



# Commitment to **EDDI**

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Lester B. Pearson School Board

Equity, Diversity, *Dignity* and *Inclusion*



# Equity, Diversity, Dignity and Inclusion

The Lester B. Pearson School Board is committed to **equity, diversity** and **inclusion** (EDI). It is understood that achieving excellence by maximizing the potential of each individual requires that:

- **equity** work be central
- **diversity** be viewed as 'normalized difference' and
- **inclusion** is understood as 'belonging before achieving'

EDI work assumes greater significance when **dignity** is upheld as the mechanism through which EDI values are championed. **Dignity** means equal worth and honour and not being 'othered', hence the acronym EDDI. Highlighting **dignity** emphasizes the need to humanize EDI work and demands inquiry into abuses of power. The Lester B. Pearson School Board affirms **dignity** as an inalienable right. Leveraging empathy and vulnerability, EDDI strengthens the Lester B. Pearson School Board's values of integrity, respect and community.<sup>1</sup>

The importance of including **dignity** as part of the efforts used across the system at the LBPSB was brought forward by the Educational Services Department's Anti-Racist Pedagogical Consultant, Patricia Blackett. Ms. Blackett emphasizes the importance of highlighting **dignity** in our work; she is intentional about collaborating with schools to center EDDI through courageous conversations that build racial literacy and are transformative.

<sup>1</sup>Cobb, Floyd, Krownapple, John. *Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity: The Keys to Successful Equity Implementation*. Mimi & Todd, 2019



Teacher, Macdonald High School

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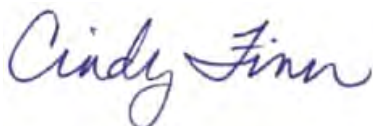
Student, Sunshine Academy

## Message from the Director General and Chairperson

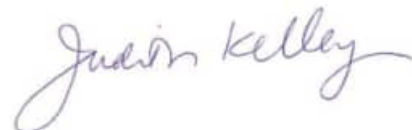
*The Lester B. Pearson School Board acknowledges that its offices, schools, and centres are located on the unceded territory of the Kanien'kehá:ka People. Lester B. Pearson School Board honours, recognizes and respects the Kanien'kehá:ka people as the traditional stewards of the land and waters and recognizes that this land has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst nations.*

At the Lester B. Pearson School Board, our priority is achieving excellence by maximizing the potential of each individual. Community, inclusion, innovation, integrity, and respect are the core values that hold up our school board. As such, we strive to create an environment where each member of the LBPSB is honoured and respected, and to ensure a safe environment where every individual can flourish.

We believe that education plays a fundamental role in the creation and understanding of societal values, and the LBPSB pledges to do its part to work towards building a better future. As we work towards greater equity through education and accountability, it is our responsibility to consider the diverse voices of the LBPSB community and to work together to support and uplift our students, staff, and those living within our service area.



Cindy Finn  
Director General



Judith Kelley  
Chairperson



Students, Forest Hill Jr.

## Vision

Achieving excellence by maximizing the potential of each individual.

## Values

Community – We promote local and global citizenship through strong engagement.

Inclusion – We reflect and celebrate diversity.

Innovation – We support creativity and a spirit of inquiry.

Integrity – We commit to honesty, equity, and accountability.

Respect – We foster a respectful, nurturing and safe environment.

## Commitment to Success

1. Everyone achieving their full potential.
2. An inclusive environment for development, learning and success.
3. Mobilization of partners and stakeholders in support of educational success.

# Introduction

In the Spring of 2020, two students at a LBPSB secondary school created a video that was based on the denigration of a visible ethno-cultural group. As part of a response to this incident that took place within the LBPSB community, and other events around the world, issues of systemic racism, inequity and injustice were brought to the forefront and a Task Force on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) was created at the Lester B. Pearson School Board.

From its inception in June 2020, the Task Force was mandated to develop evidence-based recommendations that could be shared with all LBPSB schools, centres and departments.

The Task Force charged ahead during the 2020–2021 academic year. The areas they focused on were: genders, sexualities, abilities, races and ethnicities, and religions. As stated in the Task Force report, focusing on creating solutions to address these areas as stand alone topics for consideration would be remiss as an approach since issues of intersectionality must be taken into account.

By June 2021, the Task Force submitted a final report to the LBPSB that included several recommendations. The recommendations were to be used as a springboard for actions across the system.

The importance of incorporating dignity as an integrated component in EDI work was brought forward by the Educational Services Department and adopted during the 2021–2022 school year to become EDDI.

During the 2021–2022 school year, the LBPSB took action by striking various committees to move the EDDI work forward. The committees created included a Steering Committee, Working Committees and an Advisory Committee, each tasked with specific responsibilities. The Central Students Committee are also listed as a resource and ally in planning the work.

To unify the efforts of these committees, this document was created as a guiding tool and as a way for each group to be accountable to, and transparent with, our community. This document also outlines the four pillars central to our work.



Students, PACC Adult Education Centre



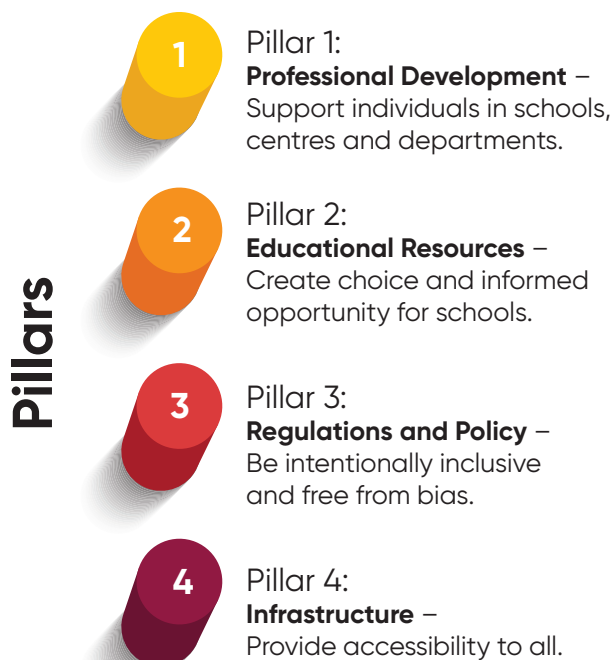
Principal, Beaconsfield High School

# Moving Forward

The Lester B. Pearson School Board is invested in actions that will result in positive change for students, staff and families and serve as a catalyst for meaningful, long-term systemic change.

As an opening statement, it is important to note that, while the Task Force was conducting their research and while this document was being written, many actions and plans had been put into motion to address issues of inequity. It is equally important to acknowledge that despite our past and current efforts, there is a need for continuous improvement and a desire to be more intentionally inclusive, understanding and informed.

Certain critical themes and areas of importance emerged from the recommendations put forth from the Task Force and the lived, shared experience. As such, the areas of focus will be organized around 4 pillars: professional development, educational resources, regulations and policy, and infrastructure.



When considering the 4 pillars, it is important to note that they will be examined by, but not limited to, the areas outlined by the Task Force:

- genders
- sexualities
- abilities
- race and ethnicities
- religions



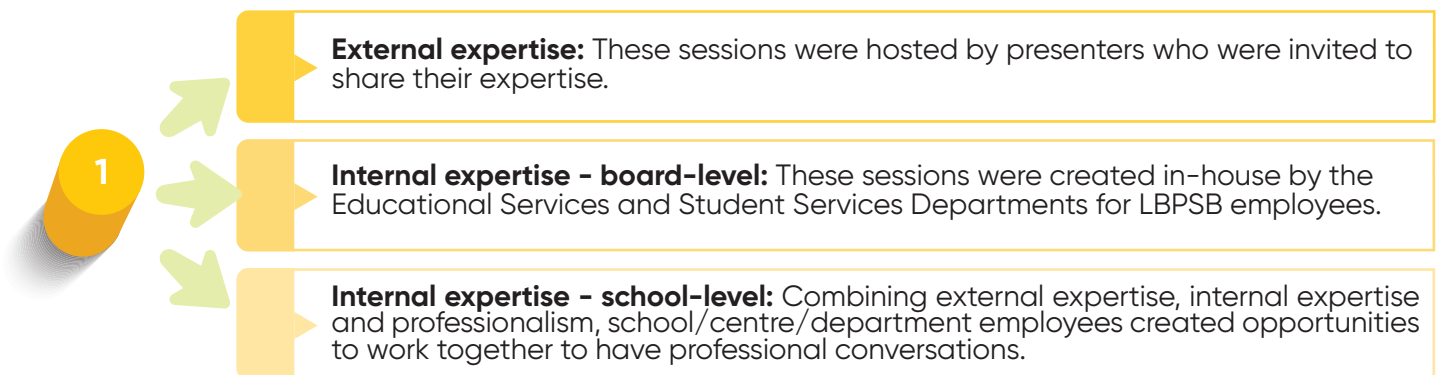
Students, St-Patrick Elementary

# PILLAR 1

**Pillar 1: Professional Development** – Support individuals in schools, centres and departments.

The events that occur in our schools, working environments, communities and the world impacts everyone and continuously shapes us. The Lester B. Pearson School Board aims to support staff and students as they navigate a complex world. This pillar focuses on LBPSB employees and provides opportunities.

Staff members will be provided opportunities for professional development and meaningful reflection on equity, diversity, dignity, and inclusion.



## Actions to support professional and personal development, and meaningful reflection:

- Develop and provide professional learning opportunities that promote:
  - Staff growth, understanding and empathy related to genders, sexualities, abilities, race and ethnicities and religions.
  - Build staff capacity related to the diverse histories, identities, and lived experiences of the students, staff and families within the community.
  - Teaching and learning through a diversity lens.
  - An opportunity for meaningful and personal reflection.
  - Removing barriers to success by addressing situations that contribute to marginalization and discrimination.



# PILLAR 2

## Pillar 2: Educational Resources – Create choice and informed opportunity for schools.

We need to consider the selection, verification and use of resources that will promote equity, diversity, dignity, and inclusion. The Lester B. Pearson School Board needs to ensure that they provide staff and students with resources that help support this goal. This pillar focuses on the educational experience for students.

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### Educational tools:

Resources that are used in the classroom for learning.

**Partnerships:** Community and schools/centres – community guests/members invited into schools/centres to share their expertise and experience.

### Actions to support selection and use of resources:

- Support teaching and learning through a perspective of diversity by:
  - Reviewing and updating teaching and learning resources to ensure that they support and reflect the diversity of our community.
  - Enhance school capacity to review, identify and use resources and materials that are culturally responsive.
  - Create positive connections with community members and organizations that support the provision of culturally meaningful learning and enrichment opportunities.



Students, Kingsdale Elementary

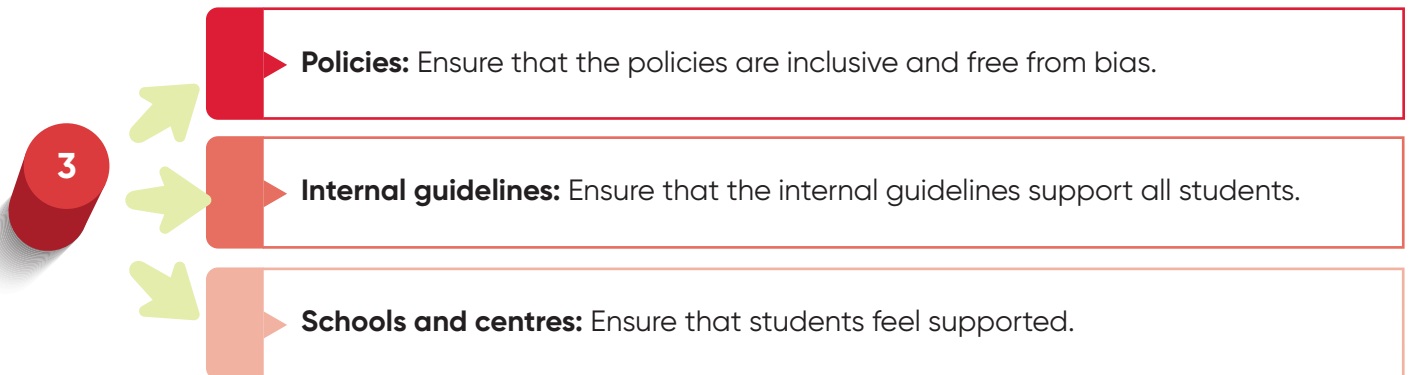
# PILLAR 3



Students, Beechwood Elementary School

## Pillar 3: Regulations and Policy – Be intentionally inclusive and free from bias.

It is important that our written regulations and policies are developed and used to anchor and guide our work of equity, diversity, dignity, and inclusion.



### Actions to support regulations and policy:

- Ensure that Lester B. Pearson School Board communications, policies, procedures, directives and guidelines are written and reviewed using an EDDI lens and consider issues of intersectionality.
- Communicate with various stakeholders to gain a diversity of perspectives and receive feedback on school board regulations and policies.



Teacher, Pierrefonds Community High School

# PILLAR 4

## Pillar 4: Infrastructure – Provide accessibility to all.

It is essential that the basic physical structures, organizational structures and facilities, are as accessible as possible to all members of our community. Both the physical space and the overall environment needs to be considered.

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**People:** Facilitating improvements across the system for employees.

**Physical spaces:** Both inside and outside the classroom.

**Data collection:** Addressing the lack of documentation and metrics to provide a realistic understanding of our students.

### Actions to support accessible infrastructure:

- Ensure that a mechanism for collecting data about needs of the community is put in place.
- Ensure that our grounds, buildings, hallways, classrooms and offices are assessed regularly in regards to accessibility and needs.
- Adapt physical spaces to meet a diversity of needs.
- Provide adaptive technologies/supports, as required.



Alumni, John Rennie High School



Students, Macdonald High School

# Organizing the Work

## The LBPSB has prioritized EDDI work.

The LBPSB has organized EDDI efforts through several committees. These committees are tasked with ensuring continued progress in each of the pillars.

### **Steering Committee**

The Lester B. Pearson School Board has established an internal Steering Committee to provide leadership, support and direction in our commitment to EDDI. Chaired by the Director General, this committee articulates the process and provides guiding principles to the other committees.

### **Working Committees**

Each administrative department of the Lester B. Pearson School Board has created their own Working Committee to carry out relevant Task Force recommendations. The director of the department is the defacto chair of the Working Committee unless they have selected another individual as chair. The chair determines the committee's composition, process, and priorities. The Working Committees report to the Steering Committee. The Working Committees create their work plan based on the recommendations provided by the Task Force. Where appropriate, the Working Committees engage schools and centres in EDDI planning.

### **Advisory Committee**

The Steering Committee established an internal Advisory Committee comprised of various employees with specific expertise and ties to the areas/lenses outlined by the Task Force (genders, sexualities, abilities, race and ethnicities, and religion). The Advisory Committee also includes representation from the Task Force. This committee connects with external community members/groups, as needed, for expertise, guidance and feedback.

### **Central Students' Committee**

The Central Students' Committee is a consultative body that represents students at the Lester B. Pearson School Board. It is comprised of one to three students from each of our high schools. They may be consulted and may act as a working committee.

## Next Steps

The Lester B. Pearson School Board is invested in actions that will result in positive change for students, staff and families and serve as a catalyst for meaningful, long-term systemic improvement.

The Lester B. Pearson School Board acknowledges that there is a long road ahead, but is committed to progress and to ensure that equity, diversity, dignity and inclusion remain a top priority.

Each of our pillars has a project plan to track progress that is supported by the working committees in each department. This project plan is an internal document that provides a detailed overview of work done within each pillar.

Annual progress related to the project plan will be shared with the community on the Lester B. Pearson School Board website and will include a tool for community members to provide feedback.



Students, PACC Vocational Training

# Appendix: Steering Committee members

## Members

**Chair:** Cindy Finn, Director General

Mathieu Canavan, Director of Educational Services

Debi Dixon, Director of Schools, Region 3

Francois Hamel, Director of Corporate Affairs and Legal Services

Joanne Malowany, Assistant Director of Communications and Community Development

Martine St-Pierre, Director of International Programs

# Advisory Committee members

## Members

**Chair:** Cindy Finn, Director General

Cynthia Labrecque Chauny

Jade Lawsane

Lisa Davis Mancini

Nathalie Constant

Patricia Blackett

Shari Waldrich

Tania Tabet

Mark Smith