

## Respect for Human Diversity

Turtle Mountain School Division values the following principles toward ensuring safe and inclusive school environments for all:

- Positive school cultures
- Respect, inclusion, fairness and equity
- Clear and consistent communication regarding expectations of conduct
- Social responsibility
- Peaceful problem solving that respects value for human diversity and human rights
- Understanding of issues such as bullying, harassment and discrimination
- Fair and reasoned responses to incidents interventions that repair harm, strengthen relationships and restore a sense of belonging
- Continuous improvement of policies, procedures and practices that promote monitor and evaluate safe and inclusive school environments; and
- Celebrating progress and achievements

### **Definitions:**

**Diversity:** encompasses all the ways in which human beings are both similar and different. It means understanding and accepting the uniqueness of individuals, as well as respecting their differences. Diversity may include, but is not limited to gender identity, sexual orientation; age; ethnic origin; ancestry, culture; socio-economic status; religion; family status; mental and physical disability.

**Equity:** refers to the provision of equitable opportunity, equitable access to programming, services, and resources critical to the achievement of outcomes for all students and the staff who serve them. Equity and equality are not necessarily synonymous, as equity can be achieved through unequal means.

**Undue hardship:** sometimes accommodation becomes so difficult, it becomes unreasonable or an undue hardship. Some factors that determine whether reasonable accommodation to the point of undue hardship has been made include: financial costs, health and safety concerns, impact on other employees and service users and the impact on other protected rights.

**Bullying:** is behaviour that is intended to cause fear, intimidation, humiliation, distress or other forms of harm to another person's feelings, self-esteem, body or reputation and is intended to create a negative school environment for another person.

Bullying takes place in a context of a real or perceived power imbalance between the people involved and is typically, but need not be repeated behaviour.

It may be direct (face to face) or indirect (through others), and it may take place through any form of expression – including written, verbal, or physical – or by means of any form of electronic communication (referred to as cyberbullying), including social media, text messaging, instant messaging, websites or email.

### **Statement**

- A. Respect for human diversity: all members of the school community have the right to learn and work in safe and inclusive school environment that respects human diversity.
- B. Training for teachers and other staff: Turtle Mountain School Division/teachers and other staff will be provided opportunities for training and professional development that increases their capacity to teach and support students on issues regarding human diversity, including areas of sexual orientation and gender identity.

- C. Accommodation of student activities/organizations: Turtle Mountain School Division will accommodate students who want to establish and lead activities and organizations that promote areas of human diversity by ensuring all activities/organizations:
- Are run consistently and in compliance with school division policies
  - Are open to all students who wish to participate in an appropriate manner
  - Submit a written proposal to school administration and appropriate school staff, counsellors, etc. that includes:
    - Assessment of school climate, possible obstacles and rationale
    - Purpose and goals
    - Procedures, including frequency of meetings, group rules/guidelines
    - Space requirements and other required resources, including support of school staff
  - That require involvement and/or intervention of outside agencies (such as CFS or law enforcement) is sought at the earliest opportunity

### Roles and Responsibilities

- Department of Education and Advanced Learning – provide information, training and feedback to school boards and school division staff to support them in the development and implementation of human diversity policies.
- School Boards – are responsible for establishing a respect for human diversity policy, which complies with the legislation. The board is also responsible to ensure, regular policy review.
- Turtle Mountain School Division plays a leading role in overall policy implementation, promoting respect for human diversity and communicating policy expectations to staff, students, parents, and community. This includes enhancing divisional materials and resources, and providing training and professional development for teachers and other staff on areas of human diversity. Divisions set standards for student conduct and develop procedures and protocols for addressing unacceptable conduct or discrimination.
- School Administrators – play a leadership role at the school level in promoting safety and acceptance to ensure a safe and inclusive school environment. Principals communicate and reinforce expectations of respecting human diversity policy to teachers and school staffs and encourage their participation in professional development and training on human diversity and related topics. Principals hold those who disrespect human diversity accountable by following established processes and protocols and maintain appropriate records at the school.
- Teachers and other staff – model inclusiveness and respect for human diversity and play a key role in communicating and reinforcing expectations of respecting human diversity policy to students. They support students on issues of human diversity and empower them to treat each other and dignity and acceptance. Under the legislation teachers and school staffs have an expanded duty to report matters of cyberbullying to the principal, whether it is believed to be happening at school or outside of regular school hours. Participation in professional development and training is essential in ensuring teachers and school staffs have the tools and knowledge they need to deal appropriately and effectively with sensitive student issues regarding human diversity.
- Students – have responsibility to monitor their own interactions and conduct in ways that ensure a welcoming, safe and inclusive school environment; particularly toward those previously identified as being at higher risk for bullying discrimination.
- Parents and guardians – play an important role in their children's understanding and respect for human diversity. Parents have responsibility to encourage their children to conduct themselves in ways that contribute to a safe and inclusive school environment.

### Dealing with Discrimination

Turtle Mountain School Division will respond to the incident under the appropriate authority. If the incident originates with a student or students, the Division/School Code of Conduct will apply. If the incident involves school or school division staff, or complaints from the public Division/School policy will apply.

**Policy Review and Evaluation**

The Turtle Mountain School Division will identify and collect relevant data and monitor implementation to inform future policy refinements and evaluate the impact of this respect for human diversity policy. Data may include, but is not limited to: initiation/access to diverse organizations, professional development accessed by staff, discipline reports, verbal or written reports to administrators, and so forth.

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