



POLICY #11

RESPECT FOR HUMAN DIVERSITY

11.1 Purpose

Whereas the Brandon School Division is itself comprised of staff and students from diverse communities, it asserts its commitment to appreciating, respecting, accommodating and supporting human diversity in all its forms. This commitment is based on the following beliefs:

- Recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world and is fundamental to the public education system.
- Safe, caring and inclusive environments are necessary to fulfill our purpose.
- Heterogeneous groups facilitate creativity, problem solving and the exchange of new ideas and they enrich the experience of our staff and students.
- All individuals have the right to be treated in all matters solely on the basis of their personal merits.

Continually striving for actions that support this commitment will ensure that our Division is an inclusive community in which staff, students and visitors feel welcomed, accepted, valued and empowered to engage, learn and contribute fully and thus will share their unique viewpoints and life experiences for the benefit of all.

11.2 Scope

This policy applies to all staff, students and independent contractors. The principles apply to everyone involved in the school community including: parents, coaches, volunteers and others while providing or receiving goods or services on Division property.

11.3 Definitions

Human diversity encompasses all the ways in which individuals are both similar and different. Some of these differences may be visible, others less so. Consistent with the principles reflected in the Manitoba Human Rights Code, diversity characteristics may include but are not limited to ancestry, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, family status, source of income, and physical or mental disability.

Respect for human diversity means accepting, understanding and celebrating the uniqueness of every individual as a result of the many variables that shape an individual's attitudes, behaviours and perspectives. Respecting diversity allows individuals to acquire new ideas, skills and solutions, and thus improves the collective strength of the group as a whole.



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11.4 Responsibilities

The Superintendent/CEO, or designate, is responsible for the implementation of this policy. The Superintendent/CEO's Department will provide resources and learning experiences that encourage all staff and students to honour the provisions of this policy.

Division administrators and supervisors are leaders in promoting respect and will support staff and/or students who request to form groups that promote gender equity, anti-racism, awareness of people with disabilities, Gay-Straight Alliances or groups of any other name that are consistent with the promotion of a positive work and/or school environment and that are respectful of all human diversity.

All schools will implement appropriate, provincially approved, curricula that supports student learning about human diversity.

Division staff members are responsible to embrace an inclusive approach and to promote respect for human diversity, and are role models for appropriate student conduct. Division staff members are responsible to support students in issues of human diversity and empower them to treat each other with respect.

Division staff and students, as well as independent contractors, parents, coaches, volunteers and others are expected to monitor their own interactions to ensure their personal conduct supports safe, caring and inclusive environments by respecting human diversity and to refrain from expressing negative comments or actions.

11.5 Compliance

Compliance with this policy will be continually reviewed. Employee incidents and student suspensions will be monitored to inform future policy refinements. Failure to comply, will subject staff and students to corrective and/or disciplinary action in accordance with respective policies. Independent contractors, volunteers and others in the school community may have certain rights and privileges suspended for failure to comply with these principles.

References:

Policy 1 – Vision, Values and Mission

Policy 13 - Safe Schools

The Public Schools Act, Section 41(1) (b.4) and 41(1.6), (1.7) and (1.8)

Date of Approval:
September 11, 2017

Date of Amendment:

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