



PROGRAM AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

**Tuesday, April 16, 2019
5:00 p.m.
Grimsby Lincoln Room**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of the Agenda
3. Business arising from the Minutes
4. New Business
 - DSNB Academy Presentation.....Marian Reimer Friesen & Helen McGregor
 - DSNB Equity and Inclusive EducationLora Courtois
 - Educational Research Committee Michael St. John
5. Other Business
6. Adjournment
7. Next Meeting – May 7, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.- Grimsby Lincoln Room

DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF NIAGARA
REPORT TO PROGRAM AND PLANNING COMMITTEE
APRIL 16, 2019

DSBN Equity and Inclusive Education Report

Background:

The Ministry of Education defines inclusive education as “education that is based on the principles of acceptance and inclusion of all students. Students see themselves reflected in their curriculum, their physical surroundings, and the broader environment, in which diversity is honored and all individuals are respected.” The District School Board of Niagara commits to learning environments where all students feel safe, accepted, included, affirmed and inspired to succeed.

The Ontario’s Education Equity Action Plan (2017) states that “every student should have the opportunity to succeed personally and academically regardless of background, identity or personal circumstance”. The focus of equity and inclusive education within the DSBN has been to understand, identify, address, and eliminate the biases, barriers, and power dynamics that limit students’ prospects for learning, growing, and fully contributing to society by supporting system, school and classroom practices. This is evidenced in the 2017 revision of the DSBN Equity and Inclusive Education Policy (E-11) which was framed by the eight areas of focus in the Ministry document, Equity and Inclusive Education: Guidelines for Policy Development and Implementation, 2014.

The DSBN Strategic Plan is built around our core values of respect, relationships and responsibility. We support equity and inclusive education, specifically, by recognizing the importance of equity, dignity, well-being, diversity and inclusion of all individuals, groups and communities as well as utilizing our resources efficiently and intentionally to support equity across the system. DSBN’s “I Matter” campaign grounds our practice: “we honour the unique experiences, cultures, viewpoints, and talents that make up each one of our students and staff members. Our strength lies in the diversity of these traits and our programs are designed to support the well-being of all students and staff.”

Centralized Support

The DSBN supports equity and inclusion centrally through the Mental Health and Well-Being Team, Special Education Support Services and Curriculum Support Services. These departments work collaboratively to align resources and support the strategic plan’s commitment to equity and inclusion for all. The Mental Health and Well-Being team supports K-12 schools with an Equity Consultant, Student Achievement Leader (Principal), Psychologist and Mental Health Lead. All of these centralized support personnel provide training to administrators and staff as well as day to day classroom support through co-teaching, resource sharing and collaborative problem solving with students, parents and administrators. The experience, educational expertise, leadership and Ministry of Education liaison of this central staff make them a driving force behind ensuring student and parent voice is reflected in supporting students who are LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning/queer, inter sex, two-spirited), living with a disability, racialized, living in poverty, gender, or facing marginalization or oppression in any way.

In addition, itinerant staff, including social workers, youth counselors, and, ESL/ELL teachers as

well as community partners, Settlement Workers in Schools - SWIS and Public Health Nurses, provide direct classroom support working alongside classroom staff. For example, SWIS workers act as cultural interpreters bridging understanding between family and school.

Leadership and Training for Students, Staff and Administrators

Supporting equity has been an ongoing process within the DSBN. It is represented across the DSBN through system and senior team messaging; student voice and leadership opportunities; and, professional development and training for students, staff and administrators. The School Climate Survey provides a framework to identify and address needs through supplemental classroom and school support. Equity is also represented by educator collaboration through co-planning and teaching as well as the development of documents to support best practices.

School-based Professional Development and Training

The DSBN Equity Consultant delivers professional development workshops throughout the year to teachers, central support and administrators. Below is a list of workshops that have been offered. The workshops provide opportunities to share experiences at the school level amongst colleagues and to share best practices for inclusion.

- Developing our LGBTQ+ I.Q., where participants become aware of different LGBTQ+ identities, using appropriate language, supportive strategies for LGBTQ+ students
- Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, which is based on the Ministry of Education monograph, Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, where participants understand how to bring student identity into the classroom to enhance student engagement
- Embracing our Bias, where participants reflect on how our implicit bias impacts the way we teach and consider why it is important to be aware of this
- Creating Safe Spaces, where participants develop an understanding of the differences between normal conflict and bullying, strategies to support victims of bullying, DSBN policies related to bullying, and resources in Medianet/School Learning Commons
- Unlearn, where participants experience how unlearn posters can be used to think critically about important social issues, with the goal of creating positive classrooms and schools.
- Equity 101, where participants understand the fundamental principles of equity, with a focus on the difference between equality and equity
- Poverty, where participants challenge assumptions about people living in poverty, assess school practices that may be barriers for students living in poverty, and consider how to move forward.

Central Staff Professional Development and Training

Through Curriculum Support Services, secondary central staff received professional development on the importance of identifying and challenging our own assumptions and bias. The session revolved around the video, Danger of a Single Story. After viewing, participants reflected on components of their own identity by creating an identity web. Using the web, participants were tasked with identifying stereotypes that exist about students in schools, and steps they could take to incorporate into their practice and interaction with school staff.

School Climate Surveys

School boards are required to conduct school climate surveys of students, school staff and parents at least once every two years as they all play a key role in contributing to a positive school climate. The 2018/19 DSBN School Climate Survey includes questions about well-being, equity and bullying. In addition to providing deeper insight into school culture from different perspectives, the reports also provide an opportunity to celebrate the positive experiences and

practices in each school. Schools are provided guiding questions to analyze their school climate survey data and generate goals for their schools that support positive school climate, including equity and inclusivity.

The Mental Health & Well-being Team along with youth counsellor and social worker staff provide presentations to schools to further enhance school climate through bullying prevention, inclusivity and kindness. These goals are further shared and supported by senior administration and central staff.

Many DSBN schools have set their goal as fostering kindness to each other. This past fall, one elementary school, through student leadership, showcased their “Chose Kind” initiative journey at a Board meeting. Another school looked at their data and determined that student safety was a priority. They did an assessment of their culture, environment, sightlines and supervision routines, in addition to equipping students with skills for self-advocacy and positive decision-making.

A secondary school used their school climate survey data to analyze students’ feeling of inclusion and exclusion. In order to enhance acceptance of diverse students, the school asked for central support to provide professional development at several staff meetings and professional development days to gain a deeper understanding of student’s lived experiences.

In the 2016/17 and 2017/18 school years, elementary schools received **My Life Online** training. This workshop highlighted the responsibilities of using the internet and social media as consumers, promoters, and contributors. Student’s learned to ask themselves prior to posting: Is it true? Is it kind? Is it you? Schools reinforced this message in various ways. For example, an elementary principal followed up with each individual class and made a list of the important points about online responsibility. The messages were created into a poster for each classroom. Teachers from another school followed up with students by reinforcing the ‘3 questions’ before posting online. In addition, some schools posted and used the My Life Online “pledge” in classroom and common areas.

Multicultural Calendar

All schools receive multicultural calendars to use as a planning tool with diverse communities in mind. In doing so, a more accepting and inclusive environment is created for all students. A few significant dates that are recognized include Chinese New Year, Black History Month, Ramadan and Eid, and Pride Month.

Set of Equity Books

Since 2017/18, a set of equity books that include the following themes: black history, race, disabilities, gender roles, LGBTQ+, cultural communication, bullying, being a changemaker, and kindness have been sent annually to elementary libraries. Another set is being planned for distribution for 2019-20.

Mental Health, Well-Being and Equity Newsletter

The Mental Health and Well-being Department Monthly Newsletter is distributed to all schools to be shared with staff, students and parents and includes important and valuable equity themes, such as:

- Days of Significance, Cultural Diversity in Literature, Bullying Awareness Prevention Week
- World Kindness Day, resources provided for: Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week and Human Rights Day, Recommended Resource: Danger of a Single Story which

- recognizes bias and stereotypes
- Multicultural Calendars, School Climate Survey reminder, Diverse Winter Holiday Celebrations, recommended resource: Equity Continuum, which is a staff reflection and goal-setting tool
- Pink Shirt Day T-shirt ordering, School-based PD Menu, recommended resource: Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy in the Early Years: It's Never Too Early outlines how to embed student identity into curriculum, resources provided for World Hijab Day and Black History Month in February
- Reminder and suggestions for Ramadan and Eid which occur in May – June, and International Mother Tongue Day
- UN's International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination provides suggested resources
- International Day of Pink, Egale's Gay Straight Alliance resource

Unlearn

Since February 2017, over 500 DSBN staff have participated in **Unlearn** professional development. This includes administrators, classroom teachers, guidance counsellors, curriculum consultants, program leads, resource teachers, instructional coaches, and educational assistants.

Unlearn posters are equity-related graphic design images that are open to interpretation; inspire critical thinking discussions; provoke thought and inspire positive change in classrooms and schools; are a vehicle to embed social justice in classrooms; and, connect to a variety of instructional tasks.

Classroom teachers are embedding unlearn into curriculum by engaging students in the following activities:

- Choose a poster that best represents the book you are reading and justify your choice, using details from the text
- Write an inspirational quote which connects to an unlearn poster, and that creates a positive class climate
- Create a personal 'unlearn' poster about a topic important to you, justifying your choice of medium, and using three elements/principles of design
- Identify what math you notice and wonder about in the unlearn posters. Determine the data you will collect based on the message in the poster

The Unlearn education has been widely reported by participants as an insightful, engaging and powerful tool to think critically about biases and awareness of the experiences of others.

In a grade 12 student reflection she shared "I learned the importance of transcending the biases and set beliefs/mindsets that we have been conditioned to have our whole lives. This is especially significant in a classroom setting because every individual student's experience is different and in order to help everyone you can't be fixed in one thought or idea; thus, you must UNLEARN these learned things preventing you from helping everyone. I can apply this to my own tutoring specifically, for example, with a group of boys in my class who always talk, and goof around and never do their work when they're supposed to. When I see them behaving in such a way, I feel compelled to see them as unmotivated kids who won't do their work because they just don't want to, but when I look past/unlearn this, I can see the various reasons for why they act like this. They could be struggling with the work, or struggle with time management or feel overwhelmed, and if I can address these issues I could really get through to the students."

Harmony Movement Leadership Conference

In 2018, many secondary schools, including one teacher and a group of students per school, participated in the Pink Shirt Student Leadership Conference led by Harmony Movement. Harmony Movement provided an interactive diversity and equity education program that empowered and inspired participants to develop an equity lens, empathy, respect, and leadership skills as leaders for social change. Focus areas were on preventing homophobia/transphobia, racism and faith-based discrimination. Students were provided with an opportunity to reflect on school need and set a goal to carry out at their school. Staff had an opportunity to attend an educator session to learn more about creating supportive conditions and using supportive language.

Samples of the participant exit card question “What goals did you set to encourage a positive school climate at your school?” are listed below.

- We want to look more at racism within our school
- As a result of the day, the students have chosen to address the issue of Mental Health with a social media campaign beginning on Pink Day that will point to a week-long campaign next year coinciding with the Bell Let's Talk
- On-going interactive student activities, for example, racialized students are very interested in talking about the impact of racist jokes said by their friends

Transgender Guidelines

In May 2018, the document, Guidelines to Support Our Transgender and Gender Variant Students, was released at the system administrators meeting. These guidelines set DSBN's best practices related to accommodations based on gender identity and gender expression and have been designed to raise awareness and help protect against discrimination and harassment. It is the intention that this document will protect the rights of and support students whose gender identity and gender expression vary from traditional social expectations.

The Equity department supports schools in implementing these guidelines through professional development and case conferences. Personalized, ongoing collaboration with students, staff and families has led to specific supports being put into place to meet individual student and family needs, at their own pace. For example, each individual student has the opportunity to collaborate on how staff can support them in their ‘coming out’ journey at school. This conversation is guided by a set of questions in the Guidelines to be discussed with the family and/or the transgender student. The Equity department has provided support to secondary schools, however, in the last few years, several requests have been made at the elementary level. Support plans for transgender students usually include professional development presentations for school staff.

Supporting Sexual and Gender Diverse Students in the Learning Environment

LGBTQ+: Supporting Sexual and Gender Diverse Students in the Learning Environment (2012) was created by the Board to provide all school staff with strategies to develop awareness and to create school climate that is inclusive of LGBTQ+ students. It includes relevant legislation; Ontario Human Rights Code protected grounds; the meaning of inclusive education; how to start a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA); student voice about the importance of GSAs; and specific strategies to implement in schools, classrooms, curricular areas, and daily practice. It was created in consultation with LGBTQ+ community members and community partners. The document has been updated and is currently in the vetting process to be released in the Fall of 2019.

In 2016, one teacher from each secondary school participated in the Positive Space Leads meeting, with a focus on the book **Safe is Not Enough: Better Schools for LGBTQ Students**. Discussion included the importance of identity, knowing our students, and ideas for Positive Space Club activities. Participants had an opportunity to begin planning inclusive spaces for LGBTQ+ students and students of all identities in their schools.

Egale Canada

Egale Canada (formerly Equality for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere) is an advocacy organization founded in 1986 to advance equality for Canadian lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people and their families, across Canada. Egale works to improve the lives of LGBTQI2S (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning/queer, inter sex, two-spirited) people in Canada and to enhance the global response to LGBTQI2S issues.

Egale presented full-day Safer and Accepting School 101 workshops on several occasions to elementary and secondary administrators, as well as Guidance Counsellor and Student Success program leads.

The session provided information and strategies for schools to create safer and more accepting schools for LGBTQ+ students. Topics covered included: LGBTQ+ language and definitions, concepts of sex/assigned sex, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation, practical tools for supporting and planning for the needs of LGBTQ+ students and families, anti-homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia policies; and, pronoun best practices.

Participant exit cards responses answering “What is one goal you would like to set to support LGBTQ+ students in your school? are outlined below.

- I would like to set up a 'safe space' for LGBTQ+ youth in our school
- Meet with the GSA alliance club to see what they feel their needs are
- Take more time at our next Staff Meeting to better educate the faculty on LGBTQ+.
- I would like to make Positive Space clubs inclusive to all students so that we continue to build a whole school awareness. We would also like to do a Student Voice survey based on students' feelings around our acceptance or lack thereof with regard to gender identity and gender expression

Safe and Accepting Schools Act (Bill 13)

The DSBN incorporates the Safe and Accepting Schools Act (Bill 13) by supporting students to form groups at their school to raise awareness and understanding of all students on topics such as: anti-racism; people with disabilities; gender equity; sexual orientation and gender identity. These groups also include Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs).

The majority of secondary schools are operating clubs which enhance positive spaces and inclusion. They have varying names such as Pride Council, Culture Team, Positive Spaces, Spectrum, GSA, Lunch Club, Multicultural Committee, and Equity Club. Elementary schools also have equity clubs, such as Me to We, elementary GSA, Harriet's Heroes, iMatter for Change, Kids helping Kids. Support in establishing or enhancing positive spaces club is provided regularly by the equity consultant, upon request. These clubs also work with staff and administration to ensure school supports are put in place such as gender-neutral washrooms and honouring individual rights.

Student voice is valued, and student leadership is evidenced by the invitation to all secondary schools to share their experiences and learn from each other at the Laura Secord Gay Straight Alliance symposium on April 30th.

Pride Niagara UNITY Awards

Pride Niagara UNITY Awards in June showcases the important successes of individuals and groups that have made an impact for the LGBTQ+ community here in the Niagara Region. DSBN covers the cost of tickets for GSA members who are nominated.

DSBN schools are often nominated for the Outstanding GSA Award:

- 2018: Outstanding Young Person's Award - Lacey Cooper (Grimsby SS)
- 2016: Laura Secord SS
- 2015: Grimsby SS, John Crawford Award – Lorne Gretsinger (DSBN administrator), Volunteer Excellence Award – Betsy Tauro (BDSS teacher)
- 2014: Community Culture Award – Brandie Lancione (DSBN Equity & Inclusion Consultant)

Supporting Racialized Students

COPA (Centre Ontarien de Préventions des Aggressions) presented Allies in Action: Equity and Inclusion workshop where 20 school teams from grades 6 to 12 comprised of an administrator and school staff attended. There was an emphasis on addressing patterns of who holds privilege and who is more vulnerable to marginalization. Ways to support racialized and LGBTQ+ inclusion were discussed. Schools used their most recent school climate survey data in their school teams to set goals to carry out back at their school.

In one participant's testimonial, the school team choose areas for improvement that included mental health, bullying, safe spaces, and inclusive language. The implementation process would involve staff education and forming of a committee including teachers and student identified student leaders. "The focus will be on the development of clubs, stronger connection with outside agencies like Quest, and the possibility of all school assemblies and greater marketing of inclusivity."

Another participant shared that their goal was an anti-racism, school wide, campaign culminating in a day of Celebration of Cultures and their Foods.

Social Identities and Race Collaborative Inquiry explored how best to support racialized students. Twelve central staff comprised of administrators, resource teachers, consultants and social workers participated in these small group sessions. There was an emphasis on understanding power and oppression related to gender, race, age, ability, etc. Participants reflected deeply on their own identity and assessed areas in which they held power. Further, participants reflected on how to create conditions for students of diverse backgrounds to have a voice and be reflected in the curriculum. Participants were given a choice of resources to support their learning including Deep Diversity and Unsettling the Settler Within.

At the end of the workshop one participants shared their follow up commitment to asking questions and working toward solutions when they saw or heard about practices that exclude groups. "I need to start with more of a personal journey towards the understanding of equity. I realize that I have been walking around entirely unaware. From there, I will work on my impact on others around me."

Another shared "Equity involves being invitational to learning, to understanding and to better be a part of a global community and to 'quiet' the voices in my head from past, even negative

experiences, rumours, media, opinions and influences and learn for myself about people I meet and interact with. Then share that with others in my day to day choices for living.”

School administrators also participated in **A Teachable Moment about Islamophobia**, presented by National Council of Canadian Muslims, an organization supported by the Ministry of Education. Participants explored some common myths about Islam and Muslims and how Muslim children are impacted by the negative public discourses about their faith. The workshop provided case studies, resources, and recommendations to support efforts to promote equity and inclusion and to ensure schools and classrooms remain safe environments. Elementary and secondary central staff, ESL teachers, consultants, resource teachers, special education staff and five school administrators from each area elementary and secondary were invited.

In 2016, Dr. Kristina Montero from Wilfred Laurier University presented **Understanding and Supporting Refugee Newcomers: Supporting Educators in Creating Conditions for Growth and Resilience** to school administrators, ESL/ELL teachers, youth counsellors and social workers. This workshop provided insight into students of diverse backgrounds including refugee newcomers.

Student Trustee Senate

For the past two school years the DSBN Student Trustee Senate had a focus on Mental Health and they successfully launched many school-based initiatives along with a community wide Mental Health Walk which raised awareness and reduced stigma around student mental health.

Student Voice is an important feedback component in how we monitor various initiatives including equity and inclusivity. Through the student success portfolio, we annually run a Student Voice Forum each fall. This year over 400 students participated. The feedback gathered is used to inform our actions moving forward in areas such as student supports, school culture and academics.

This year, our Student Trustee Senate is extending this Student Voice initiative by leading school-based student voice forums at each of our secondary schools this Spring. An important element of our monthly Student Trustee Senate meetings was a learning component which challenged students to discover whose voices are missing. Presentations from our Indigenous consultant, Equity consultant and Unlearn activities helped educate and inform students. While planning their individual Student Voice Forums, students were able to develop school specific questions. Each school is able to set a goal, identify next steps, and use Student Voice to improve their school environment.

Trustees, Director and Senior Leadership

Over the past several years, during our annual system meetings for administrators, the Director has regularly spoken of the Board's role and responsibility to adhere to human rights by ensuring safe, inclusive and equitable learning environments for all. Most recently in September of this year, he invited Nicole Bonnie to share her knowledge and experience to both experienced and new administrators to the Board. Nicole Bonnie is currently the Director of Diversity, Anti-Oppression and Community Development at Toronto Children's Aid. She has worked in senior management within child welfare in the area of anti-oppression practice integration as well as community engagement for the past seven years. Nicole has also taught post-secondary critical social work theory and practice internationally and locally. She has over 15 years of direct front line experience in the areas of: violence against women, child and adult mental health, crisis intervention, criminal justice and equity. Her research interest includes Anti-Black Racism and anti-oppressive, anti-colonial and anti-racist practice within clinical practice.

Bonnie also engaged in discussions with Trustees at the September Trustee Retreat. She shared that the DSBN's commitment to equity at the Trustee, Director and Senior Leadership level was to be commended.

Equity Audit

The DSBN's commitments to equity in its strategic plan are reflected by "recognizing the importance of equity, dignity, well-being, diversity and inclusion of all individuals, groups and communities." The DSBN believes that everyone is entitled to working environment that respects who they are and values their contributions to the success of the organization

In order to further the DSBN's commitment to equity a third-party consultant, Turner Consulting, was engaged to examine how diversity, equity and inclusion of both staff and students is supported throughout the Board. Information from the audit will allow the Board to assess how well they reflect the community they serve. Turner Consulting has conducted similar audits with York and Peel District School Boards. This is a multiyear project and the first phase, the Employment Systems Review, was launched on February 11th, 2019 and will end with a student survey in the 2021 school year. The Equity Audit is also an important part of the DSBN's commitment in the strategic plan to utilize our resources efficiently, effectively and intentionally to support equity.

The audit will result in an Employment Equity Plan which will improve our current practices and help ensure all staff benefit from an equitable opportunity to succeed. It will also help the Board to refine policies, practices, and procedures to make sure the work environment is inclusive of everyone. Currently the Employment Systems Review survey results are being analyzed and will be followed by the creation of the first phase of the DSBN's Employment Equity Plan.

Indigenous Education

The DSBN continues to implement the actions outlined in *The Journey Together: Ontario's Commitment to Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples* (2016). Across the system, direct and intentional support for the learning and achievement of Indigenous students is provided alongside promoting awareness in our schools about First Nation, Metis and Inuit cultures, histories, perspectives and contributions. Regular detailed reports are provided to trustees in May and November each year.

Equity Through Curriculum and Reflection on Practice

DSBN's strives to embed principles of equity and inclusive education into curricular areas and ongoing collaboration among central and school-based staff is fostered.

The following examples illustrate how schools develop a culture of inclusion through curriculum:

Most recently, the equity consultant and the secondary English consultant have been collaborating to respond to the Ministry of Education's focus on culturally responsive pedagogy such as embedding student identity into teaching practices. They have been co-planning and co-presenting a variety of professional development sessions to secondary English program leads which encourages a culturally responsive approach to literacy. The focus has been on the importance of using texts which represent the diversity of students in their classrooms, schools, and community. Specifically, teachers have been encouraged to consider authors, characters and themes which include a variety of racialized, LGBTQ+, cultural, and faith identities among many more.

Another example is a secondary school that has been focusing on equity with support from a school-based committee, the equity consultant and local community partners. In addition to staff participating in an equity walk, and “unlearn” training, Kind 2.0: A Personal Equity Investigation for Teachers is also being offered to some staff. Two local and experienced facilitators have been invited to lead a small group of educators in a collaborative inquiry to learn about social identities and race for the sake of individual and collective transformation. These sessions are developed for educators who have a foundation in equity, and who are interested in deepening their knowledge.

In addition, the equity consultant has been co-planning and co-teaching with a variety of elementary teachers in schools. For example, students are led through a critical thinking activity with “unlearn” posters which encourages them to think about bias and stereotypes. To take the learning further, follow up activities are planned. For example, students show their higher order thinking skills by choosing an “unlearn” poster that best represents the book they are reading and justifying their choice, using details from the text.

Summary

In the DSBN, equity is understood to be a journey, not a destination. Diversity is a strength that unites our community and is reflected in our programs, policies and procedures. The unique experiences, cultures, viewpoints, and talents of our students, staff members and communities are embedded into our equity practices.

With the creation of the role of the Equity and Inclusive Education Consultant (2007), the development of the first edition of the LGBTQ+ document (2012), and as part of our Strategic Plan, we have been dedicated to supporting equity and inclusive education across the system with intentional purpose. We recognize that the work must be ongoing to ensure that our schools continue to provide caring, inclusive, safe, and accepting environments that support the achievement and well-being of every student. As such, we will continue to listen to the voices of students, staff and community to further enhance our culture of equity and inclusion. We will continue to learn and grow through shared commitment and leadership to meet the ever-evolving, complex issues and concerns of our communities and schools.

Flag Protocol Policy

Equity and inclusive education are an integral part of DSBN's operations, as outlined in our Equity and Inclusive Education Policy E-11. This is reflected in all areas of the teaching, learning and administrative culture. The goal at the school level is to include the student, parent/guardian, and community voice in the implementation of equity and inclusive education.

In June the Pride Flag is raised at the Education Centre which represents the support for LGBTQ+ staff and students across the DSBN. Our Flag protocol, policy A-11 highlights the process for flying the flag of Canada and other flags.

Principals work closely with parents of LGBTQ+ students and their school parent communities to ensure their voices and the voices of students are heard, valued and respected in shaping their schools' inclusive culture. In addition, school staff support various LGBTQ+ focused activities, clubs and programs within the school as well as implementing curriculum supported resources at each grade level.

At an Administrators' meeting on April 10, 2019, all 150 school administrators provided feedback on the flag protocol. In a discussion surrounding Equity and Inclusion supporting students who identify as LGBTQ+, principals are confident in their knowledge and ability to make decisions to support students and families. They've had success supporting LGBTQ+ families because of their ability to connect and build trusting relationships that ensure students feel safe and respected. Flying the Pride Flag at the DSBN's Education Centre in the month of June is an important part of that support and, principals want to continue to have the flexibility to work with their communities to decide on what is best for students in their own schools.

Recommendation:

In support of the feedback received from our school administrators, and in consultation with Pride Niagara, we recommend that **the first Monday in June** be dedicated to supporting Equity and Inclusion by displaying the Pride Flag in a way that best supports the school community, whether that is on a flag pole or in a prominent place within the school.

This date helps mark Niagara Pride Week, which takes place the first week in June. DSBN will join Pride Niagara, Brock University, Niagara College, Niagara Regional Police, and other organizations across the Niagara region and province in a coordinated launch of Pride Month.

In consultation with their students and school councils, schools could also choose to display the flag throughout the entire month of June. This is in addition to the initiatives that currently happen within our schools throughout the year. This also allows principals to work directly with students, families and school councils in continuing to build the trusting relationships required to ensure student and community voice is heard. This recommendation is consistent with the current flag policy.

Respectfully Submitted by: Lora Courtois

For further information, please contact Lora Courtois at ext. 54130.

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH COMMITTEE

PROPOSAL REPORT AND SUMMARIES PROGRAM AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

Date: Thursday, April 11, 2019
4:00 pm

Location: Education Centre
Fort Erie Room

BACKGROUND:

On Thursday, April 11, 2019 the Educational Research Committee met to review two newly proposed research projects.

PROPOSAL #1 Summary

- a) ***Exploring Mathematical Proofs in Elementary Classrooms*** -- Principal Investigator: Dr. Cathy Marks Krpan, University of Toronto OISE
- b) **Objectives/Rationale/Purpose:** *This project will examine the use of mathematical proofs, and their impact on student discourse in mathematics. Researcher will use the Syllianides (2007) definition of mathematical proof.*
- c) **Number of Schools:** minimum 30 to maximum 125 students
- d) **Age of Student Participants:** Elementary
- e) **To Commence/Conclude:** January-June 2019
- f) **Time Requirements:** teachers: meet 4-6 times a year; 2 hours in length, classroom observations, may be video/audiotaped, and student and teacher semi-structured interviews on school sites

We, the Educational Research Committee, recommend this research be APPROVED.

APPROVED

Recommendation:

The report of the Educational Research Committee of April 11, 2019 be received.

Submitted by:

Michael St. John
Ann Kennerly, Chair

Next Meeting:
May 23, 2019