

Voluntary, Confidential Self-Identification of First Nation, Métis and Inuit Students	
Adopted: April 6, 2010	Last Reviewed/Revised: April 16, 2024
Next Scheduled Review: 2026-2027	
Associated Policies & Procedures: I-02 Records and Information Management I-07 Protection of Privacy II-45 Equity and Inclusive Education VI-54 Equity and Inclusive Education	

Purpose

To develop effective self-identification policies that ensure First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students receive the highest possible quality of education; that all Halton Catholic District School Board (HCDSB) students will develop knowledge, critical literacy, understanding of contemporary and traditional First Nation, Metis, and Inuit traditions, cultures and perspectives, and the important contributions of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit communities to Ontario's cultural, economic and social future.

To realize the learning aspirations and potential of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students through a responsive, transparent and accountable policy that focuses on improved programs and services and builds on strong partnerships with First Nation, Métis and Inuit communities. Continued data collection and analysis will support future decision making surrounding First Nation, Métis, and Inuit student success.

Application and Scope

This policy applies to any student of First Nation, Métis, or Inuit ancestry attending schools in the HCDSB. A student who is 18 years of age or older, or a student (16 or 17) who has withdrawn from parental/guardian control, has the right to self-identify. For students under 18 years of age, a parent or guardian will self-identify on their behalf.

The responsibility for implementation of this policy applies to the HCDSB's senior administration and school administrators.

References

[Anti-Racism Act, 2017](#)

[Building Bridges to Success for First Nation, Metis and Inuit Students, Ministry of Education, 2007](#)

[Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#)

[Education Act](#)

[Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection Privacy Act \(MFIPPA\)](#)

[OCAP - Ownership, Control, Access and Possession](#)

[Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework: Implementation Plan 2014](#)

[Ontario First Nation, Metis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework, Ministry of Education, 2007](#)

[Ontario Human Rights Code](#)

[Ontario Human Rights Commission: Policy on preventing discrimination based on creed \(2015\)](#)

[The Constitution Act, 1982](#)

[The Journey Together Ontario's Commitment to Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples](#)

[Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action \(2015\)](#)

[United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(2007\)](#)

Definitions

First Nation: A term that came into common usage in the 1970s to replace the word “Indian”, which many found offensive. The term “First Nation” has been adopted to replace the word “band” in the names of communities.

Indigenous peoples: The descendants of the original inhabitants of North America. Section 35(2) of the Constitution Act, 1982, states: “In this Act, ‘Aboriginal peoples of Canada’ includes the Indian, Inuit, and Métis peoples of Canada.” These separate groups have unique heritages, languages, cultural practices, and spiritual beliefs. Their common link is their indigenous ancestry.

Inuit: Indigenous people in northern Canada, living mainly in Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, northern Quebec, and Labrador. Ontario has a very small Inuit population. The Inuit are not covered by the Indian Act.

Métis people: People of mixed First Nation and European ancestry. The Métis history and culture draws on diverse ancestral origins, such as Scottish, Irish, French, Anishinaabe, and Cree.

Principles

- The Halton Catholic District School Board recognizes that all people are created equal, in the image of God, each with inimitable characteristics deserving of dignity (Genesis: 1:27). In accordance with the Church's teachings, it is the policy of the HCDSB to provide in all its operations an educational environment which supports and fosters diversity, equity and inclusion within its Catholic community.
- HCDSB is committed to providing a positive and inclusive Catholic learning environment which enhances the dignity and achievement of all members of its educational community. The HCDSB understands that accurate and reliable data is needed to ensure First Nation, Métis and Inuit students reach their full potential.
- **Excellence and Accountability**
HCDSB believes quality education is essential for the continuing development of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. The academic achievement of every First Nation, Métis, and Inuit student is supported through the delivery of quality education. The HCDSB provides support and resources for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students.
- **Equity and Respect for Diversity**
HCDSB creates and nurtures an academic environment for every First Nation, Métis, and Inuit student that promotes the development of a positive personal and cultural identity, as well as, a sense of belonging to both Indigenous and wider communities.
HCDSB creates and supports an academic environment that fosters First Nation, Métis, and Inuit languages and cultures. It acknowledges the diversity found in First Nation, Métis, and Inuit communities and endorses learning about First Nation, Métis, and Inuit cultures, histories, and perspectives in a Catholic education system.
- **Inclusiveness, Cooperation, and Shared Responsibility**
HCDSB recognizes that cooperation among governments, ministries, educational institutions (including the Ontario College of Teachers and faculties of education), and First Nation, Métis, and Inuit families, communities, and organizations is essential for the implementation of education programs and services designed for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students, regardless of where they live.
- **Respect for Constitutional and Treaty Rights**
HCDSB respects Indigenous and Treaty Rights protected by Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982.

Requirements

1. Engage with local First Nation, Métis and Inuit parents and communities to build understanding of Indigenous student self-identification and to increase the number of students/families that choose to self-identify. Self-identification data will be collected as part of the registration process for all students.
2. Ensure the self-identification process is responsive, transparent and accountable, and focuses on improving services and supports, building on strong partnerships with Indigenous parents and their communities.
3. Collect, analyse and report on data for self-identified Indigenous students to inform targeted strategies for increasing Indigenous student achievement and success. Data collected will be evaluated on an annual basis by school and board improvement learning teams to inform culturally relevant and responsive student programming.
4. Adhere to the collection, use, sharing and secure storage of data in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA). The HCDSB may make informed decisions regarding student achievement initiatives and supports. Data collected may be confidentially shared as required through the Ontario Student Information System (OnSIS) with the Ministry of Education and the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) for the purposes of funding and student achievement.

HCDSB recognizes research/data/statistics have, and continue to be used, to the detriment of Indigenous Peoples, communities, and Nations.

HCDSB will ensure Indigenous-related information, collection, analysis, management and use(s) of data is in accordance with all legal and ethical standards as outlined in policies, procedures and protocols for researching Indigenous Peoples (i.e. OCAP - Ownership, Control, Access and Possession).

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 HCDSB.

In matters pertaining to data, the HCDSB will engage in partnership and consultation with the Indigenous Education Advisory Committee (IEAC).

APPROVED: Regular Meeting of the Board



AUTHORIZED BY: _____

Chair of the Board