



# **A GUIDE FOR THE REPORTING OF AND RESPONDING TO DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM**

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# GUIDING VALUES

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism are values that call on all of us to commit to working together, learning together, growing together, and praying together. The Division provides a Catholic Christ-centered learning and working environment that is inclusive, welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe that promotes the wellbeing of all. Racism and discrimination violate the essential dignity of the human person and are contrary to Gospel values.

The Reporting of and Responding to Racism and Discrimination Procedure (AP 170) is supported by both the [Division Core Values](#) and the [Five Marks of Catholic School Identity](#).

## CORE VALUES

**DIGNITY AND RESPECT:** We are called to value each person and to treat one another with compassion.

**HONESTY:** Be noble of mind and heart, generous in forgiving. **LOYALTY:** We strive towards loyalty to the vision, mission, goals, and fundamental purpose of our school Division.

**FAIRNESS:** We seek unity without uniformity, symmetry without sameness, and diversity without divisiveness.

**PERSONAL AND COMMUNAL GROWTH:** At Edmonton Catholic Schools, we are an organization of people, committed to the growth of the whole person.

## FIVE MARKS OF CATHOLIC SCHOOL IDENTITY

**Mark One:** Grounded in Christian Anthropology

**Mark Two:** Imbued with a Catholic Worldview

**Mark Three:** Animated by Faith Infused Curriculum

**Mark Four:** Sustained by Gospel Witness

**Mark Five:** Shaped by Spirituality of Communion

These values provide a common understanding of the behaviours expected of students, staff and families. They describe how we go about doing our best work and ensure that this is as important as the work completed.

The 5 Marks of Catholic School Identity further supports the treatment of staff, students and families in a respectful and principled manner.

*“We cannot tolerate or turn a blind eye to racism and exclusion in any form and yet claim to defend the sacredness of every human life” – Pope Francis*

## wâhkôhtowin

wâhkôhtowin is a Cree wisdom concept of relationality. As Dr. Dwayne Donald explains in his paper, *We Need a New Story: Walking and the wâhkôhtowin Imagination*, “In a practical way, wâhkôhtowin describes ethical guidelines regarding how you are related to your kin and how to conduct yourself as a good relative. The guidelines teach how to relate to human relatives and address them in accordance with traditional kinship teachings. However, wâhkôhtowin also refers to more-than-human kinship relations.”

## RESPONSIBILITIES

All students, families, staff and visitors to Edmonton Catholic Schools have a responsibility to act in a manner that is free of racism and discrimination. Furthermore, all incidents of racism or discrimination that are disclosed or witnessed must be brought to the attention of the Principal, Manager or Supervisor of that site.

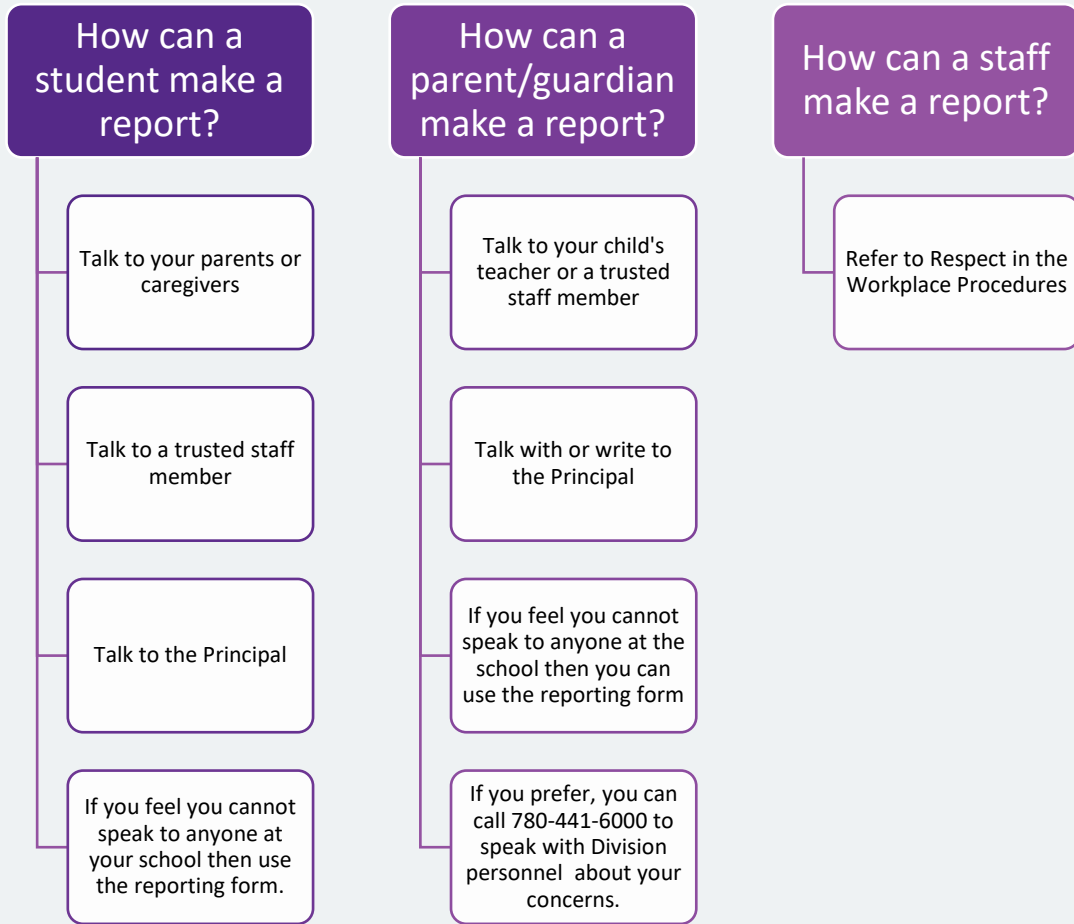
## INTENT

Edmonton Catholic Schools seeks to foster an environment in which each individual is valued and heard. The intent of this guidebook is to support the Administrative Procedure 172 Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism: Reporting of and Responding to Discrimination and Racism in a manner that is responsive, safe, accessible, transparent and equitable for all students, staff, parents, guardians and families.

*~EDIAR Strategic Plan Action 2*

## REPORTING PROCESSES

There is no one person who is the right person to report to. Different students, staff, parents and guardians may feel comfortable speaking with different staff members. All staff members have the responsibility to act on and bring forward a report of racism or discrimination that they receive from a student, parent or guardian.



### What will a staff member do when they receive a report?



### Edmonton Catholic School Division Racism and Discrimination Reporting Form:

[Ecsd.net/reportdiscrimination](http://Ecsd.net/reportdiscrimination)

Sometimes parents, guardians or students feel they cannot bring forward a report of racism or discrimination to a school staff member or principal. When this is the case, this form can be utilized to provide information about situations alleging or involving racism or discrimination. Prior to completing this form, the person who is reporting will be asked to consider if any of the following informal resolution options would be comfortable:

- Have they spoken directly to the individual involved with the situation?
- Have they spoken to a teacher, staff member or Principal?

If they choose to move forward with submitting this form, every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality. There is an option to submit the form anonymously; however, this will place limits on the investigation and response. Anonymous reports cannot be fully investigated. Providing their name allows for follow up for purposes of investigation and response. Please note that anonymity cannot be guaranteed when they provide their name; however, every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality.

**What happens when a form is submitted?**



# INVESTIGATION PROCESSES

The investigation will be led by the Principal/Manager/Supervisor, unless the complaint is against them. An investigation will involve:



Division personnel may include (in alphabetical order):

- EDIAR staff
- Family School Liaison Workers
- Human Resource Services
- Indigenous Learning Services
- One World One Centre staff
- Religious Education Services
- School Operation Services
- Other staff as appropriate

## RESPONSE PROCESSES

A trauma informed response means:

- Listening to the person or people who were harmed
- Providing access to holistic supports for all involved
- Implementing strategies to mitigate further harm

**Remember:** Division staff are governed by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act which means that you are unable to disclose details of interactions with one individual with any other individuals. For example, after an investigation, you would be able to share that an investigation has taken place and action has been taken as a result, but you would be unable to give any details.

There is a range of possible responses to situations involving discrimination or racism. The appropriate response is dependent on:

- Age of the students involved
- Ability and developmental level of all involved
- Impact of the incident
- A restorative approach
- If the incident is criminal in nature

Here are samples of possible responses. This is not an exhaustive list.

- **Call in conversation:** A call in conversation is useful to engage someone in a deeper discussion, understanding and reflection. A call-in conversation can happen in the moment or after an incident of racism or discrimination.
- **Education:** Sometimes, acts of racism or discrimination happen due to ignorance or not understanding the meaning behind a word or statement. Education for students and professional learning for staff can be an appropriate response.
- **Restorative Conference:** A conversation between people who have caused harm, people who have been harmed, and the supporters of both to repair the harm.
- **Suspension:** Principals may use suspension to ensure safety of students and staff, provide opportunity to regroup and retool for the student's return and to provide the student with opportunity to think

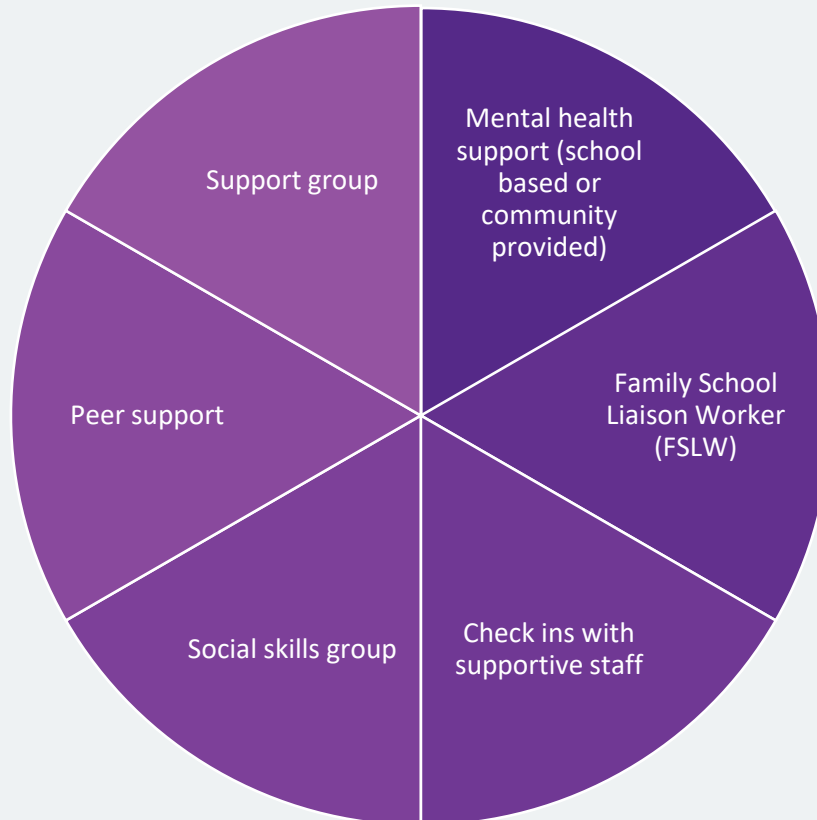
about what led to the suspension. Out of school suspension is considered extreme on the spectrum of responses.

# SUPPORT

Staff who receive reports of discrimination or racism are called to remember that experiencing discrimination can take a toll on an individual's mental health and can lead to elevated levels of stress, increased risk of depression and anxiety and poor self-image. Sometimes people begin to internalize the messages that they hear about the groups that they belong to – this is called internalized bias.

## Supports for Students

Students involved in an incident of racism or discrimination may require support. This may include both the student or students who engaged in racist or discriminatory behaviour and those who were impacted by these acts. Appropriate supports will be determined through the investigation process and may include:





## Supports for Staff

Acknowledging the emotional labour of receiving a report of discrimination or racism and/or experiencing racism or discrimination themselves, staff may require spiritual, emotional or mental health supports. Please speak with your immediate supervisor or contact [Employee & Family Assistance Program](#).

# DEFINITIONS

*Words change over time and definitions can be influenced by social, political, religious, and other forces. The definitions below are included with the anticipation that some may be adapted over time as we continue to grow and learn. The list also includes terms that are reflective of Catholic faith and the terminology used in the Alberta Human Rights Act.*

**Ableism:** Discrimination that favours able-bodied individuals.

**Ability/Disability:** Ability is the resource to perform well at something, while disability is the limits or challenges that a person faces.

**Ageism:** The intentional and unintentional discrimination against an individual or group as a direct result of their age.

**Bias:** A tendency, inclination, or prejudice toward or against something or someone. Bias can be conscious or unconscious.

**Bystander effect:** Witnesses are often hesitant to speak up, especially if there are many other people present. A bystander hopes that someone else will intervene because they do not want the pressure and responsibility of assisting the person in distress.

**Catholic Social Teaching:** commonly abbreviated as CST, is a Catholic doctrine on matters of human dignity and the common good in society.

**Citizenship:** Individuals understand their rights and responsibilities to be respectful, and participatory citizens committed to justice in a pluralistic Canadian democracy.

**Discrimination:** Unfair or prejudicial treatment of individuals or groups based on characteristics such as race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status, sexual orientation as outlined in the Alberta Human Rights Act.

**Ethnicity:** Cultural identity of a group or shared ancestry, language, and cultural traditions.

**Diversity:** Diversity is not created, but it does acknowledge the variety of differences already present in our society. Diversity encompasses the protected grounds found in human rights legislation (race, religion, gender, etc.), personal characteristics (personal habits, work experiences, etc.), and organizational experiences (work location, seniority, etc.)

**Equality:** The state of being equal, especially in status, rights and opportunities. Each individual or group of people is given the same resources and opportunities, regardless of their circumstances.

**Equity:** Equity is about fairness, not sameness. It recognizes that there are different paths to achievement and each path requires unique inputs to achieve success.

**Gender:** The Alberta Human Rights Act defines gender as the state of being male, female, transgender or two-spirited. The ground of gender also includes pregnancy and sexual harassment.

**Gender Identity:** The Alberta Human Rights Act defines gender identity as a person's internal, individual experience of gender which may not coincide with the sex assigned to them at birth. A person may have a sense of being a woman, a man, both, or neither. Gender identity is not the same as sexual orientation, which is also protected under the Act.

**Gender Expression:** The Alberta Human Rights Act defines gender expression as the varied ways in which a person expresses their gender, which can include a combination of dress, demeanour, social behaviour and other factors.

**Heterosexism:** Discrimination or prejudice against non-heterosexual people based on the belief that heterosexuality is the only normal and natural expression of sexuality.

**Inclusion:** Refers to the intentional act of recognizing and valuing diversity. It is the degree to which one perceives that they are a valued member of their work group through experiencing treatment that satisfies their needs for a sense of belonging and uniqueness.

**Indigenous Peoples:** Term used globally to refer to the original inhabitants of any region; includes the three groups of Indigenous people in Canada: First Nations, Metis and Inuit

**Intersectionality:** Describes the way in which parts of identity based on race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status, sexual orientation, intersect to create unique dynamics and effects.

**Microaggression:** The everyday verbal and nonverbal interactions and behaviours, whether intentional or oftentimes unintentional, that communicate some sort of bias towards others.

**Misogyny:** Hatred, contempt for, or prejudice against women. It is a form of sexism that is used to keep women at a lower social status than men, thereby maintaining the social roles of patriarchy.

**Race:** A categorization of humans based on shared physical or social qualities into groups generally viewed as distinct within a given society.

**Racism:** The mistreatment of members of racial and ethnic groups that have experienced a history of discrimination. Includes conscious and unconscious attitudes, comments and actions and occurs in the context of a power and privilege imbalance. Racism occurs at the individual, institutional and systemic levels.

**Restorative Approach:** Involves a foundation of restorative practices in a school and workplace culture that actively invests in relationships among students, staff and the community. A restorative conference is a conversation between people who have caused harm, people who have been harmed, and the supporters of both to repair the harm.

**Sexism:** Prejudice or discrimination based on one's sex or gender. Sexism can impact anyone, but it primarily affects women and girls.

**2SLGBTQ+:** An acronym used by people with diverse sexual and gender identities (Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning). The “+” denotes other identities that can be included within this community of people.

**Two Spirit:** An English umbrella term to reflect and restore Indigenous traditions...honouring the fluid and diverse nature of gender and attraction and its connection to community and spirituality. The term is used by some Indigenous People rather than, or in addition to identifying as LGBTQ.

**Platinum Rule:** Treat others as they want to be treated. This puts other people’s actual needs ahead of what we might think they need. The Platinum Rule asks us to take action, to consider things from their perspective.

**Sex:** Refers to physical and biological features such as chromosomes, genitals, and hormones.

**Sexual Orientation:** The Alberta Human Rights Act includes protection from differential treatment based on a person’s actual or presumed sexual orientation, whether gay, lesbian, heterosexual, bisexual or asexual.

**Stereotype:** A widely held but oversimplified image or idea about a particular type of person or group of people. Stereotypes can be negative, positive, or neutral.

## CONTRIBUTORS

We would like to thank all the people who contributed to the development of Administrative Procedure 170. Hundreds of people gave their time and perspectives.

- Board of Trustees
- Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Anti-Racism Advisory Group
- Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Anti-Racism Strategic Plan Implementation Committee
- Employee Group Liaison Representatives
- Parent and Guardian Feedback Sessions
- Principals
- School Councils
- Senior Administration
- Student Voice
- Truth and Reconciliation Advisory Circle

# REFERENCES

[Administrative Procedure 160 Commitment to Inclusive Communities](#)

[Administrative Procedure 171 Respect in the Workplace](#)

[Administrative Procedure 351 Student Code of Conduct](#)

[Administrative Procedure 355 Student Suspension and Expulsion](#)

[Alberta Education Leadership Quality Standard](#)

[Alberta Human Rights Commission: Protected Grounds](#)

[Alberta Education Teaching Quality Standard](#)

[ECSD Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism Strategic Plan](#)

[Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism Action Report 2022, Norquest College](#)

[Stepping Stones Terminology](#)

[Walking and the wâhkôhtowin Imagination](#)

