inform Board actions and initiatives around areas of need for, and impact to, the Black community, Black learners and Black professionals working within the Board.
- 2.1.10 advise, inform, provide feedback on the Board Equity Action Plan
- 2.1.11 provide feedback on implementation of Board strategic goals.

3. Terms of Service

- 3.1 All Board staff on the Committee (e.g., Director, HREA, etc.) will act as Resource to the committee. Members of the Committee who are Board staff, including those who may be a parent/guardian, will not seek elected positions and are not voting members of the Committee.

4. Executive Members

- Director of Education or designate

- Human Rights and Equity Advisor (HREA)
- Superintendent of Education
- Chair (Parent/Guardian)
- Vice-Chair (Parent/Guardian/)
- Five Parents/Guardians, one each representing Pickering, Ajax, Oshawa, Whitby, and one representing the Northern municipalities of Uxbridge, Beaverton, and Port Perry.
- Representatives from community-based organizations

5. Membership

5.1 Eligibility for general membership shall include:

5.1.1 Parents/guardians of students in the Board's schools with:

- a) expertise in or understanding of dismantling anti-Black racism;
- b) lived experience of anti-Black racism;
- c) a commitment to dismantling anti-Black racism;
- d) an authentic willingness to learn about the principles of anti-Black racism, diversity, inclusion, and human rights, with a view to dismantling anti-Black racism and promoting Black Excellence in the Board.

5.1.2 persons who are not a parent/guardian of a student in one of the Board's schools but meet any of the other requirements set out in sub-section (a) to (d) of section 5.1.1.

5.1.3 persons nominated to represent community-based organizations, provided they meet the eligibility requirements in 5.1.1 (a) to (d) above.

5.1.4 DCDSB staff representatives who may attend meetings to provide input and share information with the groups they represent, but who do not have voting rights.

5.1.5 A yearly call for general membership will take place each fall. Current general members (the Members) will have the opportunity at that time to opt out of continued participation on the Committee.

5.1.6 A call out for new executive members will occur where a member resigns from the Executive or is incapable of continuing membership or in any other event resulting in vacancy in their position in the Executive.

- 5.1.7 An executive member who records more than three (3) consecutive unexcused absences at meetings will cease to be a member of the Executive.
- 5.1.8 All members of the Committee and its subcommittees must conduct themselves in accordance with the Board's Code of Conduct and relevant policies.

6. Officers

- 6.1 The officers of the committee shall consist of the following:
 - 6.1.1 a Parent/Guardian Chair,
 - 6.1.2 a Parent/Guardian Vice-Chair,
 - 6.1.3 Five Parent Area Representatives
 - 6.1.4 the HREA,
 - 6.1.5 the Superintendent of Education with the equity portfolio or any other Director's designate
 - 6.1.6 a Secretary who shall be the Executive Administrative Assistant to the HREA, or other Director Designate at the level of a Superintendent, and
 - 6.1.7 representatives of community-based organizations.

7. Tenure

- 7.1 Elected executive members shall serve not more than two terms of two years each. In the case of a person elected to fill a vacancy, the provisions of section 8.2 shall apply.

8. Vacancy

- 8.1 Where a vacancy occurs on the Executive, whether due to resignation, incapacitation, or removal for misconduct, a Member who meets the eligibility requirements set out in section 5.1.1 shall be elected to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term.
- 8.2 A Member elected to fill a vacancy may, upon completion of the unexpired portion of that term, be elected to one additional two-year term, and no more.

9. Subcommittees and Working Groups

- 9.1 Subcommittees and/or working groups will be created as needed, and at the discretion of the Chair and HREA, to address specific issues and areas for strategic action in addressing anti-Black racism in the Board. These subcommittees and/or working groups will draw upon the existing membership of the Committee, as well as external expertise, when and where possible.

10. Voting Activities

- 10.1 Voting for executive positions will take place every two years, and in special circumstances when an individual can no longer fulfill the terms of an elected position, whether resulting from resignation, incapacitation, or misconduct. This voting exercise will be undertaken by the Members of the Committee.
- 10.2 Voting for executive positions within the Committee will be by secret ballot. Voting by the Executive to put forward recommendations to the Board pertaining to projects, policies and practices will not be anonymous.
- 10.3 Confidentiality, respect, and discretion must be upheld by all parties involved in the voting exercises. It is expected that all voting members of the Executive will do their utmost to use their votes for the overall good of the Committee and the Black community.

11. Meetings

- 11.1 The Committee will meet at least six times in a school year (once in either September or October, and at least once in November, January, February, April, and May). Specific meeting dates in each of these months will be announced in advance of the meeting days. The Executive may also call for a meeting of the Committee outside of these specified meeting dates as may be necessary. Subcommittees or working groups will meet as may be required for the performance of their functions.
- 11.2 Committee meetings will be open to the public.
- 11.3 The meeting agenda will be sent to Committee members not less than a week before each meeting.
- 11.4 Meeting minutes will be circulated to Committee members no later than two weeks after each meeting. The minutes of a previous meeting will be presented to Committee members and accepted at the Committee's next meeting.
- 11.5 Meetings of the Committee cannot be convened without a Board staff member in attendance.
- 11.6 Decisions of the Committee will be by consensus. Voting by the Executive will be required to determine whether a recommendation will be submitted to the Board.
- 11.7 Meetings will be hybrid (i.e., both in-person and virtual). A meeting link will be provided to Committee members who are unable to attend in person.

12. Quorum

- 12.1 The quorum for Committee meeting shall be greater than 50 percent of Executive membership. A meeting may hold in the absence of a quorum being formed but only for discussion purposes. No decisions shall be made in the absence of

quorum.

13. Duration

- 13.1 Committee meetings will be no more than one and a half hours (1.5 hours) except in special circumstances where Committee members agree to additional time.
- 13.2 Minutes will be taken at each meeting. The minutes will record attendees, Committee members' participation and decisions reached at the meeting.

14. Elections

- 14.1 Election of the Chair shall be as provided below:
 - 14.1.1 The Chair shall be a parent/guardian of a student enrolled in a Board school, whose child(ren) will remain enrolled for the duration of the Chair's term.
 - 14.1.2 Election to fill the position of the Chair shall take place in the month of May preceding the expiration of the term of an incumbent Chair.
 - 14.1.3 Nominations of persons for election as Chair of the Committee will open in the third week of March preceding the month of May in which the election shall be held.
 - 14.1.4 Nomination forms will be posted on the Board's website. Filled forms must be returned to the Board no later than the first week of May in which the election is scheduled to be held.
 - 14.1.5 All persons seeking to be elected as Chair of the Committee will be allowed five (5) minutes before the election commences to address the Committee on their platform for the Committee.
 - 14.1.6 Following the speech of everyone standing to be elected Committee Chair, all Members will cast their vote for the candidate of their choice.
 - 14.1.7 Voting shall be by secret balloting. Votes cast shall be counted by the HREA and Superintendent and the result shall be announced immediately.
 - 14.1.8 In the event of a tie, a second round of voting shall be conducted as provided above. Where there is a further tie, the winner of the election shall be decided by a straw vote.
 - 14.1.9 Election of the Vice-Chair shall be as provided below:
 - a) The Vice-Chair shall be a parent/guardian of a student enrolled in a Board school, whose child(ren) will remain enrolled for the duration of the Vice-Chair's term.
 - b) To allow for continuity in Committee leadership, the election of the inaugural

Vice-Chair shall be eligible for an initial term of one year. The inaugural Vice-Chair will thereafter be eligible to run for election for a further term of two (2) years.

- c) Election to fill the position of the Vice-Chair shall take place in the month of May preceding the expiration of the term of an incumbent Vice-Chair.
- d) Nominations of persons for election as Vice-Chair of the Committee will open in the third week of March preceding the month of May in which the election shall hold.
- e) Nomination forms will be posted on the Board's website. Filled forms must be returned to the Board no later than the first week of May in which the election is scheduled to be held.
- f) All persons seeking to be elected as Vice-Chair of the Committee will be allowed 5 minutes before the election commences to address the Committee on their platforms for the Committee.
- g) Following the speech of everyone standing to be elected Committee Vice-Chair, all Members will cast their vote for the candidate of their choice.
- h) Voting will be by secret balloting. Votes cast will be counted by the HREA and Superintendent in attendance and the result will be announced immediately.
- i) In the event of a tie, a second round of voting will be conducted as provided above. Where there is a further tie, the winner of the election will be decided by a straw vote.

14.1.10 Election of a Parent Area Representative shall be as provided below:

- a) A Parent Area Representative shall be a parent/guardian of a student enrolled in a Board school, whose child(ren) will remain enrolled for the duration of the Parent Area Representative's term.
- b) Election to fill the position of a Parent Area Representative shall take place in the month of May preceding the expiration of the term of an incumbent.
- c) Nominations of persons for election as a Parent Area Representative will open in the third week of March preceding the month of May in which the election shall hold.
- d) Nomination forms will be posted on the Board's website. Filled forms must be returned to the Board no later than the first week of May in which the election is scheduled to be held.
- e) All persons seeking to be elected as a Parent Area Representative will be allowed 3 minutes before the election commences to address the Committee

on their platforms for the Committee.

- f) Following the speech of everyone standing to be elected as a Parent Area Representative, all Members will cast their vote for the candidate of their choice.
- g) Voting will be by secret balloting. Votes cast will be counted by the HREA and Superintendent in attendance and the result will be announced immediately.
- h) In the event of a tie, a second round of voting will be conducted as provided above. Where there is a further tie, the winner of the election will be decided by a straw vote.
- i) Where the position of a Parent Area Representative for a municipality is not filled 3 months after the election, an eligible parent/guardian from a different municipality may apply to the Committee in writing to fill that position for the remainder of the term.
- j) Where more than one eligible parent/guardian applies to fill the vacant position, the decision will be by a straw vote.

15. Code of Conduct for Committee Members

15.1 The conduct of Committee members shall be consistent with the following DCDSB policies, at minimum:

- Anti-Racism Policy (PO200)
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy (PO318)
- Workplace Harassment Policy (PO320)
- Code of Conduct Policy (PO610)
- Student Discipline Policy (PO611)
- Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy (PO612)
- Workplace Harassment Administrative Procedure (AP320-1)
- Student Protection Administrative Procedure (AP607-1)
- Code of Conduct Administrative Procedure (AP610-1)
- Student Discipline Administrative Procedure (AP611-1)
- Bullying Prevention and Intervention Administrative Procedure (AP612-1)

15.2 Committee members cannot represent the Committee unless they have prior approval from the Chair and HREA.

16. Addressing Adverse Communications/Interactions

16.1 Adverse communications or interactions will be addressed by the Chair in consultation with the HREA in accordance with the Board's applicable policies. More serious adverse incidents will be addressed by the HREA and will go through the required processes and offices as mandated by Board policies and procedures.

17. Review of Terms of Reference

17.1 The Terms of Reference for the Committee will be reviewed every two (2) years by the Executive and the Board resource in the Executive (HREA and Superintendent of Education or any other designate of the Chief Executive Officer), or at the discretion of the Chair and HREA.

17.2 When a review of the Terms of Reference is proposed by the Chair or HREA outside of the two-year cycle, the proposed review shall be deliberated on by the Executive and Board resource in the Executive (HREA and Superintendent of Education or any other designate of the Chief Executive Officer). The outcome of the review shall be presented to the Committee for consideration as a recommendation to the Board.

17.3 When such recommendation is approved by the Committee, the Executive shall, by a motion, vote on the recommendation and if passed, the recommendation shall be submitted to the Board. Where the recommendation is accepted by the Board, the Terms of Reference shall be deemed reviewed.

17.4 An updated version of the Terms of Reference, annotated to show the date of review, shall be made available to Committee members and posted on the Board's website.