

Board Development Topic: Anti-Oppressive Education

Date of Board Meeting:

January 26, 2023

Strategic Priority:

- High Quality Teaching and Learning
- Engagement of All Students, Families, and Communities
- Effective Policy and Procedures
- Healthy, Sustainable Physical & Social Environments

Quality Indicator(s):

- QI 6.2 – The Director keeps the Board informed about Division operations.
- QI 6.3 – The Director provides the Board with balance, sufficient, concise information, and clear recommendations for actions items in agendas.
- QI 6.6 – The Director ensures high quality management services are provided to the Board.

Information for the Board (10 fast facts):

1. GSSD is in the process of developing *Board Policy 20 Respect of Human Diversity* that will require all employees, students, and the Board of Education to:
 - a. Model respect for human diversity.
 - b. Understand that equity and inclusive principles apply to everyone.
 - c. Use inclusive and respectful language and approaches in all interactions.
 - d. Assume responsibility for examining and taking steps to modify behaviours that are consistent with equity and inclusive practices.
 - e. Report matters of harassment and discrimination in compliance with the Division's policies and procedures.
2. The focus for gender and sexual diversity in GSSD is to strengthen leadership capacity to create learning environments where all students and families feel protected, respected, and included. The gender and sexual diversity efforts in GSSD protect human rights, reflect provincial priorities, and align with GSSD strategic actions.
3. GSSD developed *AP 319 Gender Sexual Diversity* in 2018. It was updated this fall and finalized this month.
4. GSSD has created a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) team that supports schools with the implementation of AP 319 and with individual school efforts to ensure that all students feel protected, respected and included.
5. Professional learning to understand and support gender and sexual diversity was provided as a breakout session during the GSSD professional development offered in August. More than 30 employees attended.
6. The Ministry of Education policy statement expects that all school divisions will respond positively to students' requests to establish a student alliance for gender and sexual diversity in their school. In the event any student's request for an alliance is denied, the ministry will work with the school division to ensure that the needs of each individual student are being met. In GSSD, 10 high schools/K-12 schools have an active Alliance; both high schools and elementary schools continue to receive support in development and implementation.
7. The Healthy, Sustainable Physical and Social Environments Aspirational Statement in the 2022/23 GSSD strategic plan includes actions on diversity audits. The intent of these audits is to ensure alignment with

updated *AP 270 Selection and Development of Instructional Materials and Equipment*. Each library technician has been asked to incorporate diversity audits into their annual plan and GSSD is in the process of completing a division-wide diversity audit on the core texts taught in grade 10-12 ELA classes.

8. GSSD has created a 'toolkit' to assist in creating welcoming, safe, caring, and respectful environments for students, staff and families of all genders and sexual orientations. The purpose of this toolkit is to support administrators and other school staff in defining appropriate behaviours and actions to prevent and address discrimination and harassment. It is in a close-to-final draft stage.
9. Education and learning are offered as part of a students' return-to-school if they are suspended for discriminatory actions and/or language.
10. GSSD is in initial stages of planning a GSSD GSA Summit. Its purpose will be to provide an opportunity for shared student leadership and deeper sense of belonging. Details are yet to be determined but plans are for it to occur this spring and to become an annual event.

Respectfully submitted,

Quintin M. Robertson, Director/CEO
Good Spirit School Division