

**POLICY**

It is the policy of the Upper Grand District School Board to provide programs and put into place measures that respond to the needs of Aboriginal students. All Aboriginal students and their parents have the right to voluntarily self-identify, a process that will provide the necessary data to inform the Board about specific program needs for Aboriginal students. It is through this voluntary identification process that the Board will establish a process to collect and aggregate student achievement data for Aboriginal students. This collection of Aboriginal student achievement data will provide the Board with relevant information to develop appropriate strategies to meet the goals established for Aboriginal education in the Upper Grand District School Board.

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**Administrative Detail**

1. It is the responsibility of the appropriate Superintendent to administer this policy.
2. It is the responsibility of Principals to implement this policy.
3. This policy will be reviewed after the first year and subsequently, every three years, or as required.
4. This policy operates in conjunction with the Ministry of Education's Aboriginal Education Strategy and the Ontario First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Policy Framework 2007; The Constitution Act, 1982, including the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; Métis Nation Resolution, 2002; Board policies including: #207 Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity, #408 Anti-Harassment, the Ontario Student Record (OSR) Guidelines 2000 (Ministry of Education), the Upper Grand District School Board's Ontario Student Record (OSR) Guidelines, and the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

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**A.    RATIONALE**

The learning aspirations and potential of all students can be realized through a responsive, transparent and accountable policy that focuses on improved programs and services and builds on strong partnerships with parents, guardians and their communities. It is essential to understand the student population and have accurate student achievement data within the Upper Grand District School Board to improve success for all students. In accordance with the Ministry of Education's Aboriginal Policy Framework, accurate student achievement data will be collected to assess progress towards the goals of improving Aboriginal student achievement and closing the gap in academic achievement between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students. Continued data collection and analysis provide information for planning and decision-making surrounding student success.

**B.    DEFINITIONS**

1.    Aboriginal Identification

Aboriginal identification refers to the definition in The Constitution Act, 1982, Section 35 (2), in that "Aboriginal peoples" include "Indian, Inuit and Métis." (Source: The Constitution Act 1982, Section 35 (2))

2.    First Nations

First Nations peoples include both status and non-status peoples: status refers to peoples registered under the Indian Act, holding certain rights and benefits that are not available to non-status or Métis people.

3.    Non-Status

Non-status refers to peoples who consider themselves persons of Aboriginal descent who do not meet the criteria of the Indian Act or who,

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despite meeting those criteria, have not been registered as a status Indian.

4. Métis

Métis means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is distinct from other Aboriginal peoples, is of historic Métis Nation ancestry, and is accepted by the Métis Nation. (Source: Métis Nation Resolution, 2002)

5. Inuit

Inuit is a distinct group of Aboriginal people who have ancestral ties to Northern Canada (Nunavut, Northwest Territories, Northern Quebec and Northern Labrador). (Source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada)

**C. GOALS**

The Board has established the following goals for Aboriginal education, to:

- a) promote effective, respectful working relationships and partnerships with Aboriginal parents, guardians and communities;
- b) improve the retention and graduation rate of Aboriginal students;
- c) ensure that all Aboriginal learners are well prepared for post-secondary studies and the work world;
- d) continue to set high expectations for learner achievement in supported learning environments, and
- e) provide high quality teaching and learning opportunities that are responsive to the learner.

**D.    GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The implementation of this policy will be guided by the following principles:

- a)    transparency;
- b)    inclusion;
- c)    innovation;
- d)    learner-centeredness;
- e)    equity;
- f)    responsiveness;
- g)    collaboration;
- h)    respect for individual privacy and dignity;
- i)    results oriented, and
- j)    acknowledgement and reflection of cultural diversity.

**E.    IMPLEMENTATION**

- 1.    Self-identification data will be collected on Student Update Forms for all students enrolled in Upper Grand District School Board schools as of the 2007-2008 school year.
- 2.    Self-identification data will be collected on Student Registration Forms for all new students enrolled in schools beginning in the 2008-2009 school year.

**F.    SECURITY PROTOCOL**

- 1.    All data will be securely stored to respect the privacy of each Aboriginal student and used only as a means to enhance Aboriginal education programs.
- 2.    Data will be treated in the same manner as Ontario Student Records (OSR) and protected and governed by the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

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3. The information gathered will be used in the aggregate only and for the purpose of developing and implementing supportive programs, and ensuring the privacy of identified students.