



EQUITY ACTION PLAN



At the DSBN, equity matters.

We believe that each individual deserves:

- to have their identity and lived experiences honoured,
- to learn in a culture of respect, dignity, and acceptance, and
- to have access to education free from discrimination and barriers.

Meaningful and intentional actions result in a learning environment that inspires every child to reach their full potential. Advancing and sustaining equity requires that we acknowledge within ourselves that learning and unlearning never ends. In centering the whole child, we use an equity lens to reimagine and reinvent our procedures and practices to be inclusive and free from discrimination and systemic barriers.

Grounding our work in culturally and historically responsive education, and upholding the respect and dignity of every individual, will ensure equitable learning conditions and an inclusive culture for all students and staff. Sharing the collective responsibility means this is everyone's work as we collaborate alongside students, parents, educators, and community to create an inclusive learning environment.

Our Equity Action Plan demonstrates our commitment to students to ensure there is equity at all levels of the system as we work together to embrace and foster engaging and innovative learning where everyone achieves success and well-being. The Plan outlines the priorities of the six focus areas and provides highlights of the work that has been done and the work we will embark upon this year.

Student Voice

Engaging and responding to student voice and agency

2020-2021

2021-2022

PRIORITIES:

- Empower, engage and equip students with the skills and tools to be critically conscious and active participants in promoting change in their spaces.
- Create the conditions to amplify, honour and center student voice so all students can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential.
- Develop reciprocal relationships for sharing ownership for learning and having youth as partners and leaders in our schools and communities.

ACTION HIGHLIGHTS:

- Collaborated with Student Trustee Senate Committee on a Faces of DSBN social media campaign highlighting secondary student activism and being agents of change in their communities
- Supported the creation of student initiated Brave Space groups where racialized students and their allies engaged in courageous and critical conversations through shared personal experiences and perspectives
- Student representation on the Equity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism Community Advisory Committee

ACTION HIGHLIGHTS:

- Establish an equity representative on all school based student councils
- Establish a Student Equity Union and provide mentorship to lead equity work and be agents of change within their schools
- Identify and support student initiated clubs and groups to ensure student voice representation with an equity lens

Inclusive Spaces

Creating brave spaces where everyone can bring their full self to actively listen, explore and learn together

2020-2021

2021-2022

PRIORITIES:

- Ensure everyone is valued, respected and knows they belong, regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status or disability.
- Create the conditions for voices to have a space to acknowledge, examine and allow for questioning for deeper understanding.
- Embed inclusive practices in all areas connected to school culture such as planning, programming and curriculum.
- Rework existing structures where all students are supported to learn, contribute and participate in all aspects of the school life.

ACTION HIGHLIGHTS:

- Established a working team of school based staff Equity Champions in every school to support the promotion and integration of equity within their school community
- Provided the tools for staff to have courageous and challenging conversations around race and oppression
- Equipped staff with an equity lens when reviewing practices and content so all student identities are included

ACTION HIGHLIGHTS:

- Launch a days of significance calendar/resource to inform and support planning of events and celebrations representing various abilities, gender identities, ethnicities, races and faith groups
- Create a Know Each Learner framework to build relationships with students by understanding their identities, the context they live in, what brings them joy, the gifts they possess, and the skills they can develop
- Disrupt discriminatory terminology and provide guidelines on the use of inclusive language that respects and promotes all people as valued members of society and avoids exclusion and stereotyping

Culturally & Historically Responsive Curriculum

Designing instruction that honours the identities, cultural knowledge and genius of all students

2020-2021

2021-2022

PRIORITIES:

- Empower students intellectually, socially, emotionally and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- Recognize all students learn differently and that these differences may be connected to background, language, family structure and social or cultural identity.
- Empower teachers to cultivate the knowledge and skills that already exist in all learners to support achievement and well-being.

ACTION HIGHLIGHTS:

- Engaged curriculum support staff in training on integrating culturally and historically relevant pedagogy in curriculum programming with a focus on student identity, skills development, intellectual development, criticality and joy
- Supported educators in their ongoing learning through courses, workshops, seminars and resources
- Developed culturally relevant resources that are responsive to student identities and lived experiences
 - Pride Month Resources
 - Black History Month
 - Heritage Month Resources
 - Book suggestions to honour student identities

ACTION HIGHLIGHTS:

- With support from school based educators, Equity Coaches, Instructional Coaches, Multi-Language Resource Teachers, Consultants, Administrators and Superintendents we will :
 - Embed culturally and historically responsive education into practices, curriculum and assessment
 - Remove barriers to learning through the review and revision of curriculum content through an equity lens
 - Develop resources to support the learning and integration of equity, inclusion and anti-racism

Anti-Bias, Anti-Racism & Anti-Oppression Learning

Developing a critical lens to disrupt oppressive practices to improve outcomes for all of students, staff and school communities

2020-2021

2021-2022

PRIORITIES:

- Build knowledge and awareness of the principles of anti-bias, anti-racism, anti-oppression.
- Develop an equity lens to support classroom, school and system decision making.
- Apply an equity lens to teaching and assessment and evaluation.
- Apply an equity lens to school and system policies and guidelines.
- Eliminate biased, racist and oppressive practices that cause harm.

ACTION HIGHLIGHTS:

- Created and facilitated monthly learning sessions to develop educator capacity in interrupting bias, anti-racism, anti-Black racism and anti-oppression
- Collaborated with various departments in the Board to provide all personnel with the required learning to support schools through an anti-oppression lens
- Provided equity professional development to School Board Trustees

ACTION HIGHLIGHTS:

- Continue to build staff capacity in identifying and disrupting personal bias, oppression and racism
- Engage educators in learning and developing their cultural lens
- Participate in ongoing professional learning opportunities in learning teams that may include co-planning and reflection to deepen professional knowledge and practice

Community Partnership

Engaging families and community members and organizations

2020-2021

2021-2022

PRIORITIES:

- Build cultural bridges between families and schools to learn about one another and appreciate differences.
- Nurture and grow the relationships between families, schools and the community in the best interest of students.
- Collaborate and implement a collective and inclusive approach to benefit the achievement and well-being of all students.
- Engage in authentic educational experiences to affect communities in positive ways.
- Develop successful partnerships with community organizations in the best interest of Niagara.

ACTION HIGHLIGHTS:

- Established Equity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism Community Advisory Committee (EIARCAC) with a membership of a trustee, staff, students, parents and community members that meets regularly to receive, review and provide feedback on the priorities of the DSBN Equity Team and other initiatives related to equity in the DSBN
- Collaborated with the Parent Involvement Committee in providing anti-oppression and anti-racism learning opportunities

ACTION HIGHLIGHTS:

- Increase communication, transparency and collaboration with families and community members through the Equity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism Community Advisory Committee
- Continue to collaborate with community agencies and groups in knowledge sharing, lived experience lens support and building cultural awareness

Identifying & Removing Systemic Barriers

Eliminating disproportionality and disparity

2020-2021

2021-2022

PRIORITIES:

- Uphold the Ontario Human Rights Code that protects marginalized groups from discrimination and harassment.
- Collect, analyze and disaggregate data to identify and remove systemic barriers.
- Review and revise policies and procedures with an equity lens to eliminate differential treatment and outcomes for marginalized groups.
- Disrupt and remove barriers within systems and policies that perpetuate racism, oppression and exclusion.

ACTION HIGHLIGHTS:

- DSBN hired a Human Rights and Equity Advisor to lead the implementation of DSBN's Equity Action Plan in support of student achievement and well-being, while continuing to build a culture of respect for the principles of human rights and equity throughout DSBN.
- Reviewed and revised policy G-28 Student Discipline to include restorative practices and an equity and cultural awareness lens to foster mutual dignity, respect and care
- Collaborated with Curriculum team on the revision of an administrative procedure for the selection of curriculum based resources that honour student identities and cultures

ACTION HIGHLIGHTS:

- Teams to collaborate with system teams to assist in the review and revision of policies and procedures that may perpetuate individual or system racism and oppression
- Administer a board wide school culture survey to board, students grade 4-12 and families, review data submitted. Establish instructional goals and develop intentional strategies to monitor progress of student achievement and well-being
- Remove barriers in accessing education by providing guidelines in ways to support students, families and staff
 - Revision and launch of Recognizing and Launching of Creed Diversity: Respecting Accommodation Guidelines - school and parent guide
 - Revision of Gender Identity and Expression Guidelines - school and parent guide
 - Inclusive Language Guidelines