



## Action Steps to Access Student Voice and Supports

The right of each student to be free from harassment, violence or malice in speech or in action is unequivocal, and the Halton Catholic District School Board carries the clear obligation to provide positive school environments for all students and staff.

In the following action plan, our Board identifies strategies to achieve the objectives articulated by the Bishops of Ontario: *“that all students in schools feel safe and respected. Our objective is that each student be treated with dignity, for each is a child of God.”*

The below suggested action steps outline the implementation of the Equity and Inclusive Education Policy II-45, with respect to the consultation process and the supports for students to ensure that our schools provide safe, inclusive, equitable and supportive learning environments for all of our students regardless of race, origin, gender, sexual orientation or ability.

### Action Steps to Access Student Voice and Supports

#### 1. “By Your S.I.D.E. (Safety, Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity)” Secondary School Student Focus Groups

Guided by faculty advisors consisting of one administrator, a chaplaincy leader and at least one other staff member (Child and Youth Counsellor, Social Worker, Teacher) students will be invited to dialogue concerning issues of equity, inclusivity, diversity and safety in order to determine how our schools may be more welcoming for all members within our school communities. Student senate members will be encouraged to participate in order to share school generated discussion outcomes with the Student Senate and Student Trustees.

#### 2. Student Senate and Student Trustee Dialogue

Student Senate members and Student Trustees will bring forth discussion outcomes from the “By Your S.I.D.E.” Focus Groups established in each secondary school. The Student Senate will make recommendations that support ways to make our schools more welcoming for all members of our school communities. Board staff will receive the student recommendations in order to further enhance support programs.

#### 3. S.I.D.E. Spaces

Principals will identify two staff members to attend training in establishing **S.I.D.E. Spaces** in schools. The *Pastoral Guidelines to Assist Students of Same-Sex Orientation* will be included in this training. The purpose of the S.I.D.E. Spaces will be to allow students to access peer support without the danger or threat of non-acceptance in order to work together to make their schools more welcoming for all members of school communities, regardless of race, origin, gender, sexual orientation or ability. S.I.D.E. Spaces will benefit all students by addressing multiple types of discrimination, while promoting diversity, equity and inclusivity among the student body and school community.

#### 4. Networks Established with Catholic School Boards and Community Agencies

Our Board will continue to work closely with other Catholic Boards and community agencies to determine best practices in creating equity, inclusivity and safety in schools. The Halton Catholic School Board will continue to provide Catholic values training with community partners supporting Equity and Diversity initiatives.