

CHIGNECTO-CENTRAL REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD

**RACE RELATIONS, CROSS-CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING
IN A HUMAN RIGHTS CONTEXT**

HANDBOOK

October, 1998
(Revised July, 2002)

CHIGNECTO-CENTRAL REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD
RACE RELATIONS, CROSS CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING
IN A HUMAN RIGHTS CONTEXT (RCH)

INTRODUCTION

Chignecto-Central Regional School Board believes that it has a responsibility to develop lifelong learners through a balanced program that fosters intellectual, physical, emotional and moral development. The Board's policy statements on Race Relations, Cross-Cultural Understanding in a Human Rights Context represent, in part, the Board's commitment to this development. This will be achieved through the provision of educational services within an environment that values and celebrates diversity and generates acceptance and respect among all members of its school community.

Education is most effectively pursued within an environment that promotes the dignity and self-worth of every person. All of us have a responsibility to create such an environment and actively support this goal. We have a responsibility to foster environments that encourage acceptance and to condemn actions that serve to undermine this environment.

Chignecto-Central Regional Schools bring together persons from diverse backgrounds in an educational and social "community". All students should believe that they are an integral part of every facet of school life. That belief is supported when all facets of school life actively promote the principle of "inclusion" and actively discourages the principle of "exclusion".

Students interact with, and are influenced by, a wide variety of learning resources. These resources and learning environments must be constantly evaluated to ensure students are encountering an objective and fair portrayal of all persons and groups within our society.

Whereas our task is to educate students in the broadest sense, all employees and Board Members must act as positive role models in the performances of their duties. Furthermore, the composition of our various employee groups must reflect the diverse nature of our student and community populations.

Finally, the school cannot do it all. The Board recognizes that schools must join with the total community in the elimination of racial and human rights discrimination. This partnership will assist in removing the barriers to the full participation of each individual within the education process.

The Board assigns a high priority to its Race Relations, Cross-Cultural Understanding in a Human Rights Context policy and is dedicated to fully implement this policy. Education is a key element if students are to acquire opportunities for a better life. The School Board affirms its commitment to promote and maintain an environment which nurtures growth, harmony and the attainment of maximum potential for all students and staff, including First Nations, African Nova Scotian and Visible Ethno-cultural communities. Included in this action will be the elimination of any policies and practices which, while not intentionally racist, sexist and/or discriminatory may produce similar effects.

APPLICATION

Policy #ES-RCH-01 applies to all Board Members, staff, students, parents/guardians of students in the system, other groups / visitors on school property.

First Nations Peoples -the original inhabitants of North America or descendants of the original peoples who inhabited this continent prior to the conquest and subordination by Europeans.

Affirmative Action - a program that aims to prevent and/or provide remedies for discrimination in the educational environment and in the workplace. It involves systemic planning and positive action to remedy the effects of discrimination.

Anti-Racism Education - an approach to education that challenges, combats and rejects racism in the education process in all its forms. by identifying and changing institutional policies, procedures, culture and values as well as individual behaviors and practices which have a discriminatory impact on individuals and groups with non-dominant identities. It focuses on knowledge, awareness, skills and action as the basis for school and social change.

Assessment -a process that incorporates a variety of strategies for collecting data about student performance. The data may include incidental and direct observation, the uses of standardized testing administered under structured conditions and anecdotal reports.

Bias – Inclination, predisposition towards; prejudice; influence. It can be either negative or positive and it can be directed against a person or thing.

African Nova Scotian People – people of Black African heritage.

Culture – the totality of ideas, beliefs, traits, values and knowledge of a group of individuals who share certain historical experiences.

Discrimination – a distinction, whether intentional or not, based on a characteristic, or perceived characteristics (referred to below) that has the effect of imposing burdens, obligations and disadvantages on an individual or a class of individuals not imposed on others or which withholds or limits access to opportunities, benefits and advantages available to other individuals or classes of individuals in society.

“Characteristics protected from discrimination” under Policy #ES-RCH-01 are the same as those set out in clauses (h) to (v) of subsection (1) of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act. No person to whom this policy applies shall discriminate against another person to whom this policy applies on of the basis of –

- h) age
- i) race
- j) color
- k) religion
- l) creed
- m) sex
- n) sexual orientation
- o) physical or mental disability
- p) an irrational fear of contacting an illness or disease
- q) ethnic, national or first nations origin
- r) family status
- s) marital status
- t) source of income
- u) political belief, affiliation or activity
- v) that individual's association with another individual or class of individuals having characteristics referred to in clauses (h) to (u).

* Thus, for the purpose of this policy, any reference to discrimination includes actions of bias or prejudice.

Employment Equity - a strategy designed to obliterate the effects of discrimination and to open equitably the competition for employment opportunities to those arbitrarily excluded. Employment Equity requires a special blend of what is fair, what is necessary and what is workable.

Ethnic - refers to large groups of people characterized by distinctive racial, cultural, linguistic traits, customs, lifestyles and social views.

Harassment - in the context of this policy parallels the definition of discrimination. It is any behavior that is directed at and is offensive to an individual, or group based on that individual's or group's race, gender, culture, ethnic, national or aboriginal origins. Such behavior may be verbal, physical, deliberate or unsolicited. It may be one incident or a series of incidents.

Institutional Racism - exercise of notions of racial superiority by social institutions through their policies, practices, procedures, organizational culture and values, either consciously or unconsciously.

Prejudice – preconceived opinion, bias (against or in favour of) a person or thing; injury that results from actions or judgment (to the prejudice of).

[NOTE: *Acting or failing to act due to a bias or prejudice based on one of the protected characteristics falls within the general definition of “discrimination” as it constitutes making a “distinction” between an individual or a particular group of individuals and the rest of society based on a protected characteristic.*]

Race - a social category used to classify humankind according to common ancestry or descent.

Race Relations - is a term used to describe activities that seek to remove discriminatory barriers as well as promote the full and equal participation of racial and ethnic groups in social, economic cultural and political life.

Racial Incident – refers to any verbal or physical action of negative attitudes, derogation or hate about a person or group because of race, creed or culture.

Racism - is the belief that people from one distinct group are superior to people from another group. It is the systemic, institutionalized mistreatment of one group by another and refers to not only social attitudes towards non-dominant groups but also to social structures and actions which oppress, exclude, limit and discriminate against individuals and groups.

Visible Ethno-cultural Persons - people with a certain set of characteristics, cultural heritage or background which sets them apart from the dominant group in a society.

AREAS FOR ACTION

The Board regards the following areas as important in creating and maintaining a harmonious environment in the schools and the communities:

- 1) Assessment and Placement
- 2) Curriculum
- 3) Harassment (Racial, Ethnic and Sexual)
- 4) School and Community Relations
- 5) Staff Development
- 6) Personnel and Placement (Staffing)
- 7) Research

ASSESSMENT AND PLACEMENT

INTRODUCTION:

All parents / guardians have an interest in the educational decisions affecting their children, including student placement, student programs, and access to support services. Such decisions require the active and informed participation of students, parents / guardians, teachers and administrators. Assessment and placement, guidance and support practices will ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to learn and are encouraged to fully participate in the formal and informal programs of the Board. All assessment, testing, interviewing, counselling and support materials and approaches will be consistent with this commitment.

PROCEDURES: To achieve these aims, administration and staff will . . .

- 1.1 acknowledge that in order to ensure equal opportunity for achieving one's full potential assessment procedures may need to be adapted so as to recognize the particular needs of First Nations, African Nova Scotian, Visible Ethno-cultural students and students with ability challenges.
- 1.2 ensure that all assessment instruments, procedures and placement practices will be administered without discrimination.
- 1.3 ensure that school staff will base expectations of students and evaluation procedures on observed growth and verifiable achievements.
- 1.4 ensure that school staff guard against basing expectations for achievement on preconceived opinions.
- 1.5 direct staff to ensure that students and parents / guardians understand the implications of course selection and student placement.
- 1.6 direct staff to ensure that parents / guardians are contacted and consulted regarding placement of a student in programs other than the regular academic program.
- 1.7 direct staff to ensure that where a parent / guardian disagrees with the program placement . . . that the school informs the parent / guardian, in a language he/she can understand, of the right and the procedure to appeal the decision.
- 1.8 direct staff to develop and employ procedures which will carefully monitor and evaluate the progress of students after placement and allow for changes in placement and/or support services.

- 1.9 direct staff to discuss assessment results with the parent / guardian and collaborate, to the extent possible, with parents / guardians regarding student placement and the provision of support services.
- 1.10 ensure staff are aware of their own frames of references in the interpretation of test results, the provision of guidance services, and the sharing of information on careers and post-secondary education / training options.

CURRICULUM

INTRODUCTION:

All curriculum must be viewed from an anti-racist, inclusive educational perspective. Curricular and co-curricular material and programs will be adapted, adjusted and developed such that opportunities are provided for all students to develop positive attitudes with respect for race, culture, ethnicity, religion, ability and lifestyle diversity.

PROCEDURES: To achieve these aims, administration and staff will . . .

- 2.1 work toward ensuring that all curriculum materials reflect the requirements under Policy #ES-RCH-01.
- 2.2 provide opportunities for anti-racist inclusive education workshops / in-services which are available to administrators, teachers and librarians and other support staff.
- 2.3 promote school and classroom environments that are free from stereotypes and discrimination.
- 2.4 in conjunction with the Department of Education, teachers, other school boards, community groups, parents and students develop and implement curriculum material and strategies that provide opportunities for students to acquire positive attitudes towards racial, cultural, religious and gender diversity.
- 2.5 require that schools, in their day-to-day operations, identify and eliminate policies and practices which, while not intentionally discriminatory, have a discriminatory effect.
- 2.6 require that schools integrate anti-racism and anti-sexism education into curriculum.
- 2.7 require that school curriculum be expanded to ensure the selection, development and inclusion of:

- i) learning resources which promote respect for a positive attitude towards the contributions and values of First Nations, African Nova Scotian and Visible Ethno-cultural people based on gender and of any other group which has experienced discriminatory practices.
- ii) perspectives on social justice as they pertain to any other group victimized by genocide and/or unfair legal systems and laws; with particular emphasis on First Nations Peoples, African Nova Scotians and the Jewish community.
- iii) an increased emphasis on learning strategies which involve a critical analysis of issues having an Anti-Racism perspective.

2.8 require that staff continue to develop and implement strategies which ensure that all curriculum textbooks, audiovisual and other resource material are free from racism, sexism, cultural bias and stereotyping.

RACIAL, ETHNIC AND HUMAN RIGHTS HARASSMENT

INTRODUCTION:

Harassment involving racial, ethnic and other protected human right characteristic (as determined by the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission) is defined as a verbal or physical expression of bias which exhibits a negative attitude or hatred towards a person or group based on their color, ethnicity or protected characteristics. Such actions may be direct or indirect and can result in a demeaning, insulting or harassing atmosphere.

Administration and staff will take all reasonable steps to foster positive race relations, cross-cultural understanding and human rights and to oppose any acts of racial, ethnic or human rights harassment by its students, staff, board members or anyone associated with the system in whatever capacity on school property or at school sanctioned events.

PROCEDURES: To achieve these aims, administration and staff will . . .

- 3.1 ensure that the Board's statement of zero tolerance will be communicated on a regular basis to all students, staff, board members or anyone associated with the system in whatever capacity on school board property or at school sanctioned activities.

- 3.2 ensure a high quality working environment for all employees and students and that all complaints will be treated seriously, objectively and without fear of reprisal.
- 3.3 assume leadership by ensuring knowledge of, and sensitivity to human diversity.
- 3.4 develop programs and create an environment which fosters an understanding of human differences and promotes racial harmony.
- 3.5 investigate any reported incident of racial, ethnic and/or human rights harassment and to deal with that incident according to the procedures appended to Handbook (see Appendix A).
- 3.6 provide appropriate training for school based race relations advisor (or designate) and school administrators.
- 3.7 define the role and responsibility of school-based race relations advisor / designate according to the procedure appended to Handbook (see Appendix A).
- 3.8 define the responsibilities of all staff with respect to incidents of racial, ethnic, sexual and human rights harassment according to the procedures appended to Handbook (see Appendix A and Administrative Handbook for Administration of Harassment Complaints).

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

INTRODUCTION:

It is a goal of the Chignecto-Central Regional School System to provide equal educational opportunities for all its students. We recognize that no successful anti-racist education program can exist in a vacuum without input and support from the communities it services, in particular the First Nations, African Nova Scotian and Visible Ethno-cultural communities. By developing effective partnerships and working relationships, the school and the broader community demonstrate a commitment to building quality of life opportunities for all students, young people and adults alike.

Also, Policy #ES-RCH-01 requires that the school system promotes partnerships between the Board, the schools that it operates and the communities that those schools serve. We intend to promote positive race relations, cross-cultural understanding and human rights through constructive and open dialogue with students, parents, staff and community groups.

PROCEDURES: To achieve these aims, administration and staff will . . .

- 4.1 through a process of continuing consultation, encourage and assist all communities including First Nations, African Nova Scotian and Visible Ethno-cultural communities to share concerns on anti-racism, race relations, cross-cultural understanding and human rights and to participate equitably in all areas of school board activity such as membership on committees, access to serve and the like.
- 4.2 support the coordination of Race Relations Advisory Committee within each Family of Schools, where feasible.
- 4.3 direct Coordinator of African Nova Scotian Cultural Services/ Coordinator of First Nations Cultural Services to develop an organized directory of resource persons and organizations which could assist in the promotion of anti-racist, cross-cultural and human rights education.
- 4.4 subject to budgetary limitations, respond sensitively to the expressed and/or observed needs of parents / guardians and other residents of the community served by the Chignecto-Central Regional School System.
- 4.5 seek and support avenues for effective school / community communication, interaction and involvement.
 - i) encourage and promote media awareness of activities and events pertinent to the aims of this policy;
 - ii) foster good relationships with local libraries and encourage local libraries to carry materials that will help promote the aims of this policy.
- 4.6 maintain liaison with other school systems, community and parent groups associations and government agencies which are committed to the improvement of race relations, cross-cultural understanding and human rights.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION:

The Chignecto-Central Regional School System acknowledges that no one lives, studies or works in a homogeneous world devoid of interaction and/or influence from persons of different origins. We have all been exposed to and/or influenced by negative issues related to race, gender, ethnicity, religion, abilities and life style diversities. We understand that the diversity of students and parents / guardians results in a diversity of learning, behavioral and communication styles and expectations of the school system. Maximizing the academic, social and emotional growth of all students requires specific awareness, understanding and skill from all

personnel. It is, therefore, relevant to support a process of education for all students and staff designed to counter negative related influences and support positive race relations, cross-cultural understanding and human rights activities.

It is the goal of the Chignecto-Central Regional School System to encourage and provide opportunities for all staff to participate in professional development activities that will provide them with the understanding, sensitivity and skills required to promote positive race relations, cross-cultural understanding and human rights. Therefore, enabling all students to participate fully in the multi-racial, multicultural Canadian community and to develop their full potential.

PROCEDURES: To achieve these aims, administration and staff will . . .

- 5.1 promote staff development in the area of race relations, cross-cultural understanding and human rights.
- 5.2 encourage each school to include on-going in-servicing on all aspects of race relations, cross-cultural understanding and human rights for all staff within their schools. Also, schools will be encouraged to provide training for students similar to initiatives proposed for all staff.
- 5.3 encourage staff to attend conferences, workshops and seminars relating to anti-racist, cross-cultural and human rights issues.
- 5.4 encourage staff to pursue studies in fields related to anti-racist education, race relations, cross-cultural education and human rights.
- 5.5 support and encourage staff to seek available opportunities through non-school system mechanisms to enhance professional growth in the area of race, culture and human rights.
- 5.6 encourage staff to become more familiar with and make more use of co-operative learning strategies to enhance cross-cultural understanding.

PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PRACTICES

INTRODUCTION:

The Chignecto-Central Regional School System is committed to an employment equity policy which treats all job applicants and employees without prejudice or discrimination on any grounds prohibited by the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act.

Through its Employment Equity Programs, all First Nations, African Nova Scotian, Visible Ethno-cultural and Persons With Disabilities job applicants and employees will be treated without racism, prejudice or discrimination on any grounds. We are further committed to the development and maintenance of practices which reflect the understanding, appreciation and respect for all employees.

The overall goal of the Employment Equity Programs will make the School System, at all levels, representative of a workforce which reflects the qualified labour pool, racial and ethnic diversity, gender equity and persons with disabilities in the areas served by the Board.

We recognize that all system employees are role models in the educational process. It is a positive experience when students from any background see ethno-cultural, racial, linguistic and other forms of diversity reflected in staff at all levels of employment within the system; their perception of life opportunities for all members of society is broadened. Positive role models for all students enhances their personal identities and self-esteem.

PROCEDURES: To achieve these aims, administration and staff will . . .

- 6.1 endeavor to ensure that Board members and all staff are familiar with Policy #ES-RCH-01 Race Relations, Cross-Cultural Understanding in a Human Rights Context through an annual orientation program.
- 6.2 endorse an employment equity program that will ensure that the Ethno-cultural, racial, gender and linguistic diversity exist within the boundaries of its jurisdiction is reflected in its staff.
- 6.3 ensure no person shall be denied employment opportunities based on any of the protected characteristics.
- 6.4 assign responsibility for implementing the employment equity policy and practices to the appropriate supervisory officer' assign adequate staff and resources to the effort and adopt procedures to monitor progress and maintain accountability.
- 6.5 actively recruit, hire and promote qualified applicants who are representative of the Women, First Nations, African Nova Scotian and/or Visual Ethno-cultural population found in our schools and community. All advertisements for employment with the Board shall contain the Board's commitment to Employment equity.
- 6.6 endeavor to ensure that interviews for any staff position include questions to elicit candidates' views on race relations and their knowledge of and commitment to anti-race education.

- 6.7 in hiring and promotion, the CCRSB shall seek to recruit, interview, hire and/or promote candidates having qualifications which include training, practical experience and sensitivity to anti-racist education and practices.

RESEARCH

INTRODUCTION:

In consultation with the Nova Scotia Human Rights Committee determine how best to develop a record of racial, Ethno-cultural and gender composition of its school population and to monitor the progress of groups relative to each other. The intent of this goal is to monitor the impact of the Board's policy on race relations, cross-cultural understanding and human rights. As such, it is strictly a confidential, internal exercise and the results shall not be a matter of public record.

PROCEDURES: To achieve the goal, administration and staff will . . .

- 7.1 direct the Coordinator of African Nova Scotian Cultural Services and the Coordinator of First Nations Cultural Services to develop a program (with the assistance of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission) that will provide the information required.
- 7.2 establish a regular and voluntary data collection system which identifies the current composition and placement of the workforce of the Board. All employees, whether hired as a team, casual, substitute, probationary or permanent, will be requested to, on a voluntary basis, complete the survey in order to maintain current information.
- 7.3 maintain hiring, retention and promotion data on an on-going basis with a view to bringing the diversity within the Board's workforce more in line with the proportion of diversity in the general community.
- 7.4 establish a regular and voluntary data collection system regarding:
 - a) the number of First Nations, African Nova Scotian and Visible Ethno-cultural students enrolled in various programs and /or initiatives;
 - b) the academic progress of First Nations, African Nova Scotian and Visible Ethno-cultural students;
 - c) the success of new or existing academic or other initiatives designed to meet the educational needs and/or increase the graduation rate of First Nations, African Nova Scotian and Visible Ethno-cultural students to the total population.

- 7.5 direct administrators to submit the results of this program to the Coordinator of African Nova Scotian Cultural Services and the Coordinator of First Nations Cultural Services at the end of each academic year.
- 7.6 ensure that the statistics compiled as a result of this program, in accordance with guidelines established with the direction of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission, are strictly confidential and for distribution only with expressed permission of the superintendent and only when its distribution will contribute to the achievement of the policy.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (General)

1. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES SERVICES

The Director of Human Resources Services (or designate) shall . . .

- a) ensure that Board Policy #ES-RCH-01 and the guidelines and procedures in this Handbook are implemented;
- b) promote positive race relations, cross-cultural understanding and human rights; and,
- c) investigate, in accordance with due process, cases involving board staff and take the appropriate disciplinary action.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COORDINATOR OF AFRICAN NOVA SCOTIAN CULTURAL SERVICES AND THE COORDINATOR OF FIRST NATIONS CULTURAL SERVICES

The Coordinator of African Nova Scotian Cultural Services and the Coordinator of First Nations Cultural Services (or designate) shall . . .

- a) ensure that Board Policy #ES-RCH-01 and supporting Guidelines and Procedures are implemented and monitored;
- b) promote positive race relations, cross-cultural understanding and human rights across the system;
- c) maintain a file of all documented reports and related correspondence of racial, ethnic, sexual and human rights complaints or incidents;
- d) as directed, investigate racial, ethnic, sexual or human rights complaints involving board staff and report results to supervisor(s);
- e) as directed, assist with the investigation and/or mediation of school-based racial, ethnic, sexual or human rights complaints;
- f) be available to consult with the school Principal throughout an investigation and resolution process;

- g) coordinate sensitivity training sessions for Principals and R.C.H. Advisors to assist them when dealing with incidents of racial, ethnic or sexual harassment as well as human rights complaints;
- h) following investigation, work with school Principals to ensure relative consistency in
- i) designing suitable educational experiences for students;
- j) consult with Principals to monitor follow-up to investigation; and
- k) work cooperatively with administrative staff to develop appropriate reporting forms.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRINCIPAL

The Principal (or designate) shall . . .

- a) report to the Coordinator of African Nova Scotian Cultural Services and/or the Coordinator of First Nations Cultural Services all incidents of racial, ethnic and sexual harassment as well as all human rights complaints;
- b) be available to investigate all incidents racial, ethnic and sexual and/or human rights harassment;
- c) be available to investigate incidents where human rights complaints have been reported;
- d) be the primary investigator of any incident of racial, ethnic, sexual or human rights harassment between student-to-student, staff and students, or staff and staff. Report incident and status of investigation to the appropriate Director and the Coordinator of African Nova Scotian Cultural Services and the Coordinator of First Nations Cultural Services; (see form HR-02)
- e) treat all substantiated incidents between students in grades primary to three as a discipline case under the school's discipline policy with respect to assault. (Arrange a suitable educational experience for the student. Inform and involve the parents.);
- f) treat all substantiated incidents between students in grades four to twelve as a discipline case under the school's discipline policy with respect to assault. (Arrange a suitable educational experience for the student. Inform and involve the parents);

- g) arrange follow-up counseling for victims and instigators of harassment. The Advisor (or designate) will contact the appropriate services to ensure that student needs are met; (if RCH advisor is administrator / counsellor);
- h) ensure that students returning to school from suspensions are reintegrated into school following a suitable educational experience; (if RCH advisor is administrator / counsellor);
- i) treat any maliciously false report of racial, ethnic, sexual or human rights harassment as an incident of harassment; and,
- j) inform all students at the opening of school and at such times during the year as necessary to raise student consciousness of the Board's policy with respect to racial, ethnic, sexual and human rights harassment.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RCH ADVISOR OR DESIGNATE

Prior to September, 1998, each school shall appoint at least one person from the teaching staff as a RCH Advisor (or designate) for each school site. This person, along with the Principal, shall participate in training sessions organized by the Coordinator of African Nova Scotian Cultural Services and / or the Coordinator of First Nations Cultural Services to provide instruction in the skills and sensitivities required by this role.

The RCH Advisor (or designate) shall . . .

- a) assist their school in developing a diversity program that reflects the Board's statement on Race Relations, Cross-Cultural Understanding and Human Rights;
- b) work with the school administration and other board staff to secure the necessary supports to meet the program needs which have been established by their school;
- c) review with the principal the school's plan for sensitizing students to diversity issues;
- d) be available to fellow staff members to review procedures for introducing potentially sensitive topics to the classroom; (Appendix B)
- e) work with school staff so as to collect information on cross-cultural guest speakers, resources and programs being used in their school; and,

- f) act as the liaison person between their school and the Coordinator of African Nova Scotian Cultural Services and / or the Coordinator of First Nations Cultural Services.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OTHER SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

It is the role and responsibility of all other Board employees to:

- a) play a proactive role in demonstrating and promoting positive race relations, cross-cultural understanding and human rights;
- b) actively utilize curriculum in all of its forms to model positive race relations, cross-cultural understanding and human rights;
- c) ensure that all their pedagogical practices promote positive race relations, cross-cultural understanding and human rights;
- d) intervene immediately and report any incident of racial, ethnic or sexual harassment to the school principal; and,
- e) do whatever possible to reassure the victim of an incident and support self-esteem.
- f) do whatever possible to reassure the victim of an incident and support self-esteem.

**RACE RELATIONS, CROSS-CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING
AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

**GUIDELINES FOR INTRODUCING SENSITIVE MATERIALS
AND ACTIVITIES INTO THE CLASSROOM**

(materials or activities which are planned in addition
to generally approved curriculum materials)

The issues related to diversity may be sensitive to students and parents for various reasons. The Board recognizes some of the issues which may arise for discussion and exploration may affect the sensibilities of certain individuals from the community.

With this in mind, these steps should be followed by teachers when sensitive diversity issues are planned as part of the lesson.

- 1) The teacher should assess the impact that a particular issue may have for any distinct or visible group within the classroom (within the scope of reasonable and general knowledge). The teacher should meet with such students and inform them of the intention to utilize materials in the classroom which contain sensitive issues. The students must be assured of the educational purpose of the exercise and be assured also that the teacher, before introducing the material or topic, plans to carefully prepare the other students in the class with the necessary contextual information which will allow the students to respond in a responsible and appropriate manner.
- 2) The Principal of the school should be made aware of any significant materials or information which will be shared with students examining issues of a sensitive nature.
- 3) Notices should be sent to parents by the teacher (over the signature of the Principal) if the teacher and principal feel that sensitive materials are being utilized and should be brought to the attention of parents.
- 4) In such situations, students, with their parents written permission, may be excused from participating in such programs. In such cases, optional assignments may be submitted for the activity missed.
- 5) If the teacher is uncertain of the possible sensitivity of a topic, he / she should consult with the principal before processing.