



POLICY 8500
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

POLICY:

The Board of Education “Board” is committed to providing educational environments that are safe, welcoming, respectful, and affirming for all students, families, and staff. The Board values diversity within the community and actively promotes inclusive and accepting cultures throughout the School District.

In order to create safe environments that are free from fear, harassment, and discrimination in all its forms, School District staff will take pro-active steps to ensure all students, employees and families are equally welcomed and included in all aspects of education and school life, and are treated with respect and dignity.

The purpose of this policy is to define inappropriate behaviours and actions in order to prevent discrimination and to provide guidance in ensuring inclusive environments across the School District.

Any communication or behaviour that belittles, labels, stereotypes, and/or incites hatred, prejudice or discrimination towards individuals on the basis of their appearance, race, ethnicity, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity/expression (whether real or perceived) or for any other reason, will not be tolerated. This also includes making gestures, publishing or displaying anything that would indicate an intention to discriminate against an individual or group, or expose them to contempt or ridicule.

The Board recognizes that there are people who face a unique set of challenges within our schools and communities. Individuals who are living with, or those perceived to be living with, diverse gender identity, gender expression, intersexuality or sexual orientation, as well as their families, are frequently the targets of homophobic, transphobic and/or heteronormative behaviours. This may have profound social consequences including harassment, physical and sexual violence, social and emotional isolation, depression, substance abuse, homelessness, school truancy and drop-out, self-harm, and suicide.

Each member of the school community will share the responsibility of modeling respectful conduct and will refuse to tolerate any form of discrimination. Students, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers and Trustees are expected to uphold this policy.

The right to confidentiality will be respected in accordance with the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#).

[DISTRICT PRACTICE 8500 DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION](#)

REFERENCES: [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#), R.S.B.C.

ADOPTED: September 2019

Amended: