

How do schools support equity, diversity and inclusion?

Schools also undertake many initiatives to promote an appreciation of, and respect for, all human beings. Just a few examples of school-based activities include:

- human rights and citizenship education
- inclusive learning materials
- clubs and co-curricular activities focused on social justice, acceptance and inclusion
- participation in anti-bullying events such as Wear Pink days
- staff support of student-based groups such as Gay/Straight Alliances
- use of inclusive Kindergarten dolls that depict children with a variety of backgrounds and abilities, such as dolls using wheelchairs or walkers
- on-going social skills building programs from the time children enter school
- school-wide theme days focused on acceptance and inclusion
- plays and artworks produced by students, as they learn about equity and diversity
- community involvement in social justice and human rights events
- Native language, French Immersion and English as a Second Language programs
- restorative practice, an approach that focuses on understanding and taking responsibility for one's actions and their effect on people.



What can families do?

You can show how to treat people fairly and with dignity through your own actions. You also can take an active role in teaching your family to value diversity, and to appreciate similarities and differences among people. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- Share your family history. Knowing about the variety in our own lives and our families' travels helps to connect with our common human experiences.
- Set a good example. Show respect for all people.
- Be kind to strangers.
- Avoid jokes or comments that put down particular cultures, faiths or groups.
- Introduce your family to diverse people and perspectives through books, volunteering, sports, personal relationships, movies, television, radio, travel, crafts and cooking.
- Tell your children what you do to include everyone in an activity.
- Discuss new experiences. Help your children understand how they feel before, during and after the experience.
- Talk with your family about any fears, questions, biases, stereotypes or feelings of being "left out" that they or their friends experience.
- Use your family's interests to discuss relationships among people, societies, nature and the world.
- Participate in community events that focus on diversity.
- Watch or read the news together. Talk about different perspectives that people affected by the news may have.
- Challenge stereotypes, rather than repeating them.

What if you have concerns about equity in your child's school?

Please tell us. We will treat your concerns seriously. If you are aware of treatment that is unfair or disrespectful, please:

- Contact your child's or teen's teacher, as the first step.
- Contact the principal, if you feel more action is required. The principal will investigate the matter, and work with you to act on your concerns.
- Call the Superintendent of Student Achievement responsible for your child's school, if you still are not satisfied.
- Contact the Director of Education if you continue to feel your concerns were not addressed.

Contact information for the Director of Education and superintendents is available at www.kprschools.ca and in the school year calendar sent home with all students.

Further information about equity, diversity and inclusion also is available from the Board's Equity and Diversity Advisor, at 705-742-9773 or toll-free at 877-741-4577, ext. 2249.

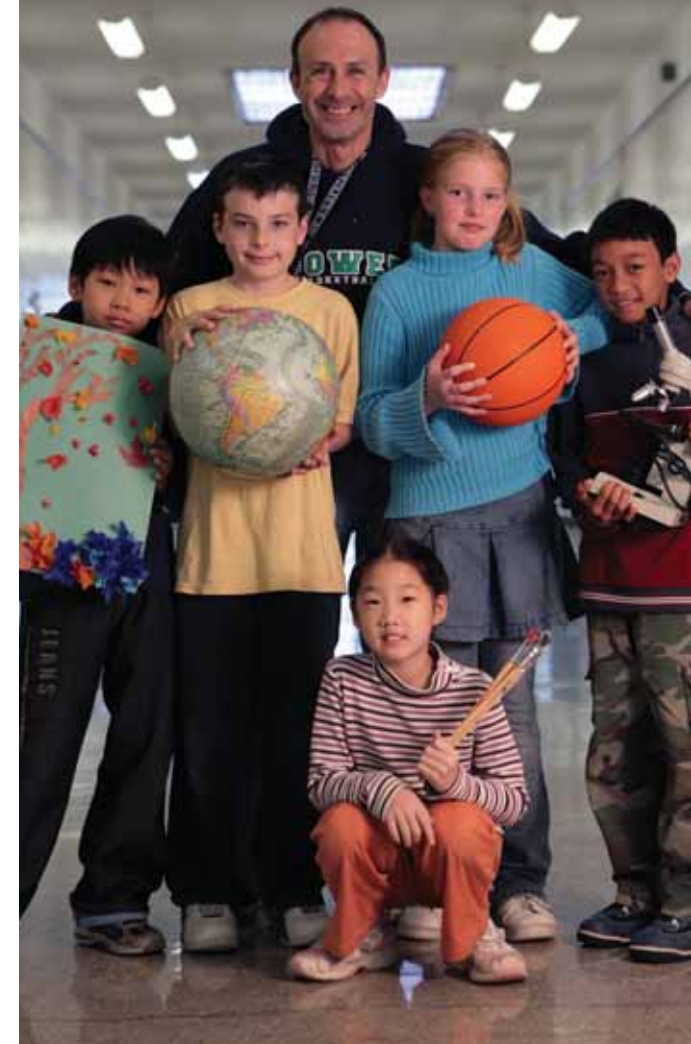


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Equity, Diversity and Inclusion



Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

The Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board (KPR) values and supports equity, diversity, inclusion and respect for the dignity of all individuals, in everything we do. We expect everyone involved in our education system to treat one another fairly, regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex (gender identity), sexual orientation, marital or family status, socioeconomic status, age, or disability.

On this we are firm: our school and work environments must ensure everyone feels safe, respected, accepted and included. We do not tolerate any actions that could have a negative effect on individual or group well-being.

What do equity, diversity and inclusion mean?

Equity refers to fair and respectful treatment of all people. It means we do everything we can to identify and eliminate unfair biases or prejudices that may limit full participation in our education system. Valuing diversity means we recognize and respect everyone's unique qualities and attributes. Inclusion means all individuals feel accepted and valued. Inclusive schools and workplaces give all people the opportunity to reach their full potential and to contribute meaningfully at school and to our world.

Our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion means we examine our attitudes, resources, programs, actions, and interactions to ensure they respect the humanity of all. It also means we eliminate anything that discriminates against or excludes any individual or group.



What guides our efforts?

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The Board's own policy on equity, diversity and inclusion states:

"The Board believes that excellence in education is founded on respect for the dignity and humanity of all individuals and the development of human potential, enabling individuals and groups to contribute fully within a diverse society. The education system's continuous improvement requires the creation and maintenance of safe, fair, nurturing, positive and respectful learning and working environments."

What are the benefits?

Promoting equity, diversity and inclusion has many benefits, including:

- the school system improves continually, as parents, guardians and community members feel able to share their unique and diverse abilities, backgrounds and views
- relationships among students, staff, parents, volunteers and community members improve
- students become more creative and better problem solvers, as they understand and appreciate various points of view
- students are better prepared to thrive in a diverse local and global society after they finish school
- student achievement improves, as students feel respected, included and supported in their quest to reach their full potential
- students, staff and visitors to our schools have clear standards of behaviour on which schools and the Board build
- students, parents and guardians feel comfortable in coming forward to express concerns and to report incidents
- schools can better identify and remove barriers related to racism, sexism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination
- human rights are honoured and protected in all of our policies, programs and practices
- the best possible employees are hired and promoted, as barriers that may limit their contributions are removed.



What steps does the Board take?

KPR supports its equity, diversity and inclusion policy with concrete actions. System-wide initiatives include:

- the Board's Equity and Diversity Committee, whose trustee and employee representatives offer recommendations on ways to maintain equitable, diverse and inclusive schools
- three full-time, central positions devoted to ensuring equity, diversity and inclusion
- curriculum, books and learning resources that reflect the diversity of our students, our communities and our world
- equity and diversity representatives in all schools, who share ideas and best practices
- an annual celebration of student artwork focused on equity, diversity and inclusion
- the annual equity and diversity calendar, which includes significant dates and observances recognized locally and around the world
- the annual ZOOM secondary student video festival, which showcases student-produced movies celebrating equity and positive character
- annual conferences for elementary and secondary student leaders, focusing on the steps students can take to make their schools more inclusive
- character development, which is part of day-to-day teaching and centres on attributes such as respect, responsibility, empathy, fairness and courage
- professional development for staff related to equity, diversity and inclusion
- ongoing partnerships and outreach with community and stakeholder groups.