



## **Respect for Human Diversity**

### **Guiding Principles**

Park West School Division recognizes that the underlying principle of human rights is the recognition of the individual worth and dignity of every person.

The Manitoba Human Rights Code prohibits unreasonable discrimination based on the following thirteen protected characteristics:

1. ancestry
2. nationality or national origin
3. ethnic background or origin
4. religion or creed, religious belief
5. religious association and religious activity
6. age
7. sex, including gender-determined characteristics, such as pregnancy, gender identity, sexual orientation
8. marital or family status
9. source of income
10. political belief
11. political association, or political activity
12. physical or mental disability
13. social disadvantage

Park West School Division is committed to the following guiding principles toward ensuring safe and inclusive school environments:

- clear and consistent communication—promoting understanding of human diversity, individual rights, social justice, bullying, and discrimination
- shared responsibility—whereby all involved are knowledgeable about the issues surrounding human diversity and are prepared to respond appropriately to inquiries and incidents
- relationship building—by respecting the right of all individuals to have their own beliefs provided their actions do not harm or negatively impact the rights of individuals who may not share those beliefs
- sustainability—ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and improvement



## **Definitions**

**Human diversity** encompasses all the ways in which human beings are both similar and different. It means understanding and accepting the uniqueness of individuals, as well as respecting their differences.

**Diversity** may include, but is not limited to, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, ethnic origin, ancestry, culture, socio-economic status, religion, family status, and mental and physical disability.

## **Policy Statements**

All members of the Park West School Division community have the right to learn and work in a safe and inclusive school environment that respects human diversity.

Teachers and other staff will be provided opportunities for training and professional learning that increases their capacity to teach and support students on issues regarding human diversity, including areas of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Student-established and student-led activities and organizations that promote areas of human diversity, including gay-straight alliances, will be run consistent with and in compliance with school division/school policies, and will be open to all students who wish to participate in an appropriate manner.

## **Dealing with Discrimination**

Incidents of discrimination will be responded to under the appropriate authority. If an incident originates with a student or students, the school division/school Code of Conduct will apply. Complaints from the public will be responded to according to procedure AP 112 (Public Concerns and Complaints).

## **Review and Evaluation**

Park West School Division will identify and collect relevant data and monitor implementation to inform future refinements and evaluate the impact of this respect for human diversity procedure. The procedure will be reviewed in accordance with the existing policy / procedure review cycle.



## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The **Board of Trustees** of Park West School Division is responsible for establishing a respect for human diversity procedure, in consultation with its communities and stakeholders, which complies with the legislation. The board is also responsible to ensure regular policy / procedure review.

**Park West School Division** will, under the leadership of the CEO / Superintendent, implement board policy and may establish administrative procedures or regulations on human diversity practices within a school division. The Division will play a leading role in overall policy implementation, promoting respect for human diversity and communicating policy expectations to staff, students, parents, and community. This includes enhancing divisional materials and resources, and providing training and professional learning for teachers and other staff in areas of human diversity. The Division will set standards for student conduct and develop procedures and protocols for addressing unacceptable conduct or discrimination. The Division will also determine what reporting and collection of data will be undertaken.

**Principals** play a leadership role at the school level in promoting safety and acceptance and in ensuring a safe and inclusive school environment. Principals communicate and reinforce expectations of the respecting human diversity policy to teachers and school staff and encourage their participation in professional learning and training on human diversity and related topics. Principals hold those who disrespect human diversity accountable by following established processes and protocols and maintain appropriate records at the school level.

**Teachers** and other staff model inclusiveness and respect for human diversity and play a key role in communicating and reinforcing expectations of the respecting human diversity policy to students. They support students on issues of human diversity and empower them to treat each other with dignity and acceptance. Under the provincial legislation teachers and school staffs have an expanded duty to report matters of cyberbullying to the principal, whether it is believed to be happening at school or outside of regular school hours. Participation in professional development and training is essential in ensuring teachers and school staffs have the tools and knowledge they need to deal appropriately and effectively with sensitive student issues regarding human diversity.

**Students** have responsibility to monitor their own interactions and conduct in ways that are respectful and ensure a safe and inclusive school environment, particularly toward those previously identified as being at higher risk for bullying or discrimination.



**Roles and Responsibilities (continued):**

**Parents and guardians** play an important role in their children's understanding and respect for human diversity. Parents have responsibility to encourage their children to conduct themselves in ways that contribute to a safe and inclusive school environment.

**School community members and groups** are diverse and the contributions they make to schools are valued and encouraged; they are to be provided with equitable opportunities for contributing to policy development and working with staff and with each other for the benefit of all students.