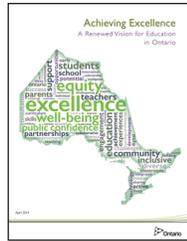


Understanding Ontario's Education Equity Action Plan: Parent Fact Sheet

Ensuring equity is a central goal of Ontario's publicly funded education system, as set out in *Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario* (2014).



It stems from a fundamental principle that every student should have the opportunity to succeed personally and academically, regardless of background, identity or personal circumstances.

Equity is also connected to all of the elements of the ministry's vision for education, from achieving excellence to promoting well-being and enhancing public confidence in our education system. It is a critical component of the student experience, and at the core of our commitment to the success of every student and child in Ontario.

Education Equity Action Plan:

Ontario's Education Equity Action Plan creates a path to identify and eliminate discriminatory practices, systemic barriers and bias from schools and classrooms. The plan will allow the ministry to better support the achievement and well-being of all students. Some key actions include: ensuring culturally

responsive curriculum and teaching practices, identifying ways to encourage diverse communities to participate on Parent Involvement Committees (PICs) and school councils, and promoting the teaching professional and removing barriers for under-represented groups.

Building on the ministry's 2009 Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, this three-year plan, which begins with the 2017-18 school year, involves working with students, parents, educators, principals, board staff, trustees, and community leaders to bring the action plan to life. Together, we can continue to build learning environments in Ontario schools that inspire every child and student to reach their full potential and become personally successful, economically productive and actively engaged citizens.

To help realize the goals outlined in the action plan, the Ministry of Education has created the **Education Equity Secretariat**. The secretariat will work to bridge gaps and address disparities in achievement for Ontario's students through new policies, resources and program options, and with realistic goals that will help all students.

Experience shows us that when we focus on a small number of clear actions, we have greater success in achieving our objectives, and are better able to track our impact. Ontario's Education Equity Action Plan sets out four areas with specific actions that will help us to combat persistent inequities in the education system – all with the goal of improving student well-being and achievement.

Action areas in the plan:

- **School and Classroom Practices** – ensuring that school and classroom practices reflect and respond to the diversity of all students and staff, so that they reflect the needs and realities of all students. One way of accomplishing this will be working with education partners, students, parents and communities to examine and address any systemic barriers built into our system so that more students can achieve and pursue their chosen pathways to work, college, apprenticeship or university.
- **Leadership, Governance and Human Resource Practices** – ensuring that the diversity of the teachers, staff and school system leaders in Ontario schools reflects the diversity of their students through its recruitment, hiring and promotion of educators and school and system leaders. An example of this is requiring directors using their annual reports to report on their progress in meeting equity goals.
- **Data Collection, Integration and Reporting** – collecting and analyzing demographic data will provide a clearer understanding of who Ontario's students and staff are, which will enable our school and system leaders to more precisely address the barriers to student success.

Data to be provided on a voluntary basis will include not only race and ethnicity, but also religion, sexual orientation and gender identity. The action plan will ensure that data collection is aligned across the education sector and provide support for school board analysis. The data will be used to inform local decision making.

- **Organizational Culture Change** – ensuring that system leaders, educators, staff and students remain committed to creating and sustaining environments that support an equitable and inclusive education system. This is a necessary condition to ensure all Ontario students feel included, respected and able to succeed. Part of this work will include conducting a review to identify and address any inequities in Ministry of Education structures, policies, programs and practices.

The Road Ahead:

Ontario's path to equity will continue to be supported by the contributions of many thousands of remarkable educators, students and parents. While we have made great strides together, there is clearly more work to do.

Ensuring equity is a necessary foundation for improving student achievement, student and staff well-being, and promoting confidence in the publicly funded school system. *Achieving Excellence* is an ambitious vision that challenges the education system to graduate academically successful students, who are also resilient and engaged, caring, confident and capable citizens.

Find more information about how the Ministry of Education is addressing equity in Ontario's publicly funded schools at ontario.ca/educationequity