

**Edmonton Public Schools  
Terms of Reference**

**MULTICULTURALISM AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY  
POLICY REVIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Effective Date: October, 2018

Review Date: October 2020

**NAME OF COMMITTEE**

The Committee shall be known as the Multiculturalism and Cultural Diversity Policy Review Advisory Committee. This Advisory Committee is a sub-committee of the Trustee Policy Review Committee.

**BACKGROUND:**

The current Board Policy *GGAB.BP - Multicultural Education (previously also referred to as HGAB.BP and ACBA.BP)* was last approved on June 9, 2009, based on the Recommendation Report from the Multicultural Task Force established in November 12, 2008 (see attached Board Report, June 9, 2009)

Also in 2009, the Superintendent approved what continues to be our current Administrative Regulation *GGAB.AR - Multicultural Education (originally referred to as HGAB.AR)*.

Since the adoption of the Multicultural Education Policy and Administrative Regulation, the demographics of student populations across the District have continued to change, pointing to an ever heightened awareness of both the opportunities and challenges of diversity in the context of our schools. Considered from the perspective of English Language Learner (ELL) populations (one possible proxy measurement of diversity), the number of ELL students (both Canadian and Foreign born) rose from 13.9%, September 2009 to 26.1% as of September, 2018 (EPSB Student Information).

In addition to the shifting demographics within our school population, it is also worth noting that a number of recent initiatives have been undertaken by both the Province and the City of Edmonton in establishing Anti-Racism Advisory Committees. No doubt, one need only skim through the news headlines and social media of the past few years to recognize the increasing emotional sensitivities related to issues of diversity and pluralism across the socio-political landscape.

As with the 2008 Recommendation Report, the proposed plan for 2018-2019 is to begin by establishing an Advisory Committee to make recommendations to enhance the educational experience of all student populations, with a specific policy focus on

inclusion, equity and belonging to better reflect the diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds of our student demographics.

## **VISION AND PURPOSE**

The primary impetus for this initiative is to review current approaches, challenges and opportunities surrounding Multicultural Education as currently implemented and practiced across the District. Following consultations with all stakeholders, recommendations will be provided to the Trustee Policy Sub-Committee, Board of Trustees, and Administration, to update the current Board Policy *GGAB.BP - Multicultural Education* and Administrative Regulation *GGAB.AR - Multicultural Education*.

The Multicultural and Cultural Diversity Advisory Committee shall be a structured vehicle established to ensure engagement of parents, guardians, staff, students, and community members in providing input into and supporting cultural diversity, equity and inclusion within the District. It may provide for continued two-way communication and dialogue between the Administration and Committee members relating to policies, regulations or practices regarding diversity and a sense of belonging for all students across the District.

## **ACTIVITIES AND OBJECTIVES**

Activities of the Committee will provide opportunities for the Board and Administration to bring forward items for information, deliberation and advice, and for parent, guardian, staff, student and community members to bring forward items to inform the District of multiple voices to articulate aspirations for an inclusive education system.

The work of the Committee enhances the work of the District in addressing and supporting an inclusive and equitable learning environment for a student population with increasingly more diverse backgrounds, needs, interests and associated family and community connections.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO THE DISTRICT**

Committee members will serve in an advisory role, with the level of participation falling in the Consult and Involve categories as defined on the Spectrum of Public Participation by the [International Association for Public Participation \(IAP2\)](#):

- Consult is defined as “to obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.”
- Involve means “to work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.”

The Committee has otherwise, no decision-making power or authority, as advice from the Committee is intended to enhance understanding and consideration of parental and

community perspectives and to inform a Recommendation Report to the Trustee Policy Sub-Committee toward a revised Board Policy for approval by the Board of Trustees, and subsequently, an Administrative Regulation for approval by the Superintendent.

Members of the Committee may neither assume responsibility for work of the District, nor represent Edmonton Public Schools, nor the Committee, in any other forum. Members of the Committee may not, in their role as Committee members, act as advocates or mediators in any individual situation.

All Committee members acknowledge that Edmonton Public Schools is subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIP), and will abide by the requirements of FOIP insofar as applicable to the operations of the Committee. Accordingly, no discussion of named students or parents/guardians or District staff shall occur within Committee discussions.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Membership will include Trustees, Parent/ Guardians , Central and School Staff, Student representatives, Community Partners. Parents/Guardians, School Staff and Community Partners will be selected by a public application process. Student representatives will be invited through Student Senate. Membership is voluntary. The Committee shall consist of up to 30 members, representing a balance of group composition, from parent, guardian, school staff, student and community members (five to seven of each group).

Central consultants from Inclusive Learning, Diversity Education and Comprehensive School Health Unit, shall serve to support the committee, as committee chair, notetakers, or other administrative functions determined in consultation with the Trustee Policy Sub-Committee. The engagement process may also include focus groups to be set up once the work of the Advisory Committee is underway.

Parents, guardians and community members normally serve a minimum of two years or until the review of the policy is complete. Students may serve a minimum of one year or until the review of the policy is complete.

Application for Membership: Parents, guardians or community members interested in Committee membership shall submit a formal application, outlining their interest, related skills or abilities, affiliation(s) with community or advocacy groups, and include two character references that the Administration may contact.

As necessary, Administration may solicit membership for the Committee by placing advertisements on the District website, in school newsletters or in local media, asking for applications from interested parents/guardians or community members. Advertisements would normally occur near the end of each two-year period, when the intentions of existing Committee members become known.

Selection, tenure and replacement of parent/guardian and community members shall be at the discretion of the Administration, using the preceding guidelines, and with the intent of seeking a balance of representation, both of parents or guardians with children currently attending Edmonton Public Schools, and of other interested community members. If a large number of applications are received, interviews may be arranged to assist in the selection process.

## **MEETINGS**

Committee meetings will be chaired by a District staff member representing the Administration.

There will be no expectations around quorum for a meeting; however, each Committee member is expected to commit to attending each meeting during their membership period, and otherwise communicate any unexpected absences to the Chair in advance of the meeting.

**Schedule of Meetings:** The Committee will meet approximately three times per school year, with dates arranged at the discretion of the Chair, in consultation with the Trustee Policy Sub-Committee. Meetings will normally last about two hours each, and depending on availability of the Committee members, may be scheduled during daytime hours or during early evenings (6:30–8:30 p.m.), in the Conference Centre at the Centre for Education (unless otherwise indicated). Duration of a meeting, however, may be occasionally extended, should a simple majority among all members vote for extension.

**Structure of Meetings:** The Chair will solicit agenda items beginning two weeks prior to each meeting, and an agenda will be prepared in advance for each meeting. Standing agenda items shall include information and requests for advice from the Administration, as well as issues, suggestions, or questions from Committee members. Any Committee member may, with reasonable notice, propose agenda items to the Chair, including during the meeting start up, when the agenda is reviewed and approved.

**Criteria for Agenda Items:** Agenda items will include a balance of information and advice requests from the Administration, agenda items proposed by Committee members, and a round table sharing session. Agenda items not covered (due to time) will be tabled for the next meeting.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Role of Committee Members:** Each member is committed to providing and promoting working environments that foster respectful and responsible behaviour. It is the responsibility of Committee members to contribute to creating a positive working environment in all activities of the Committee (source: Board Policy AE.BP - [Welcoming, Inclusive, Safe and Healthy Learning and Working Environments](#)).

Role of the Chair: To solicit and collect agenda items; provide agendas in advance of meeting dates; chair meetings; facilitate the orderly discussion of agenda items; ensure positive and respectful conversation; and distribute meeting summaries and an annual Committee activity summary to Committee members and Administration. At their sole discretion, the Chair may remove, either temporarily or permanently, any member from the Committee who acts in contradiction to these Terms of Reference.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Committee contact information and Terms of Reference shall be posted to the district website. Contact information (i.e., e-mail address, telephone number) of Committee members shall (with permission) be distributed to Committee members.

Meeting summaries shall be distributed to Committee members and to the District Support Team (i.e., Superintendent of Schools, Assistant Superintendents, and Executive Directors).

Records and correspondence will be maintained by Edmonton Public Schools' Strategic District Supports. The District records retention schedule of three years for Committee records shall apply.

## **RESOURCES AND BUDGET**

District commitment

- a. Meeting space and public parking will be provided.
- b. If the meeting is held during the day, light refreshments or lunch will be provided. If the meeting is held early evening, supper will be provided.
- c. Childcare will be provided, if requested in advance, for evening meetings.

## **DURATION**

The Terms of Reference shall be reviewed by the Committee towards the end of each District three-year planning cycle – with advice to make modifications, or to continue or disband the Committee – provided through the Chair of the Committee to the Administration for decision.

## **RELATED POLICIES AND REGULATIONS**

AA.BP - Stakeholder Relations

AD.BP - District Vision, Mission, Values and Priorities

AE.BP - Welcoming, Inclusive, Safe and Healthy Learning and Working Environments

AEBB.BP - Wellness of Students and Staff

AGA.BP - Recognition of Students, Staff, Parents and Community

GGAB.BP - Multicultural Education

HA.BP - Inclusive Education

HAA.BP - Aboriginal Education

HFA.BP - Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

HG.BP - Student Behaviour and Conduct

## **PROVINCIAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTS OF RELEVANCE**

Canadian Multicultural Act (1988)

<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/PDF/C-18.7.pdf>

The Constitution Act (1982)

(a) The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

(b) The Rights of Aboriginal Peoples

[http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/PDF/CONST\\_E.pdf](http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/PDF/CONST_E.pdf)

Alberta Human Rights Act (Current as of 2018)

<http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/A25P5.pdf>

UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

[http://www.un.org/en/udhrbook/pdf/udhr\\_booklet\\_en\\_web.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/udhrbook/pdf/udhr_booklet_en_web.pdf)

UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity:

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001271/127162e.pdf>

UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child:

<https://www.unicef.org/malaysia/1959-Declaration-of-the-Rights-of-the-Child.pdf>