



**DISTRICT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE**  
*Fostering Discrimination-Free Working and Learning Environments*

**Thursday, June 6, 2019**

**Hollywood Road Education Services – Room 3**

**4:00 pm - 5:30 pm**

## MINUTES

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

<b>Joanne De Guevara</b> Indigenous Education	<b>Dr. Norah Bowman</b> Board of Education	<b>Adam Clarke</b> COPAC
<b>Lori Dawson Bedard</b> COTA	<b>Geneviève Hawtree</b> COTA	<b>Simone Gauthier</b> CUPE
<b>Dr. Catherine Broom</b> UBCO	<b>Summer Sharma (OKM)</b> District Student Council	<b>Dr. Rick Oliver</b> Central Okanagan Public Schools
<b>Kyle Cormier</b> Central Okanagan Public Schools	<b>Deb Roseleine (Recorder)</b> Central Okanagan Public Schools	

### REGRETS

<b>Moyra Baxter (Alternate)</b> Board of Education	<b>Paula Morrison</b> COPAC	<b>Sarah Shakespeare (Alternate)</b> COPAC
<b>Kathy Weninger</b> COPVA	<b>Raquel Steen</b> COPVA	<b>Leigh-Ann Yanow</b> COTA
<b>Carol Rimmer</b> International Education	<b>Jacob Cherrey (RSS)</b> District Student Council	<b>Latif Kacuri</b> Kelowna Community Resources
<b>Anima Anand</b> Kelowna Community Resources	<b>Leah Sanford</b> Kelowna Community Resources	

#### 1. AGENDA

*Rick Oliver*

- 1.1 There were no additions to the June 6, 2019 Agenda.
- 1.2 Approval of the **June 6, 2019 Agenda – APPROVED.**

#### 2. PREVIOUS MINUTES

##### 2.1 Adoption of the December 6, 2018 and February 7, 2019 Minutes

*Rick Oliver*

The committee reviewed and ADOPTED the **December 6, 2018** and **February 8, 2019** minutes.

#### 3. ACTION ITEMS

##### 3.1 Review Policy Language – Recommendations – MBSS Diversity Club

*Rick Oliver*

Rick provided the committee with copies of the following policies and procedures:

- **#352 (Discrimination Towards and By Staff as it Pertains to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity);**
- **#450 and #450R (Discrimination Toward and By Students; #450R - Regulations);**
- **#452 (Discrimination Towards and By Students as it Pertains to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity).**

The MBSS Diversity Club recently reviewed the language of the School District's Human Rights policies and procedures. Overall the students were very impressed with them, but have a few minor changes that they would like submitted to the Board.

### 3. ACTION ITEMS (Continued)

#### 3.1 Review Policy Language – Recommendations – MBSS Diversity Club (Continued)

##### Suggestion 1:

##### ▪ **Policy #352 (Discrimination Towards and By Staff as it Pertains to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity)**

- The students are suggesting a change in relation to the definition of **Bisexual** from:

*"Bisexual can refer to people who are romantically, emotionally and/or sexually involved with women or men."*

##### To the following:

*"Bisexual can refer to people who are romantically, emotionally and/or sexually involved with **people with any gender**."*

**The students' reasoning:** It would be more inclusive as there are a few varying definitions of the identity.

##### Suggestion 2:

##### ▪ **Policy #450 and #450R (Discrimination Toward and By Students; 450R - Regulations)**

- The students suggest changing the three "**he/she**" to "**their**" or "**the student**" in #450R as follows:

- 1.1 The complainant or advocate may choose to speak or correspond directly with the alleged offender to express **their** feelings about the situation.
- 1.3 The principal is responsible for notifying the parents/guardians of the student complainant, and of the alleged offender where **they are** a student.
- 3.7 A non-employee doing business with the school district who retaliates against any individual who either made a complaint of discrimination or participated in an investigation of a complaint of discrimination, will be subject to corrective measures to the extent that the school district has control over the non-employee or **their** employer.

**The students' reasoning:** It uses more gender inclusive language.

##### Suggestion 3:

##### ▪ **Policy #452 (Discrimination Towards and By Students as it Pertains to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity)**

- The students are again suggesting a change to the definition of **Bisexual** from:

*"Bisexual can refer to people who are romantically, emotionally and/or sexually involved with women or men."*

##### To the following:

*"Bisexual can refer to people who are romantically, emotionally and/or sexually involved with **people with any gender**."*

**The students' reasoning:** It would be more inclusive as there are a few varying definitions of the identity.

The students were very impressed that the district had taken a stand and put the policies in place.

The students also read the MBSS policies and procedures and were very content with the inclusiveness of the language in them.

##### **Discussion:**

- Another suggestion would be to replace the word *Aboriginal* with *Indigenous*.
- Since these policies did originate through the Human Rights Committee, it is important for the committee to review and acknowledge the students' input before the policies are sent back to the Board for possible updates.
- The committee agreed that this was a great initiative by the MBSS Diversity Club. They have provided some good suggestions. The students' changes will be referred to the Board with the recommendation that the language be updated when they review the policies and procedures.

### 3. **ACTION ITEMS** *(Continued)*

#### 3.2 **Signage – Suggestion from GESS**

**Rick Oliver**

A suggestion has come forward from a counsellor at George Elliot Secondary. She and Kathy Weninger have been talking about the idea of a School District 23 "Welcome Statement" that can be displayed prominently in all our schools to make sure that everyone feels welcome as they enter the building. We have rainbow stickers that signal inclusiveness and a poster on every site that talks about diversity and inclusion, but what they are looking for is something beyond that, some sort of welcome statement that is affirming and tells our entire community that everyone is welcome and accepted.

**Discussion:**

- Is there a particular equity-seeking group that is wanting a welcome?
- Our community is very diverse so it would be for everybody.
- This suggestion has been brought to the Human Rights Committee for review. If the committee recommends it, it will then go to the Board. There will be a cost involved. *(Is it a big sign, a small sign, what does it look like?)*
- Our sign shop could produce a vinyl decal.
- It could also go to Student Council for review. Rainbow crosswalks have all been student driven. As people are entering our buildings, wouldn't it be great if all of our schools have something that make everybody feel welcome?
- Joanne suggested the Okanagan language wording for WELCOME which, in addition to welcome, also means that we are happy that you have arrived. A few schools already have it posted (KSS/MBSS/CNB).
- Joanne will send the exact wording and definition to Deb.

**Update:** *The wording for WELCOME in the Okanagan language is:*

**k<sup>w</sup>u limt p cyſap**  
**Welcome (we are glad you all have arrived)**  
**(kwoo leemt p chee-yap)**

#### 3.3 **Equity Scan**

**Joanne De Guevara**

*Joanne provided a handout to the committee entitled "Central Okanagan Equity Scan - District Level Group Responsibility".*

- Our District was approached by the Ministry of Education last year, asking us to be part of a pilot project. We, along with five other Districts, started the Equity Scan Project.
- The Ministry wanted us to focus on four areas: **Policy and Governance**, **Learning Environment**, **Learning Profiles**, and **Pedagogical Core** and to navigate through guided inquiry questions to determine what the barriers are for Indigenous students in our District. The Ministry generated these questions for us so that we could gather data to really understand what those barriers are for our families and our kids and what is blocking them from being successful.
- We developed an Equity Scan Committee comprised of senior administrators, principals, vice-principals, teachers, advocates, and community members.
- We took the 74 inquiry questions that the Ministry gave us and gathered as much data as we could from conversations, surveys, and student voice, and created an Equity Action Plan.
- We presented our Equity Action Plan to the Ministry. Through our data, we came up with goals and support areas. What we have done this year is move towards this action plan, marrying it with our Enhancement Agreement to determine how the work we've done up to now fits with the data that we collected through the Equity Scan.
- We are coming up with an Equity in Action Agreement for Truth and Reconciliation.

### 3. **ACTION ITEMS** *(Continued)*

#### 3.3 **Equity Scan** *(Continued)*

*Joanne De Guevara*

- We came up with goals that allowed the Ministry to take all the feedback and work that we've done and create a new system, a new action pilot piece for other districts.
- From the original 74 questions that the Ministry provided, the 32 questions that they are now actually putting out to districts are going to be a snapshot of what's happening for our learners, for our families, from the levels of policy right down to what the classroom environment is like and how our families are feeling.
- We are sharing the questions with the Human Rights Committee to show how we gathered our data as we move forward and set goals as a district through our new Equity Action Agreement.
- It is creating understanding about what equity is and more specifically, what that looks like for Indigenous learners, right down to having an Indigenous presence in schools.
- It's kind of timely in this conversation because it's not just about Indigenous students. When you walk into a school, what do you see there that makes you feel you belong? When we talk about signage, when someone walks in, they see themselves reflected in that environment. They see that and they feel that right away.
- We are really excited. We are hoping to celebrate our new Equity Action Agreement in the fall and put it out to all the schools; then help to keep that document alive by working alongside to make sure that those goals are happening in the schools. It has been exciting to create a pilot that is going to be working across the province.

#### **Discussion:**

- We had a big struggle with the initial 74 questions provided by the Ministry in terms of the language, which was very colonial. The Ministry made adjustments.
- The Ministry did take a lot of our feedback into consideration and revamped the Equity Scan. It now works for our families, for our kids and for everybody, so that we are understanding of the work that needs to be done.
- Our new agreement will be a 5-year agreement. We will continue to work alongside the Ministry as well. Some of the questions and conversations are really difficult and make some people uncomfortable. They are hard conversations to have, but it needs to happen. We need to create the time and space and the environment of safety so that people can talk, because we really want to hear the challenges and we want to hear the successes. Unless we throw it out there and talk, we can't move forward.
- It has been amazing work with time, energy, sweat, and tears, and there is still a lot more to do.
- In terms of academic success, the gap has been narrowing. If income and economic status were separated, would the gap disappear? What role does poverty play in the data?
- Poverty does play in the data. What do kids bring to the table when they walk in the door? Do they have breakfast before they come to school, do they have two parents at home, are they receiving social assistance? All those things are barriers that impact not just Indigenous kids, but all kids. So in conversations around privilege, it's just really about understanding things like intergenerational trauma or all the other things that might have led to poverty. Many things come into play.
- Sometimes we have biases around low expectations because they are Indigenous learners. We need to have those conversations. That's why we have the Enhancement Program and that's why we talk about equity.

### 3. **ACTION ITEMS** *(Continued)*

#### 3.4 **The Global Schoolhouse**

*Rick Oliver/Committee*

*Rick provided the committee with background on The Global Schoolhouse.*

- As a District, we have moved away from arranging busing and facilitating school scheduling, but there is teacher interest and the event still happens.
- The Global Schoolhouse is funded by "Heritage Canada", a federal government program. Organizers will send out a PowerPoint presentation beforehand outlining what teachers can expect from the event.

***Discussion:***

- Committee members are welcome to attend The Global Schoolhouse and bring their first-hand impressions back to a meeting.
- The Global Schoolhouse is only open limited hours, so it can be difficult for committee members to attend during working hours.
- Request for Rick to send the PowerPoint presentation to committee members when it is received from *Heritage Canada* for the next cycle.
- When teachers apply to have their classes attend, they have to indicate how they are going to prepare their students for the event and how they are going to debrief afterward. It is not a Field Study where teachers just sign up their classes and go. It is a challenging scenario.

**Action Item:** Rick will provide the next Global Schoolhouse PowerPoint presentation as part of the minutes when it becomes available.

### 4. **INFORMATION ITEMS**

#### 4.1 **Harmony Day 2019 Update**

*Rick Oliver for Leigh-Ann Yanow*

*Leigh-Ann Yanow sent her regrets. Rick provided information to the committee.*

- This year's *Living Library Middle School Conference* took place on Wednesday, January 30th and people were very happy with how the conference went.
- Our first *Living Library Middle School Conference* took place in February 2017 to mark the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Harmony Day in Central Okanagan Public Schools. A subsequent decision was made to hold a middle school conference annually to provide students with the opportunity to be exposed to different types of histories from our local community.
- With Harmony Day itself, there is always some work to be done, some changes suggested around what resources are going to go out to schools, and how hard we are going to push it to the secondary schools. Elementary schools seem to grab it and run with it.
- We are getting good uptake in terms of people looking at harmony and being inclusive. The Harmony Day Committee feels that the 12 years that Harmony Day has taken place in the District has made a noticeable difference.

**2020 Dates:**

- **Harmony Day Living Library Middle School Conference – Friday, January 24, 2020**
- **HARMONY DAY – Wednesday, February 19, 2020**

**4. INFORMATION ITEMS** *(Continued)***4.2 District Human Rights Committee Draft Meeting Dates 2019-2020****Rick Oliver**

*Rick provided the committee with a draft schedule of District Human Rights Committee meeting dates for 2019-2020.*

- We have used the same format as previous years, with three set meetings scheduled during the school year and two optional meeting dates. *(The optional meetings only take place if emergent items arise).*

**4.3 School Board Pride Motion****Norah Bowman**

*Norah provided information to the committee.*

- Trustees voted in favour of having an information table at the Kelowna Pride celebrations taking place in City and Waterfront Parks on Saturday, June 22nd.
- The cost of the table is \$200.00.
- We will be providing some SOGI information.
- We are looking for some kind of interactive fun things to do and ideas are welcome.
- Pride is a family event. It includes a walk from Stuart Park to City Park.
- There will be booths with non-profit groups in attendance that the District has relationships with.
- Student Council members will be attending to represent Central Okanagan Public Schools and any other students who feel they would like to be at the table are welcome.
- Norah will be attending the event along with other Trustees.

**5. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS****5.1 Accessibility**

- Which schools are not accessible to students and staff?
- Rick will speak to Dr. Peter Molloy about the Operations piece. In terms of accessibility, there have been requests around elevators. As an example, if a student is in a wheelchair, they have to go to Springvalley Middle School instead of Rutland Middle School. This issue could be rectified if Rutland Middle School was added on to or rebuilt.
- COPAC was interested in knowing if there are any other schools with accessibility issues. There are certainly areas of other schools that are not accessible. At George Pringle Elementary, the main floor is accessible, but the other floors are not. There are a number of schools like that in our system. Only our newer schools have elevators, so that is an issue.

**Action Item:** Rick will ask Dr. Molloy to come to a meeting to address accessibility in schools.

**6. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

**UPCOMING DISTRICT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE MEETINGS****Thursday, September 26, 2019*****Thursday, December 5, 2019***

*(Optional Meeting to be held only in the event of emergent items)*

### ACTION ITEMS SUMMARY

Action Item	Person(s) Responsible	Status
<p><b>The Global Schoolhouse PowerPoint</b> Rick will provide the next Global Schoolhouse PowerPoint presentation as part of the minutes when it becomes available.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Rick Oliver</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Ongoing</p>
<p><b>Accessibility in Schools</b> Rick will invite Dr. Peter Molloy to a District Human Rights Committee meeting to address accessibility in schools.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Rick Oliver <i>on behalf of District Human Rights Committee</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Ongoing  <i>Meeting Date To Be Confirmed</i></p>