



Policy

Title: First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Framework		Policy #: PO516
Policy Area:	Program and Instruction	
Source:	Superintendent of Education – Program	
Date Approved:	March 22, 2010	
Dates of Amendment:	December 8, 2014	

1.0 Introduction

The Durham Catholic District School Board supports the commitment of the Ontario Ministry of Education First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Policy Framework to:

- increase the capacity of the education system to respond to the learning and cultural needs of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students;
- provide quality programs, services, and resources to help create learning opportunities for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students that support improved academic achievement and identity building;
- provide a curriculum that facilitates learning about contemporary and traditional First Nation, Métis, and Inuit cultures, histories, and perspectives among all students, and that also contributes to the education of school board staff, teachers, and elected trustees; and
- develop and implement strategies that facilitate increased participation by First Nation, Métis, and Inuit parents, students, communities, and organizations in working to support academic success.

The Board will provide an opportunity for all Aboriginal students and their parents to voluntarily and confidentially self-identify their First Nation, Métis or Inuit ancestry. The collection and analysis of self-identification information will be conducted for the purpose of planning appropriate programs and supports so that Aboriginal students within the Board are able to realize their full potential. Future collection and analysis of self-identification information will ensure measurement of program effectiveness and provide data for future program planning. The Board recognizes the sensitivity of the self-identification process and will be respectful of maintaining the dignity of First Nation, Métis and Inuit students and their parents and will be conscious of its obligations in legislation relating to privacy and access of information.

The Board celebrates the significance of deep spirituality in both Catholic and Aboriginal traditions and recognizes the value of this bond as a basis for this policy.

2.0 **Definitions**

Aboriginal People – the descendants of the original inhabitants of North America. Section 35(2) of the Constitution Act, 1982, states: “In this Act, ‘Aboriginal peoples of Canada’ includes the Indian, Inuit, and Métis peoples of Canada.”

First Nations – in the Constitution Act of 1982, Section 35 (2), the Aboriginal peoples referred to as “Indian”. The term “First Nation”, came into use in the 1970s as a more appropriate term in place of “Indian”.

Métis – “Métis” means a person who self-identifies as Métis, distinct from other Aboriginal peoples. The Métis history and culture draws on diverse ancestral origins such as Scottish, Irish, French, Ojibway and Cree.”

Inuit – the indigenous people whose homeland is the Canadian Arctic including the three Territories: Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut, in addition to northern Quebec and Labrador.

3.0 **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction for the implementation of the Ontario Ministry of Education First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Policy Framework within the Durham Catholic District Board. In addition, this policy articulates a commitment to First Nation, Métis and Inuit students and families within the Board to be provided with the opportunity to self-identify their Aboriginal ancestry.

4.0 **Application/Scope**

This policy applies to all staff, students and parents of the Board. This policy includes provisions for implementation of the *Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework* and voluntary, confidential Aboriginal student self-identification.

5.0 **Principles**

- The Board supports the following goals of the Ontario Ministry of Education for improved student achievement and engagement for all students including First Nation, Métis and Inuit learners:
 - Achieving Excellence
 - Ensuring Equity
 - Promoting Well-Being
 - Enhancing Public Confidence
- The mission and values of the Durham Catholic District School Board are consistent with the following principles of the Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework:
 - Excellence and Accountability
 - Equity and Respect for Diversity
 - Inclusiveness, Cooperation and Shared Responsibility
 - Respect for Constitutional and Treaty Rights

5.0 **Principles**

- The Board values the common bond of spirituality and values that can be found in the Gospel message and the Seven Grandfather Teachings.
- The Board believes that all First Nation, Métis and Inuit students and their parents have the right to voluntarily and confidentially self-identify ancestry as part of a process to develop improved programming, instructional practices and supports for First Nation, Métis and Inuit learners.
- Data collected through the *Voluntary Self-Identification for First Nation, Métis and Inuit Students* process, will only be used in the aggregate to evaluate program effectiveness and future initiative planning. Collected information will be subject to the privacy and security provisions of Board policies and procedures, Ontario Student Record Guidelines and applicable privacy and access of information legislation.
- The Board recognizes the importance of collaborative relationships with local First Nation, Métis and Inuit communities to seek advice in implementing the First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework and associated self-identification process.
- Respect and appreciation for the contribution of First Nation, Métis and Inuit people and culture is best achieved through the integration of this knowledge across curriculum areas and grade levels for all students. This integration is achieved through appropriate training of school and board staff.
- In accordance with the *Selection and Reconsideration of Learning Resources Policy (PO508)*, the Board acknowledges its responsibility to ensure that all learning resources are respectful and accurate in the portrayal of First Nation, Métis and Inuit culture, people and contributions. Resources not meeting these criteria will be removed from use/circulation.

6.0 **Requirements**

1. The Director of Education shall issue administrative procedures to support this policy and amend them thereafter as the need may arise.
2. The Board will infuse First Nation, Métis and Inuit perspectives in Program initiatives at the school and Board level. Achievement and other variables will be monitored as a means to assess effectiveness of programming for First Nation, Métis and Inuit students and for future planning purposes.
3. The Board will convene an Aboriginal Education Advisory Circle which will include representation from local First Nation, Métis and Inuit communities as well as other staff and stakeholders to provide advice on the implementation of the Aboriginal Education Framework and the process for self-identification.
4. The Board will provide an annual opportunity for self-identification for all students as well as students who are registering in the school system. The *Voluntary Self-Identification for First Nation, Métis and Inuit Students* process will be delineated in a supporting administrative procedure.

6.0 **Requirements** (Cont'd)

5. The Board will implement an Aboriginal Education Framework communications strategy to support Ministry Aboriginal education directions and the *Voluntary Self-Identification for First Nation, Métis and Inuit Students* process. This strategy will attempt to both proactively present information as well as anticipate and respond to issues of concern utilizing print and web-based media resources.
6. The Board will utilize the Reconsideration of a Learning Resource Administrative Procedure (AP508-1) for the review of resources that support the directions of the Aboriginal Education Policy Framework. This process will include the acquisition of new resources as required and the discontinuation of older resources that do not comply with the principles outlined within this policy.

7.0 **Sources**

- Building Bridges to Success for First Nation, Métis and Inuit Students (re: self-identification)
- Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Framework Policy
- Implementation Plan – Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Framework Policy – 2014
- Ontario Student Record Guideline
- Ontario Education Act, Section 8.1(1): Collection and Use of Personal Information
- The Ontario Human Rights Commission's Guidelines for Collecting Data on Enumerated Grounds Under the Code
- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)
- Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA)

8.0 **Related Administrative Procedures and Policies**

- First Nation, Métis and Inuit Students Voluntary Self-Identification Administrative Procedure (AP516-1)
- Selection and Reconsideration of Learning Resources Policy (PO508)
- Reconsideration of Learning Resources Administrative Procedure (AP508-1)