



REGISTER OF OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, DIGNITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

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1. PURPOSE

The [Lester B. Pearson School Board](#) (LBPSB) is committed to fostering a school board culture where equity, diversity, dignity, and inclusion (EDDI) are primary values.

We acknowledge that [biases](#), racism, [discrimination](#), and inequities exist within society, perpetuating [privileges](#) for certain individuals and creating barriers for others.

To address these challenges, we are committed to recognizing and addressing inequities, eliminating barriers, and cultivating a respectful and inclusive environment through purposeful actions. We firmly believe that our work in Equity, Diversity, Dignity, and Inclusion is a collective responsibility involving the [LBPSB community](#)'s active participation.

The LBPSB is committed to an ongoing implementation of this policy by integrating its principles into LBPSB policies, guidelines, committees, practices, and programs. Additionally, we commit to annually communicating the outcomes of these efforts to the community, valuing and incorporating their feedback in our ongoing EDDI initiatives.

This policy is meant to:

- Help the LBPSB community recognize its shared responsibility to support the principles of equity, diversity, dignity, and inclusion in all aspects of the operations and services; and,
- Provide a common understanding of the principles of equity, diversity, dignity and inclusion as they apply to the LBPSB community (see Addendum A).

We aim to ensure that every individual of every race, culture, ethnicity, [gender](#), sexual orientation, ability, religion, or socioeconomic background feels respected, valued, and empowered to thrive academically, professionally, [socially](#), and emotionally.

This policy follows the principles of equity, diversity, dignity, and inclusion as outlined in the following legal frameworks:

- LBPSB Policies, By-laws, Directives, Procedures and Guidelines¹
- Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms²
- Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms³
- Quebec Civil Code⁴
- Quebec Act Respecting Labour Standards⁵
- Quebec Education Act⁶

¹ <https://www.lbpsb.qc.ca/council-of-commissioners/policies-and-by-laws/>

² <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/pch/documents/services/download-order-charter-bill/canadian-charter-rights-freedoms-eng.pdf>

³ <https://www.legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/document/cs/c-12>

⁴ <https://www.legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/document/cs/ccq-1991>

⁵ <https://www.legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/document/cs/n-1.1>

⁶ <https://www.lbpsb.qc.ca/council-of-commissioners/policies-and-by-laws/>



- United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights⁷
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples⁸

2. DEFINITIONS: PRINCIPLES OF EQUITY, DIVERSITY, DIGNITY AND INCLUSION

- 2.1. **Equity**: Equity is recognizing and valuing the diversity of individuals and communities. It acknowledges that people may experience multiple forms of discrimination or privilege based on intersecting aspects of their identity, such as race, gender, sexual orientation, culture and ability. It involves challenging systems and structures that prioritize certain groups over others and ensures the needs of [marginalized](#) or underrepresented groups are embedded in decision-making processes. Proactive measures are also taken to reduce inequalities and to eliminate [systemic barriers](#) so that all individuals can thrive. Equity practices support inclusive and respectful treatment of all people. Equity at the LBPSB means honouring, understanding and aiming to meet the specific needs of all individuals and diverse groups across the LBPSB in order to provide equality of opportunity for success. It also involves allies to do this work.
- 2.2. **Diversity**: Diversity means that there are different characteristics, [abilities](#), points of view and life experiences among people. It is all the things that make us unique, like how we look, think, learn or express ourselves. Also, factors like race, age, gender, religion, sexual orientation, and cultural background help shape our identity. Supporting diversity means fighting back against notions of desirable and undesirable characteristics, as well as notions of superiority and inferiority that influence how we view differences. Valuing and normalizing differences is an asset in our diverse school board community.
- 2.3. **Dignity**⁹: Dignity is the inherent equal value and worth that every person has simply because they are human. It is the right of a person to be honoured and respected and involves treating others with respect and kindness. Dignity is recognizing a person's rights and individuality and allowing them to maintain their pride and self-respect in all situations.
- 2.4. **Inclusion**: Inclusion is the practice of maintaining the dignity of every person ensuring that everyone feels accepted, valued, and welcomed as their unique selves. It involves removing barriers for students, staff, and community members to foster equal participation, opportunities and support. Central to the philosophy of inclusion are the beliefs that everyone belongs, diversity is valued, and that we can all learn from each other.

⁷ <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>

⁸ https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Publications/Declaration_indigenous_en.pdf

⁹ The LBPSB's anti-racist pedagogical consultant, Patricia Blackett, brought forth this value to our EDDI work.



3. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 Students: In a school community, students play an important role in upholding the principles of equity, diversity, dignity and inclusion. Students are expected to show respect to everyone, including themselves, and contribute to making their school a friendly and welcoming place for everyone. The school environment should be free from all discrimination, whether it be in the form of racism (such as [anti-Black](#), [anti-Indigenous](#), [anti-Asian](#), [anti-People-of-Colour](#), [anti-Semitic](#) and [Islamophobia](#)) or toward gender, [transphobia](#), sexuality, abilities, or religion. If students see or experience discrimination or bias, they should speak up and report it. Every school or centre has an anti-bullying and anti-violence plan and/or code of conduct to offer guidance in such situations.
- 3.2 Employees: The LBPSB is dedicated to providing all [employees](#) with the necessary tools and resources to create an equitable, positive, working and learning environment, free from all forms of racism and discrimination. Employees are encouraged to actively engage in training and professional development sessions. These sessions aim to deepen their understanding of EDDI-related topics, such as accessibility, [allyship](#), [anti-racism](#), [cross-cultural communication](#), inclusive leadership, [neurodiversity](#) support and workplace equity.

Employees are expected to uphold the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion within the workplace, fostering a dignity-centric environment. This includes continuously reflecting on personal biases and assumptions and making efforts to challenge and overcome them in interactions with others. To promote transparency and accountability, all employees are encouraged to report any instances of discrimination or bias they witness or experience, using the prescribed reporting procedures.

- 3.3 Commissioners & Administration: The Council of Commissioners and the administration are tasked with actively demonstrating leadership, commitment, and action toward establishing and maintaining an equitable, diverse, inclusive and dignity-centric school board. This requires making decisions and behaving in a manner consistent with these values. The Council and administrators also prioritize allocating resources, education, training, and accountability across the entire school board, including for themselves, to fulfill this responsibility. If any council member or member of the administration realizes their decisions contradict these values, they must promptly address the issue.



More specifically, the EDDI commitment will be present in this specific element:

3.3.1. **Policy Development:** New and revised policies are written and reviewed, using an EDDI lens while also considering matters of [intersectionality](#). In formulating policies, the unique perspectives of marginalized communities should be prioritized, recognizing that their insights may not typically be represented in the policy-making process. This contrasts with the traditional approach of solely prioritizing or focusing on the dominant group's experiences. Actively seeking the participation of diverse community members and those with expertise in EDDI can aid in incorporating various perspectives into the process.

3.4. **Committees:** All committees within the LBPSB are encouraged to value diverse perspectives, prioritize the needs of marginalized communities, and ensure their meetings are accessible for all participants. Additionally, they should actively promote EDDI principles in their decision-making processes and actions. This involves recognizing how decisions impact everyone involved, especially those who may face discrimination or exclusion.

At all Council of Commissioner committee meetings dedicated to matters within its mandate, discussions on EDDI will be included as a standing agenda item. This commitment aims to embed EDDI as fundamental principles guiding the council's actions and behaviours across all aspects of its work.

Furthermore, committee members are encouraged to educate themselves on matters related to equity, diversity, dignity, and inclusion to better understand how to promote these principles within their work. This may include attending training sessions and workshops or seeking resources provided by the school board or external organizations. If a committee becomes aware that they are not adhering to EDDI principles, prompt action is essential.

3.5. **Schools and Centres:** Schools and centres are responsible for integrating EDDI principles into their curriculum, activities, and environment. This includes creating inclusive spaces and promptly addressing instances of discrimination through established protocols or procedures. Additionally, it involves actively engaging with students, their families and community partners to promote inclusion and address diversity-related issues.

More specifically, the EDDI commitment will be present in these specific elements:

3.5.1. **Curriculum:** Every student has the right to see the breadth and scope of their humanity represented in the educational materials and activities made available to them, in alignment with the Quebec Education Program.



We are committed to supporting our educators in implementing a curriculum that is dignity-centric and [culturally responsive](#). We are also committed to providing educators with learning opportunities to develop teacher competence as it pertains to the principles of EDDI. We acknowledge the importance and interconnectedness of curriculum and community. As such we are committed to encourage the school community to engage in the Quebec Education Program through an EDDI lens.

- 3.5.2. Extra-curricular, School Activities and Events: Schools and centres are urged to actively include EDDI principles in the planning, approving, and carrying out of all events and activities. This involves proactively designing events to be inclusive from the start, by identifying and addressing any barriers that might prevent people from participating. These barriers could include things like physical accessibility, language barriers, cultural or religious needs, racial inequities, financial constraints.

This approach helps promote an inclusive and equitable environment, where everyone has the opportunity to participate, connect with others and feel like they belong.

- 3.6. Human Resources: As a public organization, LBPSB is committed to ensuring equal access to employment opportunities and actively seeks to diversify its workforce. HR plays a crucial role in implementing proactive strategies to reflect the diversity of the community in its workplace and promote inclusion.

In addition to adhering to equal access employment principles, HR actively develops and implements initiatives to attract, recruit, and retain a diverse pool of talent. LBPSB strives for equitable and unbiased recruitment and hiring practices. This includes targeted outreach efforts to underrepresented groups. Moreover, the hiring and promotion of staff are conducted while respecting the regulations and laws through collective and local agreements.

Furthermore, HR can play an important role in assisting employees in addressing barriers that prevent them from performing their duties effectively and participating fully in the workforce.

- 3.7. Parents/Guardians/Family Members: The parents, guardians and family members involved in a student's education play an important role in upholding the principles of EDDI within the school community. Supporting school initiatives, advocating for equity, treating school staff, students, and all members of the LBPSB community with dignity, acknowledging differences, and showing acceptance, are key to creating a welcoming environment where all feel valued and respected.



Moreover, when parents, guardians and family members witness or experience discrimination or bias within the school board community, they are urged to report these incidents following the guidelines outlined in By-Law 9, LBPSB Complaints Procedure.

- 3.8. Community Partners: The LBPSB has a multitude of community partners and is committed to building and enhancing collaborative and respectful partnerships. While working with the LBPSB, in any capacity, all community partners are expected to demonstrate inclusive practices and structures for inclusiveness while adhering to and participating in the LBPSB's commitment to EDDI.

4. REPORTING MECHANISMS

To uphold transparency and accountability, the LBPSB values open communication and feedback from all community members regarding the implementation of its policies.

If any issues arise regarding the application or implementation of this policy, individuals are encouraged to report their concerns promptly without fear of reprisals. Reports can be submitted through the LBPSB's designated channels, including LBPSB By-Law 9, Complaints Procedure¹⁰. All reports will be thoroughly investigated, and appropriate actions will be taken to address any identified issues. The LBPSB is committed to continuously improving the implementation of this policy and ensuring adherence to EDDI principles throughout its operations.

¹⁰ Refer to the website for more information on the complaint process: <https://www.lbpsb.gc.ca/parents-and-community/complaint-process/>



ADDENDUM A: GLOSSARY

Non-exhaustive definitions of some of the terms used in the policy.

Abilities: refers to a person’s full range of talent, skill or proficiency in cognitive, physical, sensory and emotional domains rather than placing emphasis on any limitations or challenges a person may face.

Allyship: refers to actively supporting individuals or groups who face discrimination or systemic oppression. Allies strive to understand and challenge their own biases, use their privilege to uplift marginalized voices, and work towards creating inclusive and equitable environments. Allies approach listening with humility, openness, and a willingness to learn. They avoid questioning or invalidating experiences, but instead listen attentively, acknowledging the impact of systemic oppression, and work towards understanding and dismantling the structures that perpetuate marginalization.

Anti-Asian Racism: refers to the historical and ongoing prejudice, discrimination, or hostility directed towards individuals who are of Asian descent or perceived to be of Asian descent. It involves the negative stereotyping and marginalization of individuals based on their Asian heritage, culture, or appearance.

“This includes perceptions of being a “Perpetual Foreigner,” a “Model Minority,” “exotic,” or “mystic. These stereotypes are rooted in Canada’s long history of racist and exclusionary laws, and often mask racism faced by peoples of Asian origin, while erasing their historical contributions to building Canada”.¹¹

Anti-Black Racism: is defined as policies and practices rooted in Canadian institutions such as education, that mirror and reinforce beliefs, attitudes, prejudice, stereotyping and/or discrimination towards people of Black-African descent. The term ‘Anti-Black Racism’ seeks to highlight the unique nature of systemic racism on Black people and their history as well as experiences of slavery and colonization of people of Black-African descent.¹²

Anti-Indigenous Racism: is prejudice, discrimination, or bias that specifically targets Indigenous individuals or communities. It involves treating Indigenous people unfairly or unfavorably because of their Indigenous heritage, perpetuating negative stereotypes, and denying them equal rights, opportunities, or dignity. “It includes ideas and practices that establish, maintain and perpetuate power imbalances, systemic barriers, and inequitable outcomes that stem from the legacy of colonial policies and practices in Canada which continue today”.¹³

¹¹ <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/asian-heritage-month/anti-asian-racism.html>

¹² <https://blackhealthalliance.ca/home/antiblack-racism/>

¹³ <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/systemic-racism-discrimination/anti-racism-toolkit/anti-racism-lexicon.html>



Anti-People-of-Colour Racism: a form of prejudice, discrimination, or bias that specifically targets individuals or communities based on their racial or ethnic background, with a focus on people who are non-white or belong to marginalized racial or ethnic groups. It involves attitudes, actions, policies, or systems that devalue, marginalize, oppress, or disadvantage individuals based on their race or ethnicity.

It is important to recognize that racism affects different racial and ethnic groups in distinct ways due to historical, social, and power dynamics.

Anti-Racism: an active and intentional commitment to challenging, confronting, and dismantling racism in all its forms. Anti-racism extends beyond abstaining from racist actions and beliefs; it entails actively engaging in efforts to confront and eliminate systemic, institutional, and individual racism.

Anti-Semitism: is a certain perception of Jewish people, which may be expressed as hatred or blame, stereotypes, myths and conspiracy theories. It is hostility, discrimination or prejudice against Jewish people as a cultural, religious, racial or ethnic group.

Biases: refers to preconceived notions or prejudices that can influence how individuals perceive, interact with, or make decisions about others. They are influenced by our experiences, beliefs, and societal influences. Biases can affect how we perceive, interpret, and judge people, situations, and information.

Biases can manifest in various ways. Some common examples include:

- Prejudice: Holding negative beliefs, attitudes, or stereotypes about certain groups of people.
- Discrimination: Treating people unfairly based on their race, gender, religion, or other characteristics.
- Favoritism: Showing preferential treatment towards people who belong to your own group or who share similar traits.
- Stereotyping: Making assumptions about individuals based on generalizations about their group, without considering their unique qualities.
- Confirmation bias: Seeking out or interpreting information that supports your existing beliefs, while ignoring or dismissing contradictory evidence.
- In-group bias: Favoring individuals who belong to the same group as you, while being more skeptical or distrustful of those from different groups.
- Halo effect: Forming an overall positive impression and judgement of someone based on one outstanding positive characteristic, without considering their other characteristics, as well.
- Availability bias: Relying heavily on information that is easily accessible or that comes to mind quickly, rather than considering a broader range of information.
- Cultural bias: This is the tendency to assess the world and make assumptions based on one's own background and culture, whether that is gender, race, sexual identity, or some other social construct while assuming their beliefs and understanding of the world are unanimous.



- **Unconscious bias¹⁴:** An unfair belief, assumption or generalization about an individual or group of people based on personal characteristics that occurs without one's knowledge. They are learned stereotypes that are unintentional and deeply ingrained. Unconscious biases are subtle, hidden, because they are activated automatically without being aware of them. Our unconscious biases are often incompatible with our conscious values. Recognizing and addressing biases requires self-awareness, open-mindedness, and a willingness to challenge our assumptions.

Community: the LBPSB community comprises all students, parents/guardians/family members, employees, council of commissioners, volunteers, educational and other partners.

Culturally responsive teaching: teaching in a way that respects and values students' diverse cultures and backgrounds. It involves making sure that students see themselves and their experiences reflected in the classroom. Teachers use materials, examples, and teaching methods that connect with students' cultures and make learning more meaningful and engaging for them.

Cross-cultural communication: is the exchange of information and ideas between individuals or groups from different cultural backgrounds. It involves understanding and navigating cultural differences to foster mutual understanding and effective communication. It requires being aware of cultural norms, values, and communication styles, and adapting one's approach to accommodate diverse perspectives. Cross-cultural communication promotes inclusivity, respect, and effective collaboration across cultural boundaries.

Discrimination: treating someone unfairly based on certain characteristics, such as their race, gender, religion, or ability. Discrimination can manifest in various forms, including exclusion, bias, prejudice, or unequal access to resources and services (not as part of an accommodation). It undermines equal rights and perpetuates social inequalities, creating barriers and disadvantages for those targeted by discriminatory practices.

Employees: refers to everyone employed by the Lester B. Pearson School Board including all union and non-union members.

Gender: is a social and cultural construct that encompasses the roles, behaviors, expectations, and identities that society assigns to individuals based on their perceptions of gender. It is influenced by cultural norms, beliefs, and practices. Gender includes aspects such as gender identity (one's deeply felt sense of being male, female, or another gender), gender expression (how one presents or expresses their gender), and gender roles (societal expectations for behavior based on gender).

¹⁴ Refer to: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/video/unconscious-bias-training.html>



Intersectionality: refers to how different aspects of a person's identity, like race, gender, age, or religion, can overlap or intersect to create unique experiences and challenges. It's like different layers of who we are, and each layer can affect how we experience the world around us. For example, someone's experience as a woman might be different from another woman's experience if she also belongs to a minority racial group or has a disability. So, intersectionality helps us understand that people's lives are shaped by a combination of factors, not just one.

Islamophobia: includes racism, stereotypes, prejudice, fear or acts of hostility directed toward individual Muslims or followers of Islam, in general. In addition to individual acts of intolerance and racial profiling, Islamophobia can lead to viewing and treating Muslims as a greater security threat on an institutional, systemic and societal level, regardless of actual data.

Lester B. Pearson School Board (LBPSB): refers to the legal entity that organizes, delivers and oversees educational and other services.

Marginalized: refers to groups or individuals who are treated as less significant or unimportant by society. They may face discrimination, limited opportunities, and barriers that prevent them from fully participating in various aspects of society. Marginalization can occur due to factors like race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, socioeconomic status or more. It means being excluded or ignored by society's mainstream or dominant groups.

Neurodiversity: a concept that recognizes and values the natural variations in neurocognitive functioning and neurological differences among individuals. It acknowledges that neurological differences, such as autism, ADHD, dyslexia, and other neurodevelopment conditions are normal variations of human brains rather than deficits or disorders. It promotes acceptance, understanding, and accommodations to ensure that everyone, regardless of their neurotype, can thrive and be included in society. Instead of focusing on trying to make people fit into a narrow mold of "normal," neurodiversity encourages creating environments that embrace and accommodate different ways of thinking and being.

Privilege: an advantage or benefit that someone enjoys solely based on their social status, identity, or circumstances, often without even realizing it. Privilege can manifest in various forms, such as racial privilege, gender privilege, or socioeconomic privilege. It provides certain individuals with advantages, opportunities, and protections that others may not have due to systemic biases or inequalities.

Social identities: refer to the various groups or categories that individuals belong to within society based on shared characteristics or experiences. These identities can include aspects such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic status, and ability, among others. Social identities play a significant role in shaping how individuals perceive themselves and are perceived by others, influencing their experiences, interactions, and opportunities within society.



Systemic barriers: obstacles or challenges that are built into systems or structures of society, making it difficult for certain individuals or groups to access opportunities, resources, or equitable treatment. They are not caused by individual actions or personal characteristics, but rather by the way society is organized and operates. Systemic barriers can be policies, practices, or cultural norms that unintentionally or intentionally disadvantage certain groups. They may result from historical inequalities, discrimination, or biased systems that perpetuate disadvantages for marginalized communities.

Transphobia: is an irrational fear of, aversion to, dislike, prejudice or discrimination against transgender people. Transphobia can include fear, aversion, hatred, violence or anger towards people who do not conform to the perceived gender norms.