



## ANTI-RACISM

Legal References:	<a href="#"><i>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Section 15);</i></a> <a href="#"><i>Ontario Human Rights Code (The Code);</i></a> <a href="#"><i>The Education Act.</i></a> <a href="#"><i>Anti-Racism Act</i></a>
Related References:	<a href="#"><i>Board Policy 1004 - Harassment</i></a> <a href="#"><i>Board Policy 1008 - Equity and Inclusion</i></a> <a href="#"><i>Board Policy 1009 - Violence in the Workplace</i></a> <a href="#"><i>Board Policy 1012 - Religious and Creed Accommodations</i></a> <a href="#"><i>Board Policy 1017 - Human Rights</i></a> <a href="#"><i>Board Policy 5000 - Fair, Equitable and Inclusive Hiring</i></a> <a href="#"><i>Board Policy 6000 - Safe Schools</i></a> <a href="#"><i>Board Policy 6001 - Code of Conduct</i></a> <a href="#"><i>Board Policy G021 - Trustee Code of Conduct</i></a> <a href="#"><i>Board Policy G300 – Policy Development and Reviews</i></a> <a href="#"><i>Administrative Procedure 1210 - Code-Based Human Rights Complaint Resolution Process for Staff</i></a> <a href="#"><i>Administrative Procedure 1215 - Code-Based Human Rights Complaint Resolution for Non-Staff</i></a> <a href="#"><i>Administrative Procedure 1230 - Religious and Creed Accommodations</i></a> <a href="#"><i>Administrative Procedure 3740 - Prevention and Resolution of Workplace Harassment</i></a> <a href="#"><i>Administrative Procedure 3760 - Progressive Discipline</i></a> <a href="#"><i>Policy on Preventing Discrimination Based on Creed, Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2015</i></a> <a href="#"><i>Policy on Competing Human Rights, Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2012</i></a> <a href="#"><i>Dreams Delayed: Addressing Systemic Anti-Black Racism and Discrimination in Ontario Public Education, Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2025</i></a>
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### 1. Purpose

- 1.1. The Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) and the Board of Trustees are committed to dismantling structural, institutional and interpersonal racism by identifying, preventing, and removing barriers in all WRDSB working and learning environments.
- 1.2. This policy underlines the WRDSB's commitment to understanding and addressing historical and current impacts of systemic racism and discrimination that results in inequities experienced by students, staff and other members of the WRDSB community.
- 1.3. The WRDSB seeks to address all forms of racism.
- 1.4. The provisions included in this policy are to be understood in a way that upholds existing rights as prescribed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Ontario Human Rights Code.
- 1.5. This Anti-Racism Policy further supports the WRDSB's commitment to address systemic forms of racism through the creation, evaluation and monitoring of a Multi-Year Anti-Racism Plan (MYARP).

- 1.6. The WRDSB acknowledges intersecting forms of oppression between race and the other [Ontario Human Rights Code](#)-protected grounds of age, ancestry, citizenship, colour, creed/religion, disability, ethnic origin, family status, gender expression, gender identity, marital status, place of origin, sex, and sexual orientation which may compound the experiences of racism. This affirms the WRDSB's commitment to examine the patterns in individual experiences and to strive for systemic improvements.
- 1.7. The impact and consequences of historical and ongoing racism have created systemic barriers that prevent students and staff from reaching their highest potential in school boards across the province, including the WRDSB.
  - 1.7.1. This is especially true for Indigenous and Black students who are disproportionately impacted by systemic anti-Indigenous racism and anti-Black racism due to the legacies and ongoing impacts of colonization and enslavement. Due to systemic anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism, Indigenous and Black students have experienced inequitable outcomes, which include lower graduation rates, higher rates of suspensions and expulsions, and are less likely to learn about their histories in positive, identity-affirming ways or to see themselves represented in the staff who are in their schools.
- 1.8. The WRDSB understands that racism can be experienced through systemic barriers, bias, and erasure of identity manifested through the implementation of policies, procedures, pedagogies, programs and practices.
- 1.9. Individual experiences of racism or discrimination will be attended to through the appropriate policy/procedure (referenced in "Related References" section above).
  - 1.9.1. Complaints of discrimination and/or harassment by or about WRDSB staff can be dealt with under the Violence in the Workplace Policy (1009), Prevention and Resolution of Workplace Harassment Administrative Procedure (3740) or Human Rights Policy (1017).
  - 1.9.2. Complaints of discrimination and/or harassment by or about students can be dealt with under the Safe Schools Policy (6000), the Code Of Conduct Policy (6001) or Human Rights Policy (1017).
  - 1.9.3. Complaints of discrimination and/or harassment by members of the WRDSB community including parents/caregivers, volunteers, community members and visitors can be dealt with under the Code Of Conduct Policy (6001) or Human Rights Policy (1017).
  - 1.9.4. Complaints of discrimination and/or harassment against a Trustee will be addressed under the Trustee Code of Conduct (G201).
- 1.10. Systemic change requires sustained collaboration throughout the Board. This policy affirms that all staff have a role to play in operationalizing this policy to reflect the WRDSB's commitment to understanding and addressing the impacts of systemic racism.
- 1.11. The WRDSB and the Board of Trustees will identify and eliminate or revise policies, procedures and other systemic practices that indirectly or directly create racism, through the Trustee administered policy review process, Board Policy G300 – Policy Development and Reviews and in alignment with AP 1650 - Development of Board Policy/Procedure.

## 2. **Definitions**

Definitions in this section are from many sources. The WRDSB recognizes that the terms and usage of the terms may vary based on individuals and groups. This list is not meant to be exhaustive or comprehensive.

- 2.1. **Anti-Black Racism:** Prejudice, attitudes, beliefs, stereotyping and discrimination that is directed at people of African, Afro-Caribbean, and/or Black descent and is rooted in their unique history and experience of enslavement and its legacy. Anti-Black racism is deeply entrenched in Canadian institutions, policies and practices, to the extent that anti-Black racism is either functionally normalized or rendered invisible to the larger White society. (Source: [Government of Canada](#))
- 2.2. **Anti-Indigenous Racism:** The ongoing race-based discrimination, negative stereotyping, and injustice experienced by Indigenous Peoples within Canada (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit). It includes ideas and practices that establish, maintain and perpetuate power imbalances, systemic barriers, and inequitable outcomes that stem from the legacy of colonial policies and practices in Canada which continue today. (Source: [Government of Canada](#))
- 2.3. **Anti-oppression:** A proactive and consistent process of change to eliminate individual, institutional, and systemic oppression (e.g. ableism, antisemitism, biphobia, classism, colonialism, homophobia, Islamophobia, racism, sexism, transphobia). (Source: [Ontario Human Rights Commission](#))
- 2.4. **Anti-racism:** Is about taking proactive steps to fight racial inequity. It's different from other approaches that focus on multiculturalism or diversity because it acknowledges that systemic racism exists and actively confronts the unequal power dynamic between groups and the structures that sustain it. Anti-racism involves consistently assessing structures, policies and programs, and through monitoring outcomes, ensuring they are fair and equitable for everyone. (Source: [Government of Ontario](#))
- 2.5. **Barrier:** Anything that prevent a person or groups of people with shared identities from fully taking part in all aspects of society, including physical, architectural, information or communications, attitudinal, economic, and technological barriers, as well as policies or code practices. (Source: [Ontario Human Rights Commission](#))
  - 2.5.1. **Systemic barrier:** A barrier embedded in the social or administrative structures of an organization, including the physical accessibility of an organization, organizational policies, practices and decision-making processes, or the culture of an organization. These structures may appear neutral on the surface, but exclude members of groups protected by the *Ontario Human Rights Code*. (Source: [Ontario Human Rights Commission](#))
- 2.6. **Colonization:** The process of invasion, dispossession, genocide and subjugation of a people. The result is the dispossession of vast amounts of lands from the original inhabitants and the long-term result is institutionalized inequality. The colonizer/colonized relationship is by nature an unequal one that benefits the colonizer at the expense of the colonized. Settler colonialism — such as in the case of Canada — is the unique process where the colonizing population does not leave the territory, asserts ongoing sovereignty to the land, actively seeks to assimilate the Indigenous populations and extinguish their cultures, traditions and ties to the land. **Colonialism** refers to the ideology or method that makes way for colonization. (Source: [Government of Canada](#))
- 2.7. **Erasure:** The process by which individuals or groups are denied recognition or acknowledgment of their cultural, racial, or personal identities. This often occurs through systemic marginalization, stereotypes, and microaggressions that undermine the unique experiences and histories of these individuals or groups. Such erasure can contribute to feelings of invisibility and disconnection from one's heritage and community.
- 2.8. **Human Rights:** Human rights are rights we have because we exist as human beings. Everyone is entitled to a life of equality, dignity, and respect, free from discrimination. Human rights are recognised and protected by a set of international and Canadian laws. In Ontario, human rights are protected by the Ontario Human Rights Code. It is a provincial law that helps to make sure that everyone enjoys equal rights and opportunities

without discrimination in areas such as employment, housing and services. (Source: [Ontario Human Rights Commission](#))

- 2.9. **Intersectionality:** A framework or approach that considers how someone's identification with more than one Code-protected ground or characteristic can result in unique or compounded barriers or discrimination (for example, how a student's First Nations, Métis or Inuit identity, race, gender, socio-economic status, being a newcomer, refugee, English-language learner or being in the child welfare system, can combine with a reading disability to create unique and overlapping experiences of disadvantage and discrimination). (Source: [Ontario Human Rights Commission](#))
- 2.10. **Microaggression(s):** A comment or action that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expresses a prejudiced attitude toward a member of a marginalized group (such as a racial minority). (Source: [Government of Canada](#))
- 2.11. **Oppression:** The systematic subjugation of one social group by a more powerful social group for the social, economic, and political benefit of the more powerful social groups. (Source: [Government of Canada](#))
- 2.12. **Racism:** An ideology that either directly or indirectly asserts that one group is inherently superior to others. It can be openly displayed in racial jokes and slurs or hate crimes, but it can be more deeply rooted in attitudes, values and stereotypical beliefs. In some cases, these are unconsciously held and have become deeply embedded in systems and institutions that have evolved over time. Racism operates at a number of levels, in particular, individual, systemic and societal. (Source: [Ontario Human Rights Commission](#))
- 2.13. **Stereotype:** Incorrect assumption based on things like race, colour, ethnic origin, place of origin, religion, etc. Stereotyping typically involves attributing the same characteristics to all members of a group regardless of their individual differences. It is often based on misconceptions, incomplete information and/or false generalizations. (Source: [Government of Canada](#))
- 2.14. **Systemic racism:** Consists of patterns of behaviour, policies or practices that are part of the social or administrative structures of an organization, and which create or perpetuate a position of relative disadvantage for racialized persons. These appear neutral on the surface but, nevertheless, have an exclusionary impact on racialized persons. (Source: [Government of Canada](#))

### 3. Application

- 3.1. This policy applies to all WRDSB students, staff, trustees and other users such as members of consultative committees, clients of the Board, parents/caregivers, volunteers, permit holders, contractors, and employees of organizations not related to the Board, but who work on or are invited onto Board premises.
- 3.2. All WRDSB staff have the additional responsibility to act immediately following relevant policies and procedures (outlined in Section 2.5 above) if they observe or become aware of harassment or discrimination due to racism. Managers and administrators are responsible for creating and maintaining an environment that is free from racism.
- 3.3. The WRDSB will provide human rights, anti-oppression and anti-racism professional learning opportunities for WRDSB staff. Trustees will engage in learning to support their knowledge and understanding of human rights and equity and responsibilities pursuant to the Ontario Human Rights Code.
- 3.4. The WRDSB will create and maintain a multi-year anti-racism plan that will be reviewed annually and updated as needed at a minimum of every five (5) years.
  - 3.4.1. The progress of the plan with key indicators will be reported to Trustees on an annual basis.