

BOARD POLICY	
Adopted	M22-0171 (November 2022)
Revised	
Review Date	November 2026

INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

Context:

Indigenous Peoples are the Original Peoples of this land who have historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies. They are self-determining Nations with inherent inalienable rights, laws and institutions as outlined by their respective Nations and within their lands. In the exercise of these rights Indigenous Peoples will be free from harassment and discrimination of any kind. Halton District School Board (HDSB) is committed to reconciliation by protecting and upholding Inherent, Indigenous and Human Rights as outlined by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the Ontario Human Rights Code, and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The Halton District School Board (HDSB) understands the need to align all Board policies, practice(s) and procedure(s) to ensure the protection of Indigenous students, staff and families.

Intended Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to support anti-colonial efforts across the HDSB. It is to be used to critically analyze, examine and address; existing board structures, processes, policies and programs that are not in alignment with Inherent, Indigenous and Human Rights.

This policy was created in consultation with Inherent Rights Holders, Indigenous Academics, Indigenous Education Department, Indigenous Education Advisory Council and in collaboration with the HDSB Human Rights Advisory Officer and educators. The purpose is to examine how the Board can promote, protect and uphold Indigenous Rights and support Indigenous Education to improve the experience of all Indigenous Peoples in the HDSB.

1. Overview:

- 1.1 The HDSB is situated on the ancestral, treaty and title lands of the Anishinaabek Ojibwe Michizaagiig Nation, now known as the Mississaugas of the Credit. As the Original People of this territory, they possess distinct, inalienable and inextinguishable, Inherent Rights and jurisdictions across their territory, in accordance with their self-determined social, legal, political, economic and governance institutions, structures and processes.
- 1.2 Indigenous Peoples also hold distinct rights, Indigenous Rights. Indigenous Rights do not

supersede those of the Inherent Rights Holders within their respective territories.

- 1.3 The Board understands that Human Rights legislation is limited in its ability to protect and uphold Inherent Rights and Indigenous Rights.
- 1.4 Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) are terms defined by the ministry/board/state.

2. Colonialism

- 2.1 The HDSB is committed to acting upon, reconciling and being accountable to Indigenous Peoples for addressing the impacts of colonialism.
- 2.2 The HDSB is committed to continuous knowledge building with respect to ways to address and resolve the ongoing impacts of colonialism that continue to negatively impact the education, social, legal, economic, cultural and political lives and needs of Indigenous Peoples and their lands, including Indigenous Peoples' right to education without discrimination.
- 2.3 The HDSB recognizes that uninterrupted existing structures replicate and/or perpetuate colonial and discriminatory structures, processes and decision making that negatively impact Indigenous Rights. The Board commits to engage in anti-colonial actions to address these structures.
- 2.4 The HDSB further recognizes that intersections between *Human Rights Code* grounds, Indigenous Rights and Inherent Rights can result in exacerbated and additional barriers.

3. Distinct Rights and Consultation

- 3.1 Indigenous Peoples are distinct from equity-deserving groups in that they are self-determining Nations with Inherent Rights, laws, and institutions.
- 3.2 a) The HDSB is committed to respecting Indigenous Rights. The HDSB recognizes and understands that Indigenous Rights are distinct and protected at law (see legal references section above).
- 3.2 b) Further, HDSB deems the deprivation of Inherent, Indigenous and Human Rights as unacceptable and incompatible with the Board values, aspirations and expectations.
- 3.3 In the exercise of these rights, Indigenous students have the right to an education free from racism and discrimination of any kind.
- 3.4 The Board will act upon the urgent need to promote and protect Indigenous and Inherent Rights through meaningful engagement, consultation and consent.
- 3.5 Indigenous Education delivered within the HDSB is to comply with legislative requirements, the terms of this policy and shall support the Boards commitment to Indigenous rights, human rights, anti-colonialism, anti-Indigenous racism and nondiscrimination.

4. Indigenous Education Advisory Council

- 4.1 As mandated by the Ministry of Education, the Indigenous Education Council exists to support Indigenous education.
(<https://www.ontario.ca/page/indigenous-education-ontario>).
- 4.2 The Indigenous Education Advisory Council will consult, guide and advise on all matters of Indigenous Education.

5. Self-Identification:

- 5.1 In response to the Ministry of Education's Ontario First Nation, Metis and Inuit Education Policy Framework (2007), the HDSB shall provide students 18 years or older and all parents/guardians of Indigenous students the opportunity to voluntary, confidential self-identification of First Nation, Métis and Inuit ancestry.
- 5.2 The HDSB shall establish and maintain a strictly voluntary process to collect, aggregate, and report confidential Indigenous self-identification data in accord with applicable privacy legislation and best industry practices to maintain privacy and confidentiality.
- 5.3 Any such data shall only be used to identify and remove barriers experienced by Indigenous students and families, inform anti-colonial practices and improve Indigenous education programs within the HDSB.
- 5.4 The Board in partnership and consultation with the Indigenous Rights and Education Department, IEAC, and relevant Indigenous experts, agree to develop, implement, and evaluate responsive programming with a view to increasing Indigenous student engagement, well-being, and achievement of Indigenous students within the HDSB.

6. Data:

- 6.1 The Board recognizes research/data/statistics has and continues to be used to the detriment of Indigenous Peoples, communities and Nations.
- 6.2 The Board will ensure Indigenous-related information, collection, analysis, management and use(s) is in accordance with all legal and ethical standards as outlined in policies, procedures and protocols for researching Indigenous Peoples (ie. OCAP - Ownership, Control And Possession).
- 6.3 Any such data shall only be used to identify and remove barriers experienced by Indigenous students and families, inform anti-colonial practices and improve Indigenous education programs within the HDSB.
- 6.4 In matters pertaining to data the HDSB will engage in partnership and consultation with the Indigenous Rights Education Dept., IEAC, Inherent Rights Holders and relevant Indigenous experts.

Legal References:

Law:

[Original Law, Custom and Treaty of the Michizaagiig, Ojibwe, Anishinaabek](#)
[United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples | United Nations For Indigenous Peoples](#)
[Canadian Bill of Rights \(SC 1960, c. 44\)](#)
[Constitution Act, 1982 s.\(25\)](#)
[Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms s.\(15\), s. \(35\)](#)
[Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
[Universal Declaration of Human Rights | United Nations](#)
[Human Rights Code, RSO 1990, c. H.19 - Laws](#)
[International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#)
[International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#)
[Education Act, RSO 1990, c. E.2](#)

Ministry/Board Policy:

[Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework, 2007](#)
[Aboriginal Education Strategy](#)
[Implementation Plan: Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework](#)
[Building Bridges to Success for First Nation, Métis and Inuit Students – Developing Policies for Voluntary, Confidential Aboriginal Student Self-Identification: Successful Practices for Ontario School Boards, 2007](#)
[Strengthening Our Learning Journey: Third Progress Report on the Implementation of the Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework, 2018](#)
[ONTARIO'S EQUITY AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION STRATEGY, 2009](#)
[Policy on preventing discrimination based on creed | Ontario Human Rights Commission](#)
[Indigenous spiritual practices | Ontario Human Rights Commission](#)
[Your guide to special programs and the Human Rights Code \(PPM 165 or 166 Provision connected to elimination of reg. 264\)](#)
[Indigenous Self-Identification Policy](#)
[HDSB Harrassment and Discrimination Policy](#)
[Religious and Creed Accommodation](#)
[HDSB EMPLOYMENT EQUITY POLICY](#)

Board References:

Human Rights, Equity Action and Accountability Plan: *The Way Forward*
Multi-Year Strategic Plan: Operational Plan

Other Documents:

[Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples - Library and Archives](#)

[Canada](#)

[Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action](#)

[Calls for Justice](#)