

A principle for cultural competence

Purpose:

To have a culturally competent, welcoming school that honours, respects, and values diversity in theory, and in practice and where teaching and learning are made relevant and meaningful to students of various backgrounds.

Goal:

“Intercultural competence is the ability to interact and communicate with people from different cultures in a respectful and effective way. It is the bridge between diversity and inclusion and is key to creating welcoming learning environments. True intercultural competence cannot exist without recognizing diverse identities and making intentional steps to be inclusive to people of varying backgrounds.” (Page, H. 2020)

The goal of this principle is to equip our community with the knowledge and skills to understand and navigate this topic, to identify and eliminate discriminatory practices, behaviours and barriers, and to create a truly inclusive environment for all members of our community.

By building cultural competencies, we promote inclusion and equity with the result of:

- An environment where every student can be their best self, and bring their “full self” to school.
- Increased trust, cooperation, and respect in the classroom and within the school community.
- Increased knowledge from inviting students to share information, experiences, and perspectives.
- Empower students to address bullying themselves, in particular racial aggressions and microaggressions.
- Modelling the globalized environment in which we want our children to live outside the classroom.

School responsibility:

By building cultural competencies, we promote inclusion and equality with the result of:

- Providing opportunities inside and outside the classroom to acknowledge and celebrate the multifaceted and multicultural backgrounds of our students.
- Identifying areas of the curriculum where diverse perspectives can enhance learning.
- Having on staff teachers and administrators who are trained and sensitized towards issues of unconscious bias, racism and equity, and who are equipped to deal with questions and issues that arise on these topics.
- Taking incidents of discrimination seriously, consistent with the school’s An-bullying Policy and the Principle on Civilized Language.

Parent responsibility:

We encourage families to grow in their own cultural competence by:

- Engaging in school and community activities.
- Encourage relationship building and mutual respect by connecting students outside school hours.
- Showing tolerance, patience and understanding towards others.

Student responsibility:

We encourage students to practice cultural competency by:

- Being respectful of each other, accepting of different lived realities, and understanding boundaries.
- Being curious, open and willing to share.
- Being an “ally”, not only interacting and mixing with others in class work, play and outside of school, but identifying when someone needs help, and standing up for one another.
- Activating the student council to celebrate our diversity in various ways.

Success criteria for this principle:

If we acquire a high level of intercultural competency, then the benefits of building an organization's cultural competence are:

- Increases respect and mutual understanding amongst each other.
- Increases participation and involvement.
- Increases trust and cooperation.

Related documents

- Bullying prevention and action plan (2023)
- Code of conduct (2023)
- Principle for civilized language (School Board principle)