

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

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VOLUNTARY ABORIGINAL STUDENT SELF-IDENTIFICATION POLICY

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1. 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 our student population and have accurate student achievement data within Lakehead District School Board to improve success for all students. In accordance with the Ministry of Education's Aboriginal Policy Framework, accurate student achievement data needs to 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 will provide information for improvement planning and decision-making surrounding student success.

2. Policy

Lakehead District School Board recognizes that it serves a diverse population and is committed to making education meaningful, responsive to, and inclusive of, the Aboriginal heritage of our staff and students.

2.1 It is the policy of Lakehead District School Board to provide parents and guardians an opportunity to voluntarily identify their children attending Lakehead District School Board as being of Aboriginal ancestry (First Nations, Métis, or Inuit).

2.2 Personal information will be kept confidential.

3. Collection of Information

3.1 Voluntary self-identification data will be collected annually on the Student Information Form for all elementary and secondary students enrolled with the Lakehead District School Board.

3.2 Voluntary self-identification data will be collected on the Lakehead District School Board Registration Form for all new elementary and secondary students enrolled with the Board.

4. Guidelines

Education programs will be aligned to the Program Implementation Policy 4010, and evaluated regularly, based on:

- learner-centeredness;
- inclusion;
- responsiveness;
- student achievement results;
- respect for individual privacy and dignity;

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- equity;
- acknowledgement and reflection of cultural diversity;
- collaboration;
- innovation;
- transparency; and
- contribution to the knowledge base through research.

5. Accountability

Education programs developed will achieve these objectives:

- provide high quality learning opportunities that are responsive, flexible and accessible to all students;
- improve literacy and numeracy results of all students;
- increase the retention rate of all students;
- increase the graduation rates of all students; and
- ensure that all students are well-prepared for participation in post-secondary studies and the world of work.

6. Definitions

The following definitions are made without prejudice.

- 6.1 Aboriginal identification refers to the definition in the Constitution Act, 1982, Section 35 (2), as: "In this Act, Aboriginal peoples of Canada include Indian, Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada".

(Source: Constitution Act 1982, Section 35 (2))

- 6.2 "First Nations" peoples include both status and non-status peoples:

- Status refers to peoples registered under the Indian Act of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC), holding certain rights and benefits that are not available to non-status or Métis people and possessing a registry number with AANDC.
- Non-status refers to peoples who can identify where their ancestral lands are (First Nation or reserve community), who are not registered under the Indian Act of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) due to ineligibility registry requirements or who have not applied for their status.

(Sources: Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, Benefits and Rights: Indian Status, 2013 www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca; Indian Act, Sections 5,6)

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- 6.3 “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 National Council, Métis National Council. “The Métis” Ottawa, ON: 2011)

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

(Source: Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, “Inuit” 2013 www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca; Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. “Inuit Historical Perspectives” <https://www.itk.ca/about-inuit>)

- 6.5 A Tuition Agreement is the purchase of a service contract (between a band council, an education authority, and a school board) stating that the school board will provide, for a fee, accommodation, instruction and special services to First Nation students. Section 188 of the Education Act permits school boards to enter into agreements with a band council, an education authority.

(Sources: Ontario Education Act, Section 188; Legislative Assembly of Ontario)

7. Data Collection, Storage, Access and Usage

- 7.1 Lakehead District School Board is responsible for all matters related to the collection, storage, access and use of student information. All student data will be collected and securely stored to respect privacy and will be used only as a means to enhance, develop and implement supportive education programs within the Lakehead District School Board.
- 7.2 All student data are stored in a student information management system.
- 7.3 Lakehead District School Board is committed to data collection and assessment practices which are multifaceted, bias-free and culturally and linguistically appropriate.
- 7.4 Lakehead District School Board staff will use the data to achieve the objectives as outlined under Accountability.

8. Data Protection

Data will be maintained and used in compliance with the Education Act R.S.O. 1990 c.E2 ss.265 and 266, Ontario Student Record Guideline 2000, Provincial Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) and protected and governed by the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA), R.S.O. 1990 C. M56.

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SELF-IDENTIFICATION POLICY****8062**9. Data Reporting

9.1 Lakehead District School Board will report system results to the Board, the Ministry of Education, Tuition Agreement partners, and action plans for improvement for the purpose of developing and implementing supportive programs.

9.2 Individual data will not be communicated and is protected by law.

10. Review

This policy shall be in accordance with Policy Development and Review Policy 2010.

<u>Cross Reference</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>	<u>Legal Reference</u>
Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee 8061	May 22, 2007	_____
Volunteer Student Staff- Identification 8065	<u>Date Revised</u> June 25, 2013	_____
Safe Schools 8070		