

<b>Policy Title</b>	<b>Equity and Inclusive Education</b>		
<b>Date of Issue</b>	June 15, 2010	<b>Related Procedure</b>	AP 6303-D; AP 6304-D; AP 7520-D; AP 6915-D
<b>Revision Dates</b>	February 21, 2012 (rev. Rationale-Strategic Plan); May 16, 2017	<b>Related Forms</b>	
<b>Review Date</b>	May 1, 2022	<b>Originator</b>	Board of Trustees
<b>References</b>			
BP 1411-D “Accessibility Standards”; School Codes of Conduct; BP 6825-D “Progressive Discipline-Students”; Ontario Ministry of Education PPM #119 “Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools”, 2013; Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation (2014); Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Ontario’s Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy (2009); Ontario Human Rights Code; Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; Education Act; Ontario Code of Conduct; Constitution Act, 1982; Human Rights Code; BP 7520-D “Human Rights”; BP 1410-D “Inclusive Language”; AP 1410-D “Inclusive Language Guidelines”; BP 6821-D “Bullying Prevention & Intervention”; Ontario Ministry of Education PPM 144 & 145; AP 6304-D “Religious Accommodation”.			

**Policy:**

**1.0 RATIONALE**

- 1.1 Bluewater District School Board policies will support and provide direction necessary to achieve the board’s Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan priorities.
- 1.2 Bluewater District School 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 serviced by the school system, as well as those who serve the system.
- 1.3 Bluewater District School Board is committed to providing safe schools and workplaces that not only respect the rights, but also recognize the worth of every individual. Everyone has the right to a workplace and educational environment free of discrimination and harassment.

**2.0 POLICY**

- 2.1 **Bluewater District School Board is committed to racial equity, and the principles of fairness and equity as essential principles in our school system, reflected through inclusive policies/procedures, programs, services, curriculum, and operations, in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Education Act, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and board policy BP 7520-D “Human Rights”.**
- 2.2 **Bluewater District School Board values the contribution of all members of our diverse community of students, staff, parents, and community groups to our overall goal and strategic priorities. The board will identify and remove systemic and attitudinal barriers and biases to learning and employment opportunities that have a discriminatory effect on any individual.**

- 2.3 This policy applies to all Bluewater District School Board students, employees, trustees and other users such as members of committees, clients of the board, parents, volunteers, permit holders, contractors, and employees of organizations not related to the board but who nevertheless work on or are invited onto board premises. This policy also covers discrimination and harassment by such persons which occur outside the study/work place, and which are proven to have repercussions that adversely affect the board's learning/working environment. This policy will act as a foundation for all board operations.**

### **3.0 DEFINITIONS**

#### **Racial and Ethnocultural equity**

The equitable treatment of members of all racial and ethnocultural groups and the elimination of institutional and individual barriers to equity.

#### **Creed (Religion)**

Creed is interpreted to mean 'religious creed' or 'religion.' It is defined as a professed system and confession of faith, including both beliefs and observances or worship. A belief in a God or gods, or a single supreme-being or deity is not a requisite. Religion is broadly accepted by the Commission to include, for example, non-deistic bodies of faith, such as the spiritual faiths/practices of aboriginal cultures, as well as bona fide newer religions (assessed on a case-by-case basis). (*Ontario Human Rights Policy Guidelines on Creed and the Accommodation of Religious Observances*)

#### **Diversity**

The presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes within a group, organization or society. The dimensions of diversity include, but are not limited to, sex, sexual orientation, race, ancestry, appearance, ethnic background, place of origin, language, religion, age, disability, culture, gender, gender identity, physical and intellectual ability, and socio-economic status.

#### **Ethnocultural**

A person's cultural heritage in the broadest sense. It can include national affiliation, language, and religious beliefs. There are ethnocultural groups within racial groups.

#### **Equity**

A condition or state of fair, inclusive and respectful treatment of all people. Equity does not mean treating people the same without regard for individual differences.

#### **Harassment**

Any conduct or comment, which is based on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, race, ancestry, appearance, ethnic background, place of origin, language, religion, age, disability, culture, gender, gender identity, physical and intellectual ability, and socio-economic status and might be perceived as placing a condition or restriction on any aspect of employment or learning; or which creates a working or learning environment that is intimidating, humiliating or uncomfortable. Harassment includes behaviour that the persons know, or reasonably ought to know, is offensive and actions that suggest or imply the inherent superiority of a particular group.

#### **Human Rights**

The basic rights and freedoms to which all humans are entitled.

#### **Inclusive Education**

Education that is based on the principles of acceptance and inclusion of all students. Students see themselves reflected in their curriculum, their physical surroundings and the broader environment, in which diversity is honoured and all individuals are respected.

**Race**

A social category into which societies have divided people according to such characteristics as skin colour, texture of hair and facial features.

**4.0 SYSTEM EXPECTATIONS**

Bluewater District School Board is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment, free from inequity, discrimination and harassment, by addressing the following eight major areas of focus.

**4.1 Policies, Programs, Guidelines and Practices**

Through the cyclical review process, Bluewater District School Board will ensure that principles of equity and inclusive education are incorporated into all board policies, procedures, guidelines, practices, operations, structures and programs.

Bluewater District School Board will develop and maintain practices to eliminate systemic discrimination in employment practices.

**4.2 Shared and Committed Leadership**

Bluewater District School Board will establish an education system that is based on equity and inclusive education and requires commitment from all levels. All partners in education, those within the ministry, the board and schools, have a critical role to play in leading the identification and removal of bias, discrimination, and other barriers to an inclusive education system.

**4.3 School-Community Relationships**

Bluewater District School Board will establish and maintain partnerships and communication channels among the board, schools, and diverse members of the community to ensure that the perspectives and experiences of all students, families, and employees are recognized and addressed.

**4.4 Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment Practices**

Bluewater District School Board will implement an inclusive curriculum, as regulated by the Ministry of Education, and review resources, instruction and assessment and evaluation practices in order to identify and address discriminatory biases so that each student may maximize their learning potential.

Bluewater District School Board will affirm and emphasize the value of students' cultures and first languages, while providing an opportunity to acquire competence in Canada's first languages.

**4.5 School Climate and the Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment**

Bluewater District School Board is committed to providing all members of the Bluewater community with a respectful, positive school climate and learning environment where they feel safe, accepted, valued and that is free from systemic barriers and all forms of harassment and discrimination.

**4.6 Faith/Religious/Cultural Accommodation**

Bluewater District School Board will acknowledge each individual's right to follow or not follow religious/cultural beliefs and practices.

Bluewater District School Board is committed to providing religious/cultural accommodation to students and staff in an equitable and appropriate way, in accordance with AP 6304-D "Religious Accommodation".

**4.7 Professional Learning**

Bluewater District School Board will provide administrators, staff, students, and other members of the school community with opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills, behaviour and attitudes required to identify and eliminate discriminatory biases and systemic barriers.

**4.8 Accountability and Transparency**

Bluewater District School Board will continuously monitor and assess board communications, policies, programs, guidelines and practices to ensure that they reflect the strategies and commitments of equity and inclusive education; and to communicate these results to the community.

The Director of Education will authorize initiatives as necessary to support the ongoing commitment of Bluewater District School Board to equity of opportunity and equity of access to all programs, services and resources.