

CODE: HA.BP**EFFECTIVE DATE:** (20-06-2017)**TOPIC:** Inclusive Education**ISSUE DATE:** (21-06-2017)**REVIEW YEAR:** (2019)**PURPOSE**

To reflect the Board of Trustees' (the Board) mandated responsibility and expectation for providing a welcoming, inclusive, safe and healthy learning and working environment throughout the District.

POLICY

The Board of Trustees is committed to inclusive education. The Board of Trustees expects the District to be an inclusive education system with its values reflected in District programs, operations and practices. The attendance area school is the guaranteed point of entry for all students, and the regular classroom shall be the first placement option considered.

An inclusive education system is a way of thinking and acting that demonstrates universal acceptance of, and belonging for, all students. Inclusive education is a values-based approach to accepting responsibility for all learners, whether registered in District Early Years or school age learning environments. It is founded on the belief that all students can learn and reach their full potential given opportunity, effective teaching, and appropriate resources. An inclusive education system supports every student to be included in their greater school community. The success of an inclusive education system relies on the engagement, collaboration and involvement of students, parents/guardians, staff and community.

The Board of Trustees believes all students can learn and is committed to meeting the schooling needs of all students in Edmonton Public Schools through the provision of a range of programs and instructional options to accommodate their differing needs and interests. The Board of Trustees believes that program implementation should provide continuity and flexibility for student learning.

PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATION STATEMENT

The Board of Trustees believes that the District, as an inclusive education system:

- welcomes, respects, accepts and supports children and their parents/guardians;
- provides for families a range of options in programs and programming choice;
- demonstrates an ongoing commitment to meet the needs of the diverse student population;
- actively recruits qualified staff with academic training that supports an inclusive education system;
- provides staff with continuing opportunities for professional learning in support of achieving an inclusive education system;
- provides each student with the relevant learning opportunities necessary to enable each student to achieve success;
- provides a continuum of specialized supports and services to students that is consistent with the principles of inclusive education;
- maintains a high standard of responsiveness, open communication, and accountability;

- continually develops partnerships with community organizations.

The Board of Trustees believes that schools, as inclusive learning environments:

- visibly demonstrate the qualities of an inclusive education system;
- provide welcoming, acceptance and belonging for all children and their parents/guardians;
- work in partnership with parents/guardians in planning, problem solving and collaborative decision making;
- emphasize the achievement of learning outcomes for all students using effective instructional practices and specialized supports based on the learning needs of each individual student;
- model strength-based programming and assessment practices based on individual student needs.

The Board of Trustees understands that creating an inclusive education system is complex and will take time.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The provision of an annual report at a public board meeting on progress towards the strategic direction of this policy will ensure accountability and demonstrate the District's commitment to inclusive education throughout this transformation.

REFERENCES

AE.BP Welcoming, Inclusive, Safe and Healthy Learning and Working Environments

GA.BP - Student Programs of Study

GAA.BP - Delivery of Student Programs of Study

HA.AR- Students in Need of Specialized Supports and Services

HC.BP - Student Accommodation

Glossary of Terms

Standards for Special Education - Amended June 2004

Setting the Direction Framework, June 2009

Setting the Direction Framework: Government of Alberta Response, June 2010

Setting the Direction: Moving Toward an Inclusive Education System in Alberta, revised November 2010

School Act Sections 8(1), 20(e), 45(1)(2)(3)(7)(8), and 47

School Act Section 45.1(1)