

<p>SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS</p> <p>VOLUNTARY FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS, AND INUIT STUDENT SELF-IDENTIFICATION POLICY</p>	<p>8000</p> <p>8062</p>
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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 families and their communities. We recognize and honour the unique cultural and historical identity of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students and staff. It is essential to understand our student and staff populations and have accurate data connected to student achievement and well-being within Lakehead District School Board (LDSB) to improve success for all students.

In accordance with the Ministry of Education’s First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework (2007), reliable and valid data is necessary to assess progress towards the goals of improving the achievement and well-being of Indigenous students and closing the academic achievement gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. Self-identification allows us to better understand the strengths, needs and experiences of Indigenous students and to offer programs and services that best support their success. It also helps us to track our progress in meeting our commitment to Indigenous education and reconciliation. Staff self-identification allows us to track demographic representation between Indigenous students and staff and offer supports to Indigenous staff members in our LDSB.

2. Policy

It is the policy of LDSB to provide the opportunity for voluntary self-identification of Indigenous students and staff as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit.

- 2.1 First Nation, Métis, and Inuit identification is defined in the Constitution Act, 1982, Section 35 (2), and “includes the Indian, Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada.”
- 2.2 Self-identification data will be kept confidential in the same manner as Ontario Student Records (OSR).
- 2.3 Lakehead District School Board recognizes the importance of collaborative relationships with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities and will seek the advice of the Miiniwewinan: Indigenous Education Advisory Committee in policy review and implementation.

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3. Guiding Principles

Self-identification data collected will be used to develop and implement supportive programming. The implementation of this policy will be guided by the following principles:

- transparency;
- inclusion;
- innovation;
- learner-centeredness;
- collaboration;
- responsiveness;
- results oriented;
- respect for individual privacy and dignity;
- equity; and
- acknowledgement and reflection of cultural diversity.

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4. Definitions

The following definitions are made without prejudice.

4.1 “First Nations” peoples include both status and non-status peoples:

- Status refers to peoples registered under the Indian Act of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), holding certain rights and benefits that are not available to non-status or Métis people and possessing a registry number with ISC.
- 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 Indigenous Services Canada due to ineligibility or who have not applied for their status.

(Sources: Indigenous Services Canada, “What is Indian Status” 2023 <https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/> ; Indian Act, Sections 5,6)

4.2 “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)

4.3 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>)

5. Review

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

<u>Cross Reference</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>	<u>Legal Reference</u>
8061 Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee	May 22, 2007	Ontario Student Record Guidelines
8070 Safe Schools - System Expectations	<u>Date Revised</u> June 25, 2013 June 27, 2023	