



November 10, 2025

Policy & Governance Standing Committee

Notice of Meeting

The Policy & Governance Standing Committee Meeting of the Waterloo Region District School Board will be held in the Boardroom, Building 2, 1st Floor, 51 Ardelet Avenue, Kitchener, Ontario, on September 17, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

AGENDA

Call to Order

Territorial Acknowledgement and O Canada

Approval of Agenda

Announcements

Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

Delegations

Staff Follow Up

Reports

01 Board Policy 6013 Drug Education and Addictive Behaviours

08 Board Policy 2004 Character Education and Social-Emotional Skills Development

12 New Anti-Racism Policy

Board Reports

Question Period for Members (5 minutes)

Rise & Reconvene



Report to Policy & Governance Standing Committee

November 10, 2025

Subject: Board Policy 6013 - Education on Substance Use and Addictive Behaviours

Recommendation

That the Policy & Governance Standing Committee recommend approval of changes to Board Policy 6013 - Education on Substance Use and Addictive Behaviours as recommended at the November 10, 2025, Policy & Governance Standing Committee.

Status

Recommended changes include an updated title (formerly titled Drug Education & Addictive Behaviours) and a refocus and alignment with the [Mental Health and Addiction Strategic Plan](#).

The following steps have occurred:

- Public Consultation
- Consultation with WRDSB Committees including but not limited to, Parent Involvement Committee, Special Education Advisory Committee, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Group
- Reviewed using the Human Rights and Equity Review Guide
- Reviewed by Leadership Council
- Reviewed for legislative updates, consistent language and AODA considerations

Background

The policy was reviewed through the Policy Review Process.

Financial implications

There are no known financial implications of the policy changes.

Communications

Policies will be updated on the internal and external websites after approval by the Board of Trustees at the monthly Board meeting.

Prepared by: Stephanie Reidel, Manager of Corporate Services in consultation with Leadership Council.



DRUG-EDUCATION ON SUBSTANCE USE AND ADDICTIVE BEHAVIOURS

Legal References:	Education Act, as amended; Policy/Program Memorandum 169 – Student Mental Health Provincial Code of Conduct; Ontario Regulation 472/07;
Related References:	Policy and Procedure Memorandum 145 – Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour; Board Policy 6000 – Safe Schools; Mental Health and Addictions Strategic Plan Board Policy 6001 – Code of Conduct; Board Policy 6008 – Student Discipline; Administrative Procedure 1260 – Student Discipline Procedure Administrative Procedure 1360 – Safety Response Issues in Schools Administrative Procedure 1370 – Responsibility for Maintaining Safety, Security and Order in the School Environment Administrative Procedure 3480 – Responsibilities and Expectations: Principal Administrative Procedure 3490 – Responsibilities and Expectations: Vice Principal; and School Board Police Protocol.
Effective Date:	January 22, 2018
Revisions:	February 10, 2020, November 10, 2025
Reviewed:	

1. Purpose Preamble

- 1.1 The Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) believes that education is a critical strategy that can help prevent students from developing problematic addictions to substances and behaviours. ~~partners with community agencies and organizations to support a comprehensive awareness, prevention and intervention strategy that prohibits gambling and the use of alcohol, tobacco, vapour products and other drugs on school grounds.~~
- 1.2 Recognizing that, despite education, students may find themselves struggling with addictions to substances and behaviours, the WRDSB collaborates with community service providers to ensure students have access to a mental health system of care. ~~The WRDSB prevention strategy provides a framework for learning about:~~
 - ~~prevention of substance use and gambling problems through the delivery of a comprehensive curriculum, grades K-12~~
 - ~~intervention strategies with student/youth at risk of developing or having substance use or gambling problems, by actively promoting harm reduction approaches, treatment and recovery programs and services~~
 - ~~identification, assessment and referral to community agencies, resources and service providers to address substance use and gambling problems~~

2. Application

- 2.1 The WRDSB teaches elementary and secondary students about substance use and addictive behaviours in accordance with The Ontario Curriculum, Health and Physical Education.
- 2.2 In partnership with Region of Waterloo Public Health, educators receive professional development about substance use, addiction and wellness.
- 2.3 In alignment with the Mental Health and Addictions Strategic Plan, educators receive professional development to implement Tier 1 supports and to refer students to Tier 2 supports, such as Social Workers and Psychology staff members in schools. With increased awareness, educators may refer students, families and caregivers to Tier 3 supports, which involve appropriate and identity-affirming community resources and supports.

Community Collaboration (Waterloo Region Integrated Drug Strategy – WRIDS)

- 2.4 The WRDSB collaborates with a number of community partner agencies and service providers, collectively known as the Waterloo Region Integrated Drug Strategy (WRIDS) to deliver education programs and services in alignment with the Mental Health and Addictions Strategic Plan, following strategy pillars:
 - Prevention
 - Harm Reduction
 - Treatment and Recovery
 - Enforcement and Justice

Definitions

Prevention Pillar — this pillar includes interventions that seek to prevent or delay the onset of substance use and address root causes of use. This pillar committee is currently working to develop school and community curriculum to prevent and reduce the use of alcohol and drugs among youth.

Harm Reduction Pillar — to reduce the harms to individuals and communities resulting from problematic substance use. Led by the Region of Waterloo Public Health Department, this committee is currently working to increase sector capacity across harm reduction programs and services. They are also working to raise harm reduction awareness and reduce drug related stigma.

Treatment and Recovery Pillar — recovery and rehabilitation committee is working to improve the physical and emotional well-being of people who use or have used substances. They are currently addressing gaps in treatment including more complex behaviors that result at the intersection of substance use and mental health including meth use.

Enforcement and Justice Pillar — is addressing community safety to address crime and community disorder as a result of substance use. It includes partnerships with the police, courts, corrections and community reintegration services.

WRIDS Integration — The Waterloo Region Integrated Drugs Strategy Steering Committee and the Coordinator tie the strategy together at the intersection of services, programs, policies and work that crosses the four pillar committees.

Families and Caregivers

The WRDSB offers families and caregivers opportunities that provide information about substance abuse/addiction, self care and parenting approaches that are supportive of their student/youth. Families and caregivers are a vital component of each youth's treatment and recovery plan.

Communication

2.5 The WRDSB will regularly **and publicly** communicate ~~about the goals~~ **and key actions** of the Mental Health and Addictions Strategic Plan, ~~Waterloo Region Integrated Drug Strategy (WRIDS), resources and service providers available across Waterloo Region and specific safety alerts as they relate to substance use.~~

~~The WRDSB will engage in a three-year cyclical review of the Integrated Drug Strategy to ensure that it remains relevant and effective.~~



DRUG EDUCATION AND ADDICTIVE BEHAVIOURS

Legal References:	<i>Education Act, as amended; Provincial Code of Conduct; Ontario Regulation 472/07;</i>
Related References:	<i>Policy and Procedure Memorandum 145 – Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour; Policy 6000 – Safe Schools; Board Policy 6001 - Code of Conduct; Board Policy 6008 – Student Discipline; Administrative Procedure 1260 – Student Discipline Procedure Administrative Procedure 1360 – Safety Response Issues in Schools Administrative Procedure 1370 – Responsibility for Maintaining Safety, Security and Order in the School Environment Administrative Procedure 3480 – Responsibilities and Expectations: Principal Administrative Procedure 3490 – Responsibilities and Expectations: Vice Principal; and School Board Police Protocol.</i>
Effective Date:	<i>January 22, 2018</i>
Revisions:	<i>February 10, 2020</i>
Reviewed:	

1. Preamble

- 1.1 The Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) partners with community agencies and organizations to support a comprehensive awareness, prevention and intervention strategy that prohibits gambling and the use of alcohol, tobacco, vapour products and other drugs on school grounds.
- 1.2 The WRDSB prevention strategy provides a framework for learning about:
 - prevention of substance use and gambling problems through the delivery of a comprehensive curriculum, grades K-12
 - intervention strategies with student/youth at risk of developing or having substance use or gambling problems, by actively promoting harm reduction approaches, treatment and recovery programs and services
 - identification, assessment and referral to community agencies, resources and service providers to address substance use and gambling problems

2. Community Collaboration (Waterloo Region Integrated Drug Strategy – WRIDS)

- 2.1 The WRDSB collaborates with a number of community partner agencies and service providers, collectively known as the Waterloo Region Integrated Drug Strategy (WRIDS) to deliver education programs and services in alignment with the following strategy pillars:
 - Prevention
 - Harm Reduction
 - Treatment and Recovery

- Enforcement and Justice

3. Definitions

- 3.1 **Prevention Pillar** – this pillar includes interventions that seek to prevent or delay the onset of substance use and address root causes of use. This pillar committee is currently working to develop school and community curriculum to prevent and reduce the use of alcohol and drugs among youth.
- 3.2 **Harm Reduction Pillar** – to reduce the harms to individuals and communities resulting from problematic substance use. Led by the Region of Waterloo Public Health Department, this committee is currently working to increase sector capacity across harm reduction programs and services. They are also working to raise harm reduction awareness and reduce drug related stigma.
- 3.3 **Treatment and Recovery Pillar** – recovery and rehabilitation committee is working to improve the physical and emotional well-being of people who use or have used substances. They are currently addressing gaps in treatment including more complex behaviors that result at the intersection of substance use and mental health including meth use.
- 3.4 **Enforcement and Justice Pillar** – is addressing community safety to address crime and community disorder as a result of substance use. It includes partnerships with the police, courts, corrections and community reintegration services.
- 3.5 **WRIDS Integration** – The Waterloo Region Integrated Drugs Strategy Steering Committee and the Coordinator tie the strategy together at the intersection of services, programs, policies and work that crosses the four pillar committees.

4. Families and Caregivers

- 4.1 The WRDSB offers families and caregivers opportunities that provide information about substance abuse/addiction, self-care and parenting approaches that are supportive of their student/youth. Families and caregivers are a vital component of each youth's treatment and recovery plan.

5. Communication

- 1.1 The WRDSB will regularly communicate about the goals of the Waterloo Region Integrated Drug Strategy (WRIDS), resources and service providers available across Waterloo Region and specific safety alerts as they relate to substance use.
- 1.2 The WRDSB will engage in a three year cyclical review of the Integrated Drug Strategy to ensure that it remains relevant and effective.



Report to Policy & Governance Standing Committee

November 10, 2025

Subject: Board Policy 2004 - Character Education & Social-Emotional Skills Development

Recommendation

That the Policy & Governance Standing Committee recommend rescinding Board Policy 2004 - Character Education & Social-Emotional Skills Development effective November 10, 2025.

Status

Upon review of this policy, it was noted that the “Character Education” language is out of date and related to a school subject in 2006. This is no longer the language used in classrooms, the Ministry of Education or [School Mental Health Ontario](#). Social-emotional skill development is covered and referenced in a number of other policies and resources including:

- [School Mental Health Ontario](#)
- Strategic Plan - [Learner Profiles](#)
- [Board Policy 6000 - Safe Schools](#)
- [Board Policy 6001 - Code of Conduct](#) and the related school Codes
- [Board Policy 6008 - Student Discipline](#)
- [Board Policy 6009 - Student Bullying Prevention & Intervention](#)

As a result, staff recommend rescinding Board Policy 2004 - Character Education & Social-Emotional Skills Development.

Background

The policy was reviewed through the Policy Review Process.

Financial implications

There are no known financial implications of the policy changes.

Communications

Policies will be updated on the internal and external websites after approval by the Board of Trustees at the monthly Board meeting.

Prepared by: Stephanie Reidel, Manager of Corporate Services in consultation with Leadership Council.



CHARACTER EDUCATION AND SOCIAL- EMOTIONAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Legal References:

Related References: *Finding Common Ground: Character Development in Ontario Schools, K–12, 2008*
A Guide to Character Development in Ontario Schools, K–12, 2008
Administrative Procedure 1200 - Student Bullying Prevention and Intervention
Administrative Procedure 1260 - Student Discipline Procedure
Administrative Procedure 4070 - Responsible Use Procedure for Information, Communication and Collaboration Technologies
Board Policy 6009 – Student Bullying Prevention and Intervention
Police School Board Protocol
Character Development Poster
Digital Citizenship Poster
Code of Digital Conduct Poster

Effective Date: *June 28, 2006*

Revisions: *November 16, 2015, March 6, 2017*

Reviewed: *September 15, 2014, May 14, 2018*

1. Preamble

- 1.1 The Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) recognizes that character development promotes safety, caring and inclusion within all learning environments including the digital environment. These characteristics of the learning environment are important in supporting high expectations for student learning and equity of learning outcomes, and increased achievement and well-being for all students. These characteristics also create the conditions for student mental health and well-being
- 1.2 Parents, guardians, caregivers and family have the primary responsibility for students' character development including social and emotional skill development. The WRDSB also plays an important supporting role in character development including the identification, instruction and reinforcement of social and emotional skills that contribute to a student's cognitive, emotional and social well-being. This includes the WRDSB identified attributes: Social Responsibility, Co-operation, Empathy, Hope, Initiative, Integrity, Kindness, and Respect.
- 1.3 Staff are expected to integrate and reinforce character development for all students from JK-12. This includes embedding character development in their teaching of curriculum, integrating character development in system priorities or projects, and promoting character attributes, as identified by the WRDSB, in workplace practices and interactions with students, parents and community partners.
- 1.4 Staff is deliberate in their efforts to nurture democratic ideals, personal development and respect for self, others, property, the environment, diversity, human rights and other qualities upon which we find common ground and in doing so support the development of strong communities and the

ideals of citizenship. The focus on character development and related attributes creates and expands opportunities for students to learn about, and contribute to the building of healthy communities, our nation and the world.

2. Definitions

2.1 Character Development is defined as an ongoing process of growth that intentionally models, teaches and inspires all people to want to do the right thing for the greater good of our whole community. Character Development is the journey of connecting deep caring to knowing, feeling and doing.

2.2 The Waterloo Region District School Board has identified the following eight universal attributes that are valued within schools and our communities. Character development is the deliberate effort to nurture these attributes and use them as a standard against which we hold ourselves accountable. They are key aspects of school life. They bind us together and form the basis of responsible citizenship. They are a foundation for excellence and equity in education and for school communities that are respectful, safe, caring and inclusive.

2.2.1 Waterloo Region District School Board - Character Attributes:

Empathy:

Understanding how someone feels and responding with sensitivity.

Initiative:

Acting responsibly without being asked.

Cooperation:

Everyone working together for the greater good of all.

Integrity:

Saying and doing what you know is right, even when it is hard.

Respect:

Treating others, ourselves and our environment with care and consideration.

Kindness:

Helping others with your caring words and actions.

Hope:

Acting with the belief that things can be better and that what we say and do matters.

Social Responsibility:

Acting as caring citizens who want to make our world a better place for everyone.



Report to Policy & Governance Standing Committee

November 10, 2025

Subject: New Policy - Anti-Racism

Recommendation

That the Policy & Governance Standing Committee recommend approval of the new policy titled Anti-Racism as presented at the November 10, 2025, Policy & Governance Standing Committee.

Status

The Anti-Racism Policy Steering Committee has been meeting since May 2023 to oversee the drafting of a new Anti-Racism Policy. Six phases of policy development and review were identified and laid the foundation for the work.

- Phase 1 - October 2023 - May 2024 included a review of existing internal data and a review and analysis of existing anti-racism policies in Canada and Ontario
- Phase 2 - June 2024 - December 2024 included the drafting of the policy and determining how to collect feedback from committees
- Phase 3 - January 2025 - June 2025 included soliciting feedback from our advisory committees (Equity & Inclusion Advisory Group, Indigenous Education Advisory Council, Special Education Advisory Committee, Student Roundtable, Staff Advisory Committee, and Parent Involvement Committee)
- Phase 4 - June 2025 - August 2025 - included reviewing all of the feedback that was provided through the feedback from committees and making any necessary changes to the draft policy. There were a total of 282 recommendations made by the committees. All of these were reviewed by the Anti-Racism Policy Steering Committee.
- Phase 5 - August 2025 - November 2025 included getting a legal review of the draft policy, review and approvals through our internal mechanisms (Communications, Superintendents, Leadership Council), and approvals at the Board of Trustees.
- Phase 6 - beyond November 2025 includes ongoing policy review, monitoring and evaluating policy implementation.

We are currently in Phase 5.

Consultation

During Phase 3, Anti-Racism Policy Steering Committee members attended in-person and virtual meetings with our advisory committees. Consultations took place between February 10, 2025 - June 3, 2025.

During consultations, participants were provided a brief overview and background to the policy, were given a copy of the draft policy or it was shared on screen during virtual meetings, and were provided an opportunity to read the draft policy and provide comments verbally, and during in-person sessions, also in writing. Members of the steering committee facilitated the conversations in small groups where possible.

Members of the Anti-Racism Policy Steering Committee considered all of the feedback and implemented changes as appropriate. Over 280 comments were collected during the consultation process.

Background

During the June 13, 2022 Committee of the Whole meeting, staff reported on the recommendation to create an Anti-Racism Policy. In the report, it stated that “Preliminary research into what exists currently in other Boards in terms of anti-racism policies has been conducted and staff are monitoring the process and release of an anti-racism policy with the goal of developing a WRDSB anti-racism policy.”

Financial implications

There are no known financial implications for approving this policy.

Communications

Policies will be updated on the internal and external websites after approval by the Board of Trustees at the monthly Board meeting.

Prepared by: Stephanie Reidel, Manager of Corporate Services in consultation with the Human Rights and Equity Advisor and Leadership Council.



(DRAFT) ANTI-RACISM

Legal References:	<u>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Section 15);</u> <u>Ontario Human Rights Code (The Code);</u> <u>The Education Act.</u> <u>Anti-Racism Act</u>
Related References:	<u>Board Policy 1004 - Harassment</u> <u>Board Policy 1008 - Equity and Inclusion</u> <u>Board Policy 1009 - Violence in the Workplace</u> <u>Board Policy 1012 - Religious and Creed Accommodations</u> <u>Board Policy 1017 - Human Rights</u> <u>Board Policy 5000 - Fair, Equitable and Inclusive Hiring</u> <u>Board Policy 6000 - Safe Schools</u> <u>Board Policy 6001 - Code of Conduct</u> <u>Board Policy G021 - Trustee Code of Conduct</u> <u>Board Policy G300 – Policy Development and Reviews</u> <u>Administrative Procedure 1210 - Code-Based Human Rights Complaint Resolution Process for Staff</u> <u>Administrative Procedure 1215 - Code-Based Human Rights Complaint Resolution for Non-Staff</u> <u>Administrative Procedure 1230 - Religious and Creed Accommodations</u> <u>Administrative Procedure 3740 - Prevention and Resolution of Workplace Harassment</u> <u>Administrative Procedure 3760 - Progressive Discipline</u> <u>Policy on Preventing Discrimination Based on Creed, Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2015</u> <u>Policy on Competing Human Rights, Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2012</u> <u>Dreams Delayed: Addressing Systemic Anti-Black Racism and Discrimination in Ontario Public Education, Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2025</u>
Effective Date:	November 10, 2025
Revisions:	
Reviewed:	

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.