

Policy 7 – Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Background

The BC School Superintendents Association recognizes that issues of equity, inclusion, racism, and Truth and Reconciliation are complex and evolving. The Association affirms that educational leaders have a responsibility to foster environments that honour dignity, embrace diversity, and advance reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. This policy provides a clear foundation for members to rely on in their leadership practice, ensuring that BCSSA's commitments are consistently expressed through governance, operations, and service to members.

Guiding Principle

The BC School Superintendents Association upholds diversity, equity, inclusion, anti-racism, and Truth and Reconciliation as core commitments. These principles guide members' leadership and the work of the Association, ensuring educational environments that are safe, respectful, supportive and where all individuals can thrive with dignity and belonging.

Scope

This policy applies to all BCSSA governance, operations, programs, and services, and guides members in their leadership roles with students, staff, Rightsholders, and communities throughout British Columbia.

Policy Statement

The BCSSA affirms that all individuals are equal in dignity and rights. The Association commits to:

- Advancing equity by identifying and addressing systemic barriers.
- Ensuring that no person is discriminated against based on ancestry, country of origin, ethnicity, cultural background, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, physical or intellectual ability, or any other personal characteristic.
- Upholding the rights of Indigenous Peoples as affirmed in the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) and responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action relevant to education.
- Supporting leadership practices that promote safe, inclusive, and equitable learning and working environments.

Responsibilities

1. Dignity and Respect

- 1.1 Ensure inclusion of all members, students, and communities in the Association's work.
- 1.2 Prevent and respond to discrimination and harassment in all Association operations.

2. Equity as a Foundational Responsibility

- 2.1 Identify and address systemic barriers, biases, and oppression.
- 2.2 Promote ongoing professional learning in equity, anti-racism, accessibility, inclusion and reconciliation.
- 2.3 Align policies, practices, and leadership with the Association's Code of Conduct and the Ministry of Education and Child Care's commitments to equity and inclusion.

3. Leadership for Justice and Belonging

- 3.1 Model culturally responsive, inclusive, and courageous leadership.
- 3.2 Take all complaints of discrimination or harassment seriously and ensure they are resolved effectively.
- 3.3 Promote practices that ensure the voices of diverse students, staff, families, and Rightsholders are heard and valued.

4. Commitment to Indigenous Peoples

- 4.1 Honour the central role of First Nations Rightsholders in shaping educational environments.
- 4.2 Ensure Indigenous voices are respected in decision-making processes.
- 4.3 Embed reconciliation as a shared responsibility across all BCSSA leadership work.

5. Shared Responsibility

- 5.1 Foster diversity, equity, and inclusion as a collective responsibility of all members.
- 5.2 Encourage empathy, active listening, and continuous learning.
- 5.3 Challenge inequity in all its forms and celebrate growth and accomplishments toward inclusion.