

LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING DEPARTMENT

HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD



Assessing Learning Materials for Bias



All Students Achieving Their Full Potential



Acknowledgments

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board's Leadership and Learning Department
created *Assessing Learning Materials for Bias* under the supervision of
Gail Belisario, Principal of Equity.

Writer

Pat Wright, Antiracism Trainer and Facilitator, Centre for Civic Inclusion Reviewer

Reviewer

Bill Torrens, Principal of Gatestone Elementary School
Barbara Vandyk, Special Assignment Teacher, Elementary ESL/ELD

Editor

Gail Belisario, Principal of Equity

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*Assessing Learning
Materials for Bias*

Preamble

Assessing Learning Materials for Bias

Purpose of the Handbook

This handbook is designed as a screening tool for classroom and school-based materials. It is developed in accordance with the Equity Policy and Supporting Guidelines of Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board. It may be used as a “stand alone” tool, or in conjunction with *Using an Equity Lens: A Guide to Creating Equitable School Environments*, a resource document developed by the Leadership and Learning Department, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board.

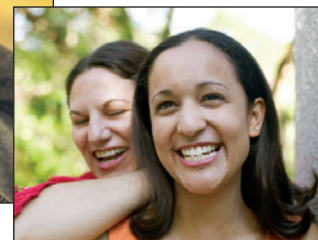
This handbook contains tools that allow educators to:

- Uncover biases within classroom learning materials
- Provide inclusive learning materials for their students
- Address sensitive issues or concepts that may be found in classroom learning materials.

As communities become more diverse, different perspectives and world views come to light. Community values change and community practices, norms, and language, once thought to be appropriate, may no longer address personal learning needs in the changing environment.

Individual perceptions are developed from, and are influenced by, personal and social identity, cultural values and experiences gained within their particular cycle of socialization¹. When children begin attending school, they already have notions and ideas about their world and they are not protected from perception-forming experiences. It is therefore important for them to be exposed to influences that provide both balanced and accurate information and reduce or correct misperceptions.

“ Children begin to develop biases and prejudices long before they reach our classrooms. Research shows that children as young as two years of age begin to develop discriminatory perceptions of bias and prejudice which, if unchallenged, may later develop into overtly racist or other discriminatory behaviors.”



¹ Harro B. (1982) published in Appendix 5C – *Teaching Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook*, Adams, Maureen; Bell, Lee Anne; and Griffin, Pat; Eds. Routledge 1997.

² Barta, Jim & Winn, Theresa; *Children Today*, 1996 Vol 24, Issue 1, p 28

Preamble

Learning and educational materials presented to children should be reflective of the broad diversity within society. This material should be inclusive in a manner that enables students to feel that they are active participants in the learning process.

It becomes increasingly important for educators to:

- Develop strategies and adopt guidelines to ensure that learning materials are reviewed regularly so that biases which may have been overlooked are uncovered and removed;
- Understand that topics or learning materials that may have been acceptable at one time may now be inappropriate for the new and diverse classroom;
- Evaluate personal biases or "blind spots" and make a conscious effort to ensure that learning materials provide a balanced perspective and approach;
- Understand that expressions and language used in the learning materials may be inadequate to fully express terms that reflect a specific culture and that some cultural concepts are not easily articulated in English or in French;
- Value, and appear to value, different voices, approaches and perspectives.

Very shortly after birth, a child begins to observe similarities and differences and to notice colour contrasts and patterns. This ability enables the child to differentiate between familiar people and strangers and shapes their awareness of the world around them. Because children become aware of differences in colour, language, gender, and physical ability very early in life, they need to be exposed to a range of diverse learning materials that encourages positive attitudes and balanced perspectives. "Providing the child with unbiased and inclusive learning materials, ensures that they are shielded from absorbing spoken and unspoken messages prevalent in society about differences"³. Exposure to a range of diverse learning materials also retards the growth of negative stereotypes that may be present in the environment about various aspects of human diversity. It is important that a bias-free approach is taken very early in the life of the child because it is difficult to change negative stereotypes and biases once they are assimilated and ingrained.

This handbook should be viewed as a guide that provides a strategy for assessing learning materials. It is up to the individual educators to use this guideline within the frame of their own professional discipline and judgment and in accordance with the Policies of Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board.

³ Katz P. (1982). Development of children's racial awareness and intergroup attitudes. In L. G. Katz (ed.), *Current Topics in Early Childhood Education*. 4. 17-54. Norwood, NJ: Ablex

Building Inclusion

Assessing Learning Materials for Bias

It is important to understand how traditional curricula, built upon a Eurocentric approach to knowledge and learning, has silenced diverse groups and has prevented them from seeing themselves as full participants within the school system.

“ Much of the traditional curriculum focuses on the values, experiences, achievements, and perspectives of white-European members of Canadian Society and excludes or distorts those of other groups in Canada and throughout the world. ⁴ ”

Inclusion therefore requires that one hears voices which have hitherto been quiet, listen to viewpoints that have been excluded, and incorporate minority knowledge/perspectives into the educational dialogue. Building inclusion into the school, classroom, and learning materials will necessitate that a conscious effort is made to validate, honor, and respect experiences originating outside the Eurocentric frame.

In addressing issues of diversity at post-secondary institutions Anver Saloojle⁵ makes the following observation:

“ Biases of commission are relatively easy to detect. They centre on negative stereotyping of groups of people on the bases of race, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, etc. Biases of omission are much more difficult to detect. Biases of omission occur when the curriculum and the curricular material fail to validate and legitimate the experiences, values, traditions, historical experiences of others. ”

Although Saloojle's comments and recommendations were made with respect to post-secondary learning environments, his observations can also be applied to secondary and elementary learning environments. He suggests that instructional materials that facilitate student learning should:

- develop self esteem
- honor student experiences
- present information from multiple perspectives
- support multiple learning styles
- support the development of critical thinking and activism
- encourage them to access and use their own family and cultural knowledge.

Implementing these approaches in the classroom will build a bias free and inclusive learning environment. The curriculum could therefore be used as a mirror in which students see a reflection of themselves and their world, and a window through which they view the world around them.

⁴ Ontario Ministry of Education and Training. (1993) Antiracist And Ethnocultural Equity Education.

⁵ Creating Inclusive Post Secondary Learning Environments (1999) www.uregina.ca/tdc/ProDiversityAntiDiscrimination.htm

Learning Material Assessment Lenses

To conduct an effective assessment it is necessary to reflect on what is brought to the table in terms of personal biases, values and understanding. It is also valuable to know the framework and environment within which the assessment will occur, and have appropriate and effective analytical tools to use for assessment. Materials should be examined through the lens of:

- 1** Self awareness
- 2** Environment awareness
- 3** Material content awareness.

Self Awareness

The first step in assessing learning materials is to be aware of the need to have bias-free learning materials and recognize the biases and preconceived notions or stereotypes that one may already have. By being aware of personal frames of reference and acknowledging that personal viewpoints are influenced by one's social identity, belief and value system, allows one to be self critical and make a conscious selection of learning resources that are reflective of the broad diversity in society.

One should therefore ask the following:

- Can I recognize my own pre-judgments based on gender, culture, race, belief system, tastes, style and preferences?
- Can I separate my own pre-judgments from the materials I am assessing?
- Am I able to view the materials neutrally and critically?
- What filters do I consciously (or unconsciously) apply to the materials I assess?
- Am I comfortable in assessing this particular learning material?
- Do I feel confident that I can assess this material without bias?

Environment Awareness

Learning is a complex process that may occur in different places, at different times and under different circumstances. Learning will occur inside and outside the school and classroom and children may become confused when their classroom and school experiences are not matched or reflected by their life or non-school experiences. Learning occurs when students feel included in, and validated by a school system that offers bias-free curricula and is recognized and supported by the community.

The curriculum is defined as encompassing “all learning experiences the student will have in school. These include school environment, interactions among students, staff and the community, and the values, attitudes and behaviours conveyed by the school.”⁶ The curriculum therefore establishes the environment surrounding learning materials and influences how bias free learning materials may be evaluated and delivered

⁶ HWDSB Glossary of Terms contained in Equity Policy

Questions to ask:

- Is the curriculum bias-free?
- Does the classroom environment support an unbiased approach to learning? Who is rewarded, who is not? Who feels included who does not? Whose voice is heard, who is silent?
- Does the school environment support an unbiased approach to learning? Who is rewarded, who is not? Who feels included, who does not? Whose voice is heard, who is silent? Who leads, who follows?
- Does the classroom and school support different ways and styles of learning?
- Does the classroom and school recognize, acknowledge and validate different ways that knowledge may be represented?
- Does the community support an unbiased approach to learning? Who is visible, who is not?

Material Content Awareness

The impact learning materials are likely to have on a diverse student population needs to be considered - do students see their realities reflected in the material? Learning materials should be examined and assessed to determine: if stereotypes are portrayed by language, visual imagery or graphics; how historical or social events are reports; how belief systems and viewpoints are expressed; how family structures, relationships, social and economic situations are portrayed.

Assessment of the content of learning materials therefore requires that a number of areas be examined and the following questions be asked.

- Is the language used biased? Stereotypical? Loaded? Appropriate?
- Whose voice is being heard? Are different points of view portrayed or is the perspective that of the dominant culture? Who has been omitted and needs to be heard?
- What is the story line? What are the values or belief systems outlined?
- How are relationships between people described?
- What are the lifestyles portrayed and how are they portrayed?
- Who are the heroes and heroines?
- What is the message contained in graphics, illustrations, and visual images?
- What may be the effect on different students and their image of self?
- Are students able to see their realities reflected positively in the material?
- How old is the material and is it still current and appropriate?

SCREENING

Questions to Ask



Screening – Questions to Ask

Screening Language in Learning Materials

The use of certain words or phrases can express bias. It is important to avoid terms or phrases that have, or could have, negative cultural or ethnic connotations. Words can wound and be very hurtful and have long term impact on the life and development of a person.

Learning materials should:

- Describe events or activities without qualifiers that could convey stereotypical impressions.
- Ensure that all groups with a range of diverse characteristics, (for example, ethnicity, age, faith, or ability) are depicted with the full range of attributes and capabilities.
- Show that power and leadership roles may be filled by males and females.
- Be current and not outdated, in terms of language terminology.

Questions to Ask

Please Check the Appropriate Box		Yes	No	N/A
1	Does the language contain hierarchical implications by representing one group as being superior to another and demeaning to others?			
2	Are the words loaded? Could they be offensive? (i.e., Is everything that has a negative connotation described as being “black”?)			
3	Is the language of social oppression avoided? Is any language being used to denote a certain group (class, race, sexuality, ability, gender, etc.) as a negative, or as having an undesirable quality?			
4	Does the language allow students to see themselves and their real life experiences reflected in the material?			
5	Is the language inclusive? Are important contributions and viewpoints omitted? Do word problems and case studies include multi-ethnic names?			
6	Is the language dated? When was the material published? Does the material contain outdated notions about race, gender, ability, culture and beliefs?			
The language of this material is suitable for students.				

Screening – Questions to Ask

Screening Visual Imagery and Graphics

Visual and graphic images convey information without the use of language. It sets a tone which can create or destroy the learning environment. Visual information contained in materials should be balanced and fair and represent attributes and appearances in a manner that will not lead to negative assumptions about individuals or situations.

Learning materials should:

- Ensure that all groups with a range of diverse characteristics, for example, ethnicity, age, faith, or ability are depicted with the full range of attributes and capabilities.
- Show that power and leadership roles may be filled by anyone within the broad sphere of individual and cultural diversity.
- Portray individuals with a variety of body types and images and present them in a manner that will counter prejudice and stereotype as related to body image.
- Make certain that pictures of historical events are accurate.

Questions to Ask

Please Check the Appropriate Box		Yes	No	N/A
1	Are all ethnic groups, age groups, ability groups depicted with the full range of attributes and capabilities?			
2	Are the graphical images depicted realistically without exaggeration?			
3	Are characters portrayed in active or in passive roles?			
4	Do the Illustrations depict only one type of individual in a role of power and authority and another in a menial and subservient role?			
5	Are the visual portrayals and symbols of belief systems presented respectfully, accurately and with appropriate context?			
This visual and graphical material is suitable for students.				

Screening – Questions to Ask

Screening Historical and Other Events

Distortions of history and the reporting of events often portray the “conquered” group in a negative light and the “conquering” group in a positive light. History often fails to include the voice of the defeated and therefore we need to ask the question, whose history is this? If the materials do not include minority voices and perspectives, then these voices should be included as supplementary materials so as to provide a fair and balanced record of events. Of particular importance is the inclusion of aboriginal perspectives in the teaching of the history of Canada

Learning materials should:

- Ensure that the historical context and that pictures, videos, and visual material are accurate.
- Review the heroes and heroines and who determined that they are heroes.
- Provide perspectives from the viewpoints of different participants in the event and provide opportunity for other voices to be heard.
- Portray individuals in a manner that will counter prejudice and stereotype.
- Examine the terminology used and the implications of words such as “discover”, “settler”, “savage”.

Questions to Ask

Please Check the Appropriate Box		Yes	No	N/A
1	Does the material omit the contributions of others in a manner that perpetuates the belief that being male or white are required standards for success?			
2	Are the social, artistic, mathematical, and scientific contributions of different races and cultural groups equally integrated into the text and visual materials?			
3	Does the worldview presented in the material reflect a dominant, Eurocentric, patriarchal or colonial perspective without including other perspectives?			
4	Is the diversity and uniqueness of Aboriginal Peoples portrayed in a manner that enables a deeper understanding and appreciation of them in both the past and present day contexts?			
5	Are qualities of character, leadership, integrity, honesty, etc., attributed equally between genders, races, cultures, ability groups?			
6	How are Middle-Eastern, Aboriginal, African and Asian peoples portrayed?			
Event and historical information is suitable for students.				

Screening – Questions to Ask

Screening Belief Systems and Viewpoints

Belief systems and viewpoints have a deep impact on how people see themselves and function within a given community. When individuals have belief systems and viewpoints that are different from those of the mainstream culture, they often feel excluded and isolated. Non-judgmental recognition of differing views, perspectives and beliefs, is an important step in building inclusion.

Learning materials should:

- Recognize, include, and validate perspectives and beliefs systems from diverse groups and from groups other than the dominant group.
- Present alternate views in an accurate and non-judgmental manner.
- Describe characteristics of specific belief systems accurately and if unable to do so, invite experts into the classroom who can.
- Recognize that within a belief system there may be differences in interpretation and practices.

Questions to Ask

Please Check the Appropriate Box		Yes	No	N/A
1	Are differences in customs, habits, life-style and daily living portrayed sensitively and respectfully?			
2	Does the material help students understand that knowledge is socially constructed and reflects the experiences, social, economic and political context in which they live and work?			
3	Does the material show how stereotyping, racism, bias, labeling and name-calling can be harmful and result in prejudice and discrimination?			
4	Is the context and reference to belief systems clear and does it indicate the time-period, social setting, or political environment within which it was formed?			
5	Do the authors or writers use neutral tones or expressions or do they show bias towards a particular viewpoint or set of values?			
6	Is the material free from implied or visual messages of hate or intolerance?			
The belief systems and viewpoints are suitable for students.				

Screening – Questions to Ask

Screening Family Structures and Interpersonal Relationships

Families are constructed in several different ways and the individuals within the family group will have differing interpersonal gender and age-group relationships. Family members may or may not share a genetic tie and the family group could be very small or quite extended.

Learning materials should:

- Show how the needs of family members and children are met both inside and outside the home environment.
- Portray different types of family relationships and structures in a neutral and unbiased manner.

Questions to Ask

Please Check the Appropriate Box		Yes	No	N/A
1	Does the learning material show a variety of family relationships and structures?			
2	Does the learning material show different family members engaged in a range of different activities?			
3	Does the material use gender-inclusive and age-inclusive language and show males and females fulfilling a range of roles and functions?			
4	How does the material deal with interpersonal conflict? Does the material show how conflicts within families and between individuals may be resolved appropriately?			
5	Does the material address alternate family relationships and structures?			
This material is suitable for students.				

Screening – Questions to Ask

Screening Social and Economic Status

Learning materials should:

- Reflect a broad range of living standards and achievements of people in Canada and throughout the world.
- Depict people from different socio-economic groups with the full range of attributes and capabilities.
- Include the perspectives of individuals of different socio-economic backgrounds and show different groups and people have made valid contributions to the community.
- Include perspectives of individuals from different occupations and geographical regions of Canada.

Questions to Ask

Please Check the Appropriate Box		Yes	No	N/A
1	Does the material recognize the rights of individuals at all levels of the community to adequate shelter, privacy, food, education, and to be able to meet the basic necessities of life?			
2	Does the material recognize the achievements and contributions of individuals from a range of socio-economic backgrounds?			
3	Is the concept of success portrayed as being dependent upon gender, race, education, ability, and socio-economic status?			
4	Does individual worth appear to be dependent upon appearance, lifestyle, employment, or material possessions?			
5	Do the materials engage students in thinking critically about why people are poor rather than just exposing them to images of poverty?			
6	Does the material include role-models that reflect the variety of socioeconomic levels in Canada?			
This material is suitable for students.				

Screening – Questions to Ask

Impact on Self Esteem

Learning materials should:

- Ensure that all ethnic groups, age groups, and ability groups can see themselves and their reality reflected in the material.
- Portray different cultures, faiths, belief systems in a neutral and non-judgmental manner.
- Allow students to feel good about themselves and the materials they are using.
- Provide students with a solid base from which to grow and develop a positive awareness of themselves.

Questions to Ask

Please Check the Appropriate Box		Yes	No	N/A
1	Do the students see themselves, their culture and their real life experiences reflected in an accurate and respectful manner?			
2	Do the students feel included by the material?			
3	Does the material provide opportunities for dialogue that considers a variety of socio-economic, racial, ethnocultural, and gender viewpoints?			
4	Does the material provide opportunities for validation of alternate views and belief systems?			
5	Does the material allow students to express themselves in a variety of ways and validate the range of student learning styles and preferences?			
This material allows students to develop a positive self image.				

Glossary of Terms

The following are key terms in the area of equity pertinent to this document and contained within Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board, Equity Policy No. 1.01.

Aboriginal 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 Metis peoples of Canada”. These separate groups have unique heritages, languages, cultural practices, and spiritual beliefs. Their common link is their indigenous ancestry.

Refer to: Ontario Ministry of Education, Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation, 2009.

Anti-classism and Socio-economic Equity

Akin to antiracism, the principles of Anti-classism and Socio-economic Equity strive to ameliorate the effects of classism and discrimination based upon socioeconomic status. Specifically, Anti-classism and Socio-economic Equity initiatives attempt to provide equality of outcome by removing barriers impeding access to goods and services for marginalized socio-economic groups.

Antidiscrimination Education

the prohibited grounds identified in the Ontario Human Rights Code and other, similar grounds. Antidiscrimination education seeks to identify and change educational policies, procedures, and practices that may unintentionally condone or foster discrimination, as well as the attitudes and behaviours that underlie and reinforce such policies and practices. It provides teachers and students with the knowledge and skills that will enable them to critically examine issues related to discrimination, power, and privilege. Antidiscrimination education promotes the removal of discriminatory biases and system barriers.

Refer to: Ontario Ministry of Education, Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation, 2009.

Antiracism Education

An approach that integrates the perspectives of Aboriginal and racialized communities into an educational system and its practices. Antiracist education seeks to identify and change educational policies, procedures, and practices that may foster racism, as well as the racist attitudes and behaviours that underlie and reinforce such policies and practices. It provides teachers and students with the knowledge and skills that will enable them to critically examine issues related to racism, power, and privilege. Antiracist education promotes the removal of discriminatory biases and systemic barriers.

Refer to: Ontario Ministry of Education, Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation, 2009.

Glossary of Terms

Barriers

An obstacle to equity that may be overt or subtle, intended or unintended, and systemic or specific to an individual or group, and that prevents or limits access to opportunities, benefits, or advantages that are available to other members of society.

Refer to: Ontario Ministry of Education, Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation, 2009.

Bias

An opinion, preference, prejudice, or inclination that limits an individual's or a group's ability to make fair, objective, or accurate judgments.

Refer to: Ontario Ministry of Education, Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation, 2009.

Class

Relative social rank in terms of income, wealth, status and/or power.

Refer to: M. Adams, L. Bell, P. Griffin, Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook New York, 1997.

Classism

Practices and beliefs that place different value (worth) on people because of their socioeconomic class, and an economic system that creates inequality between socioeconomic groups.

Refer to: Peel District School Board's 'Go Beyond Words'.

Cultural Identity

Cultural identity refers to (a) the collective selfawareness that a given group embodies and reflects (e.g., racial, ethnic, gender groups) and (b) the "identity of the individual in relation to his or her culture".

Refer to: Carl E. James, Seeing Ourselves: Exploring Race, Ethnicity and Culture, Toronto, Canada, 1995.

Culture

Culture is the totality of ideas, beliefs, values, knowledge, and way of life of a group of people who share a certain historical background. Manifestations of culture include art, laws, institutions, and customs. Culture changes continually and, as a result, often contains elements of conflict and opposition.

Refer to: Ontario Ministry of Education, Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity in School Boards: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation. 1993.

Curriculum

The curriculum identifies the expectations for each grade and describes the knowledge and skills that students are expected to acquire, demonstrate and apply.

Refer to: Ontario Ministry of Education, The Ontario Curriculum.

Glossary of Terms

Discrimination

Unfair or prejudicial treatment of individuals or groups on the basis of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status, or disability, as set out in the Ontario Human Rights Code, or on the basis of other, similar factors, Discrimination, whether intentional or unintentional, has the effect of preventing or limiting access to opportunities, benefits, or advantages that are available to other members of society. Discrimination may be evident in organizational and institutional structures, policies, procedures and programs, as well as in the attitudes and behaviours of individuals.

Refer to: Ontario Ministry of Education, Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation, 2009.

Equity

Equity refers to a condition or state of fair, inclusive, and respectful treatment of all people. Equity does not mean treating people the same without regard for individual differences.

Refer to: Ontario Ministry of Education, Realizing the Promise of Diversity, Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, 2009.

Ethnic

An adjective used to describe groups that share a common language, race, religion or national origin. Everyone belongs to an ethnic group.

Refer to: Ontario Ministry of Education, Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation, 2009.

Ethnicity

The shared national, ethnocultural, racial, linguistic, and/or religious heritage of a group of people, whether or not they live in their country of origin.

Refer to: Ontario Ministry of Education, Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation, 2009.

Ethnocultural Group

A group of people who share a particular cultural heritage or background. Every Canadian belongs to an ethnic group.

Refer to: Ontario Ministry of Education, Realizing the Promise of Diversity, Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, 2009.

Eurocentric Curriculum

A curriculum that focuses primarily on the experiences and achievements of people of European background. Such a curriculum inevitably marginalizes the experiences and achievements of people of other backgrounds.

Refer to: Ontario Ministry of Education, Realizing the Promise of Diversity, Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, 2009.

Glossary of Terms

Prejudice

A frame of mind which tends to prejudge a person, or a group, in a negative light. This negative judgment is usually without adequate evidence. These negative attitudes are frequently not recognized as unsoundly based assumptions because of the frequency with which they are repeated. They become common sense notions which are widely accepted and are used to justify acts of discrimination.

Refer to: Strengthening Hamilton's Community Initiative, AntiRacism Framework, 2003.

Race

A social construct that groups people on the basis of common ancestry and characteristics such as colour of skin, shape of eyes, hair texture, and/or facial features. The term is used to designate the social categories into which societies divide people according to such characteristics. Race is often confused with ethnicity (a group of people who share a particular cultural heritage or background); there may be several ethnic groups within a racial group. (Refer to the Ontario Human Rights Commission's *Policy and Guidelines on Racism and Racial Discrimination*, at www.ohrc.on.ca).

Refer to: Ontario Ministry of Education, Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation, 2009.

Racism

A set of erroneous assumptions, opinions, and actions stemming from the belief that one race is inherently superior to another. Racism may be evident in organizational and institutional structures, policies, procedures, and programs, as well as in the attitudes and behaviours of individuals.

Refer to: Ontario Ministry of Education, Equity and Inclusive Education in Ontario Schools: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation, 2009.

Socio-economic Status

Socio-economic Status refers to the relative position of a family or individual on a hierarchical social structure based on their access to or control of wealth, prestige and power.

Refer to: J. Doug Wilms, *Vulnerable Children*, 2002, pg. 337.

Socio-economically Marginalized Communities

Socio-economically Marginalized Communities are communities whose members have incomes barely sufficient or insufficient to meet basic human needs.

Refer to: M. Adams, L. Bell, P. Griffin, *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook* New York, 1997.

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Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
Leadership and Learning Department
P.O. Box 2558
Hamilton, ON L8N 3L1
905-527-5092
www.hwdsb.on.ca