

UGDSB approves new Indigenous Education policy

At the May 25 Board Meeting, the Upper Grand District School Board approved the adoption of a new Board Policy, Policy 519 Indigenous Education (First Nations, Métis, Inuit).

The policy states that the Upper Grand District School Board acknowledges that Indigenous Peoples are distinct from other equity seeking groups in that they are self-determining nations with inherent rights, laws, and institutions. Indigenous rights are distinct. It is the goal of the UGDSB to ensure that Indigenous staff and students are not deprived of their rights, and are provided with a learning and working environment that is free from racism and discrimination of any kind.

The UGDSB is committed to supporting staff and students who identify themselves as First Nations, Métis and/or Inuit. The UGDSB is also committed to supporting the education of staff and students on Indigenous Peoples and anti-Indigenous racism. Through this new policy, the board responds to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action by addressing the ongoing impacts of colonialism, and protecting Indigenous Peoples' right to education as outlined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

This policy is important to Indigenous Peoples, students, parents, staff, school councils, and community members because everyone has a responsibility to ensure Indigenous Peoples are not deprived of their rights, and are provided with a learning and working environment that is free from racism and discrimination of any kind.

Policy 519 was developed in collaboration with the Indigenous community partners who sit on the UGDSB First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Council. It is the result of years of conversations on how a school board can both promote and protect Indigenous education.