Addressing Anti-Black Racism

1. Purpose and Legislative Context

This appendix supports the implementation of Policy 1020 - Equity and Inclusive Education by outlining Lakehead District School Board's commitment to addressing anti-Black racism.

This work is grounded in the Board's obligations under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, which prohibits discrimination and harassment based on race and related grounds, and the *Education Act*, which requires school boards to provide safe, inclusive, and equitable learning environments. It also reflects responsibilities under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* to maintain a safe and respectful workplace.

This appendix is informed by the findings and recommendations of the *Dreams Delayed Report* by the *Ontario Human Rights Commission*, which identified the presence and impact of anti-Black racism in Ontario's public education system and called on education duty-holders to take proactive, measurable, and sustained action.

Lakehead District School Board recognizes that anti-Black racism is specific, systemic, and historically rooted, and continues to shape the experiences and outcomes of Black students, staff, families, and communities.

Anti-Black racism extends beyond individual acts of discrimination and may be embedded in policies, practices, and institutional structures.

The Board acknowledges that:

- anti-Black racism may occur even where conduct does not meet the legal definition of discrimination under the Ontario Human Rights Code; and
- systemic and structural forms of anti-Black racism contribute to ongoing inequities.

The Board commits to:

- publicly acknowledging the existence and impact of anti-Black racism;
- working in partnership with Black students, families, staff, and communities;
- developing, implementing, and monitoring measurable actions to address anti-Black racism; and
- sharing this commitment in ways that are clear, accessible, and responsive to the diverse needs of students, families, and communities.

2. Roles, Responsibilities, and Accountability

Lakehead District School Board will ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities across the system, including trustees, senior administration, school leaders, and staff, in preventing and responding to anti-Black racism.

The Board will:

- respond promptly and appropriately to incidents of anti-Black racism;
- helping students and families navigate Board processes for addressing concerns related to discrimination; and
- ensure that individuals responsible for addressing complaints and incidents have the appropriate training, authority, and resources.

3. Monitoring, Reporting, and Early Intervention

The Board will establish and refine processes to:

- recognize, track, and respond to both incidents and complaints of anti-Black racism;
- identify patterns of behaviour or systemic barriers through data collection and analysis;
- develop early intervention approaches to address emerging concerns before escalation; and
- review and improve complaint and reporting processes to ensure accessibility across languages, generations, and communities.

The Board may use aggregate, non-identifying information to:

- inform planning and system improvement;
- support transparency and accountability; and
- identify trends and areas requiring targeted action.

4. Prevention, Response, and Supports

The Board will:

- maintain safe, accessible processes for reporting incidents without fear of reprisal;
- respond in a timely, fair, and proportionate manner in accordance with Board policy and legislation; and
- implement responses that may include educational, restorative, supportive, or disciplinary actions.

The Board will also provide supports for:

- individuals who experience harm;
- individuals who witness incidents; and
- individuals who engage in harmful behaviour, where appropriate.

Supports will be trauma-informed and culturally responsive, and may involve qualified professionals such as social workers, psychologists, and community partners.

5. Student Experience and Well-Being

The Board will:

- create learning environments that affirm Black identities and lived experiences;
- support student voice, leadership, and engagement;
- address disparities in student outcomes through targeted and system-level actions; and
- involve students and families in key transition points, including pathways between elementary and secondary school and beyond.

6. Professional Learning and Workforce Development

The Board will:

- provide ongoing, mandatory professional learning related to anti-Black racism and culturally responsive practice;
- partner with communities and organizations to assess the impact of curriculum and practice; and
- implement strategies to recruit, retain, and support Black educators and staff.

7. Community Engagement

The Board will:

- engage Black students, families, and communities as partners in decision-making;
- develop approaches that are accessible, inclusive, and responsive to diverse needs; and
- reduce barriers to participation and strengthen representation in advisory structures.

8. Continuous Improvement

The Board will:

- regularly review policies, procedures, and practices to ensure alignment with this appendix;
- assess progress and adjust strategies based on evidence and community input; and
- embed anti-Black racism priorities within Board and School Improvement Plans.

Addressing anti-Black racism is a necessary part of the Board's commitment to equity and inclusion. Lakehead District School Board recognizes that different forms of discrimination may require specific and intentional responses. This work contributes to creating learning and working environments where all individuals are treated with dignity, respect, and fairness.

References

Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19.
Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2.
Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.1.
Ontario Human Rights Commission. (2025). *Dreams Delayed: Addressing Systemic Anti-Black Racism and Discrimination in Ontario's Public Education System.*
Ontario Ministry of Education. (2009). *Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119: Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools.*
Ontario Ministry of Education. (2013). *Policy/Program Memorandum No. 128: The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct.*