

ABORIGINAL STUDENT SELF-IDENTIFICATION POLICY

S.M.16

POLICY

1. The Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board, in its Mission and Vision to enable all students to realize the fullness of their humanity of which our Lord Jesus Christ is the model, will provide all First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and their parents/guardians the opportunity to voluntarily and confidentially self-identify as a means of enhancing student achievement, program development, cross-cultural understanding and public confidence.
2. The purpose of this policy is to provide direction to staff and the community with respect to providing the highest possible quality of Catholic education for all students, including First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. This policy seeks to:
 - Provide learning opportunities that are responsive, flexible, and accessible;
 - Improve EQAO test scores;
 - Increase retention rates;
 - Increase graduation rates;
 - Increase post-secondary participation rates; and
 - Provide effective, respectful working relationships and partnerships with Aboriginal parents and the Aboriginal community.
3. This policy intends to ensure that:
 - the learning aspirations and potential of Aboriginal students are realized through a responsive, transparent and accountable policy focused on support for students and a strong partnership with Aboriginal parents and the Aboriginal community;
 - student achievement data will help to determine whether current programs offer similar opportunities for success as for other students; and
 - continued data collection and analysis will provide information for future decision-making surrounding Aboriginal student success.
4. In keeping with an Aboriginal student's right to confidentiality, the student's records/data will be treated in the same manner and in accordance with the Ontario Student Record (OSR) Guidelines and the requirements of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. The data/information will be used in the aggregate only and for the purpose of evaluating, developing and implementing supports.

ABORIGINAL STUDENT SELF-IDENTIFICATION POLICY (cont'd)

S.M.16

REGULATIONS

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 Métis people of Canada”.

Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework – Aboriginal Education Office – Ministry of Education 2007”

PROCEDURES

1. The collection of information with respect to Aboriginal student self-identification shall be offered to all registered and new families of the Board to ensure voluntary identification.
2. Personal information collected from voluntary self-identification shall be kept confidential in compliance with Ministry policies, the Ontario Student Record Guideline and the Freedom of Information Act regarding access, storage and use of the data.
3. Staff will use the data/information obtained to ensure appropriate programming and supports for all self-identified students.
4. The HWCDSB registration form is to be reviewed and revised to reflect the selected voluntary student self-identification fields.
5. Appropriate communications material will be developed for distribution to the school community.
6. Board-wide Voluntary Confidential Student Self-Identification will be implemented in September 2011.
7. The policy will be reviewed with stakeholder representation in accordance with the Board’s policy review procedure.

BM 18 Jan 2011

RELATED BY-LAW(S): 7.02

RELATED BOARD COMMITTEE: Religion, Family Life & Instructional Services

POLICY REVIEW DATE: 5 years