

DATE: June 11, 2019

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Trustee Sherry Adams, Policy Review Committee
Trustee Trisha Estabrooks, Chair, Policy Review Committee
Trustee Bridget Stirling, Policy Review Committee

SUBJECT: Board Policy HAA.BP First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Third and Final Reading

ORIGINATOR: Karen Mills, Director Board and Superintendent Relations

RESOURCE STAFF: Clarice Anderson, Marnie Beaudoin, Ann Parker, Nancy Petersen

REFERENCE: [HAA.BP Aboriginal Education Board Policy CH.BP – Framework for Policy Development and Review Dec 11, 2018, public Board meeting, Item 3](#)

ISSUE

The Policy Review Committee is presenting draft Board Policy HAA.BP First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education for third and final reading.

BACKGROUND

- As part of the 2017-2018 Policy Review Committee Work Plan, the Board engaged with a range of stakeholders, including students, staff, community members and parents around the review of Board Policy HAA.BP Aboriginal Education. Feedback from this consultation helped to inform the development of draft Board Policy HAA.BP First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education.
- On June 19, 2018, the draft policy was brought forward to the Board of Trustees for first reading. After first reading, an online survey was posted to the District website to obtain stakeholder feedback on the draft policy. The Policy Review Committee used this feedback to inform changes to the draft Board Policy HAA.BP First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education.
- On December 11, 2018, the draft policy was brought forward to the Board of Trustees for second reading. Following second reading, the Board further engaged with a range of stakeholders, including students, staff, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, community stakeholders and parents around the revised draft. Engagement was conducted through in-person sessions and an online survey.
 - The online survey was open from January 11 to February 10, 2019, and received responses from the following groups:
 - District parents (50 responses)
 - Non-District parents (3 responses)
 - District students (6 responses)
 - District staff members (91 responses)
 - Community members (3 responses)
 - Community organizations (3 responses)
 - In-person sessions included the following groups:

- District students
- District parents
- District staff
- Elders and Knowledge Keepers
- Community stakeholders
- Feedback summarized from the online survey and in-person sessions expressed support for:
 - The overall direction of the draft policy
 - The clarity of the draft policy
 - How the draft policy reflects the District’s responsibilities to truth and reconciliation
- This feedback also provided suggestions for improvements to the draft policy and constructive questions for the Policy Review Committee’s reflection.
- Based on this feedback, changes have been made to the Purpose, Definitions, Policy, and References sections of the document.
- These specific changes include:
 - Adjustment to the language of all terms in the Definitions section to enhance clarity and understanding.
 - Addition of the following terms to the Definitions section:
 - Aboriginal
 - Indigenous
 - Traditional Protocol
 - Adjustment of language throughout the document, including:
 - The addition of the word “truth” to accompany “reconciliation”
 - Language to more accurately describe truth and reconciliation, colonization and the importance of Treaty 6
 - The removal of words identified as problematic or redundant
 - Ensuring the use of asset-based language
 - Addition of recently revised Professional Practice Standards to the References section:
 - Teaching Quality Standard (TQS)
 - Leadership Quality Standard (LQS)
 - Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard (SLQS)

RELATED FACTS

- The Policy Review Committee brought revised Board Policy HAA.BP First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education to the Board of Trustees for first reading in June 2018, and for second reading in December 2018.
- The Board conducted extensive stakeholder engagement to inform the revision of the policy, including in-person sessions with students, staff, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, community stakeholders and parents, as well as two publicly available online surveys.
- As a result of this stakeholder engagement, the Policy Review Committee made final revisions to draft Board Policy HAA.BP First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education.

RECOMMENDATION

That Board Policy HAA.BP First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education be considered for the third and final time and approved.

OPTIONS

Based on the information provided in this report, the following options are considered most appropriate:

1. Accept and approve the draft Board Policy HAA.BP First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education as presented for third reading.
2. Provide feedback and/or request changes to the draft Board Policy HAA.BP First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education.

CONSIDERATIONS and ANALYSIS

- The active Board Policy HAA.BP Aboriginal Education requires revisions to align with:
 - Current District values and practices.
 - Current terminology, knowledge, understandings and overall societal context.
 - Current District policy template.
- The scheduled review year for Board Policy HAA.BP Aboriginal Education was 2014.

NEXT STEPS

Once approved, Board Policy HAA.BP First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education will be posted on the District public website. The Superintendent will revise Administrative Regulation HAA.AR Aboriginal Education to reflect alignment with the policy.

ATTACHMENTS and APPENDICES

ATTACHMENT I Draft Board Policy HAA.BP First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education

TE:mb

CODE: HAA.BP

EFFECTIVE DATE: (22-05-2007)

TOPIC: First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education

ISSUE DATE: (24-05-2007)

REVIEW YEAR: (2014)

PURPOSE

- To affirm the Board of Trustees' (the Board) responsibility in supporting First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students to thrive within a welcoming, inclusive, safe and healthy learning environment that is respectful of and responsive to students' life experiences.
- To support a District culture that promotes truth and reconciliation through the acknowledgement of the impact of colonization and intergenerational loss of language, culture, identity and relationships on children, families and communities.
- To strengthen the learning and academic achievement of students through collaborative relationships with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit parents/guardians, grandparents and other family members, Elders, Knowledge Keepers and community members.

DEFINITIONS

Aboriginal is used in the context of the Indigenous peoples of a particular country. Section 35(2) of Canada's *Constitution Act, 1982* states "Aboriginal peoples of Canada includes the Indian (status and non-status), Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada." The word "Indigenous" is often used instead of "Aboriginal".

Colonization refers to the period of European colonization from Columbus (1492) to present day in the Americas, Oceania, Asia and Africa. Colonizers impose their institutions and belief systems in the already inhabited lands, which negatively impacts the social, cultural, spiritual and political structures and practices of the Indigenous peoples. This results in the intergenerational loss of language, culture and relationships on children, families and communities.

Elder is a First Nations, Métis, or Inuit individual recognized by their community for their wisdom that has been passed down through the generations pertaining to traditions, knowledge, spirituality, culture and language.

First Nations refers to a distinct nation or group of Indigenous people with their own languages, traditions, protocols, spiritual and cultural practices. Each group has their own traditional government with hereditary leaders or leaders chosen by the people of the group.

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit is used to refer to the diversity of Indigenous peoples. This diversity is represented in part through the different languages, communities and groups of the Indigenous peoples in Alberta.

Indigenous is used internationally to refer to the descendants of the original inhabitants of an area.

Intergenerational Trauma happens when the transfer of knowledge, language, culture and values from one generation to the next is broken; for example, the impact of Indian Residential Schools. Intergenerational trauma reverberates through individuals, families and communities resulting in a legacy of loss that persists across multiple generations.

Inuit means “the people” in the Inuktitut language. Inuit communities are spread across the vast region of Canada referred to as “Inuit Nunangat”, an Inuit term that includes land, water, and ice. Inuit have an oral history with distinct traditions, languages, beliefs, songs, art and culture.

Knowledge Keepers are individuals recognized by Elders and their community as having knowledge and wisdom related to First Nations, Métis, or Inuit cultural practices, customs, history, values and language. Knowledge Keepers are sometimes referred to as “cultural advisors”.

Métis means a person who self identifies as Métis and is recognized by a Métis community. Métis are distinct from other Indigenous peoples, and have their own history, culture, language, flag, songs, dance and stories.

Reconciliation is the process and goal of creating societal change through a fundamental shift in thinking and attitudes. Reconciliation involves learning about historical and contemporary First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives and experiences that are grounded in experiential truth, including residential schools and treaties. Fundamental to reconciliation are mutually respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

Traditional Protocol is the presentation of tobacco or a gift to an Elder or Knowledge Keeper. Protocol represents a verbal contract between two parties, as the Elder or Knowledge Keeper is agreeing to the request and the person offering protocol is committing to respect the process. The use of protocol is dependent on the cultural practices of the Elder, Knowledge Keeper and the community.

Treaty 6 is an agreement signed in 1876 between Crown representatives and First Nations leaders that outlines the rights, obligations and benefits of the signing parties to each other. This commitment was acknowledged through a ceremonial and sacred agreement that incorporated the spirit and intent for treaties to last “as long as the sun shines, the grass grows and rivers flow.” According to the Confederacy of Treaty 6 First Nations, the total area of the Treaty stretches from western Alberta, through Saskatchewan and into Manitoba; and includes 50 First Nations. Provisions in Treaty 6 recognize the medicine chest as well as the right to education. Edmonton Public Schools is located on Treaty 6 territory.

POLICY

The intent of this policy is to strengthen First Nations, Métis, and Inuit student academic achievement in learning environments that are equitable, culturally responsive and meaningful. This policy also supports the belief that the inclusion of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives and knowledge will benefit all students.

The Board acknowledges and respects Treaty 6 territory on which the Edmonton Public School District resides and recognizes and celebrates the history and significance of this land and the people who came

before us. The Board acknowledges that we are all Treaty people and that Treaty 6 signifies the ongoing agreement and relationship among Treaty people living together on this land.

The Board confirms its commitment and role in actively supporting truth and reconciliation and recognizes that working towards this vision is for the benefit of students, staff and the community.

The Board welcomes and embraces the rich cultural diversity of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students. The Board recognizes that respect for historical and contemporary First Nations, Métis, and Inuit knowledge, perspectives, contributions, cultural beliefs, traditions, languages and values contributes to welcoming, inclusive, safe and healthy learning and working environments for everyone.

The Board respects the learning potential and aspirations of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students and supports the establishment of conditions under which the full capacity of students is realized.

The Board recognizes that creating learning and working environments where First Nations, Métis and Inuit students thrive is a shared responsibility reflecting the collaborative efforts of students, District staff, parents/guardians, grandparents and other family members, Elders, Knowledge Keepers and community members. The Board values building and nurturing these positive relationships.

A. WELCOMING, INCLUSIVE, SAFE AND HEALTHY LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

The Board understands that developing relationships to learn about each student's life experiences enriches the school community and strengthens student success and achievement. We commit to such relationships through:

1. nurturing a positive sense of self and promoting a sense of belonging within the school community
2. strengthening intentional understanding, respect and recognition of historical and contemporary First Nations, Métis, and Inuit knowledge, perspectives, contributions, cultural beliefs, traditions, languages and values
3. supporting culturally responsive learning and working environments that weave in First Nations, Métis, and Inuit ways of knowing, being and doing.

B. TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

The Board commits to the ongoing process of truth and reconciliation and recognizes the importance of truth and opportunities that support reconciliation within school communities. The Board acknowledges the harmful impacts of systemic racism on First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students, families and communities. We are working towards truth and reconciliation through:

1. committing resources and building organizational capacity to support First Nations, Métis, and Inuit student success and academic achievement
2. supporting professional learning and capacity building of District staff to meet the learning needs of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit and all other students
3. supporting education that reflects historical and contemporary First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives and experiences, including but not limited to: treaties and agreements with First Nations, Métis legislation and agreements, the legacy of residential schools, the Sixties Scoop, and Eskimo Identification tags

4. supporting students, staff and District leaders to build and apply knowledge and understanding about First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives, contributions, cultural beliefs, traditions, languages and values
5. using culturally responsive resources that reflect and demonstrate the strength and diversity of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit cultures and communities
6. acknowledging the impacts of intergenerational trauma
7. practicing culturally responsive protocols to develop mutually respectful relationships
8. supporting opportunities for students to participate in language and cultural learning experiences related to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit cultures and communities.

C. STUDENT SUCCESS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

The Board commits to strategic efforts that support the success and academic achievement of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students. The Board confirms this work is realized through a focus on the strengths and potential of students. We are working towards this through:

1. building and nurturing relationships with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit parents/guardians, grandparents and other family members, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and community members to support student success within the school community
2. identifying and using instructional and assessment strategies that strengthen First Nations, Métis, and Inuit student engagement and learning
3. identifying and using culturally relevant resources
4. analyzing a range of data to support evidence-based decisions relevant to student success
5. identifying culturally relevant research and implementing research-based practices that strengthen First Nations, Métis, and Inuit student engagement and learning.

EXPECTATIONS

The Superintendent of Schools will implement this policy by assigning roles and responsibilities, and developing administrative regulations, processes and best practices.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Superintendent will provide an annual update to the Board around progress made in support of reconciliation, student success and achievement, within a welcoming, inclusive, safe and healthy environment.

The District will provide an annual update on progress and priority strategies that support First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students through the Annual Education Results Report to Alberta Education.

REFERENCES

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

GGAB.BP – Multicultural Education

HAA.AR – Aboriginal Education

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action

Honouring the Truth, Reconciling the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

Teaching Quality Standard

Leadership Quality Standard

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