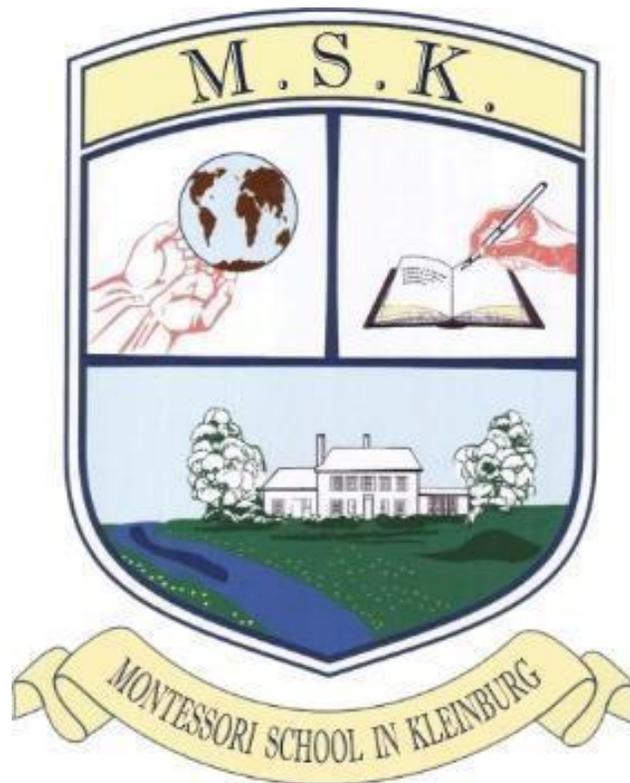


Equity and Inclusive Education at Montessori School in Kleinburg 2020-2021



DEFINITIONS

DIVERSITY: The presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes within a group, organization, or society. The dimensions of diversity include, but are not limited to, ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status.

EQUITY: A condition or state of fair, inclusive, and respectful treatment of all people. Equity does not mean treating people the same without regard for individual differences.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: Education that is based on the principles of acceptance and inclusion of all students. Students see themselves reflected in their curriculum, their physical surroundings, and the broader environment, in which diversity is honoured and all individuals are respected.

ACCOMMODATION: An adjustment made to policies, programs, guidelines, or practices, including adjustments to physical settings and various types of criteria, that enables individuals to benefit from and take part in the provision of services equally and to participate equally and perform to the best of their ability in the workplace or an educational setting. Accommodations are provided so that individuals are not disadvantaged or discriminated against on the basis of the prohibited grounds.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION: Opposition to the unjust and prejudicial treatment of different categories of people.

BARRIER: An obstacle to equity that may be overt or subtle, intended or unintended, and systemic or specific to an individual or group, and that prevents or limits access to opportunities, benefits, or advantages that are available to other members of society.

BIAS: An opinion, preference, prejudice, or inclination that limits an individual's or a group's ability to make fair, objective, or accurate judgements.

DISCRIMINATION: Unfair or prejudicial treatment of individuals or groups on the basis of grounds set out in the Ontario Human Rights Code (e.g., race, sexual orientation, disability) or on the basis of other factors. Discrimination, whether intentional or unintentional, has the effect of preventing or limiting access to opportunities, benefits, or advantages that are available to other members of society. Discrimination may be evident in organizational and institutional structures, policies, procedures, and programs, as well as in the attitudes and behaviours of individuals.

ETHNOCULTURAL: Relating to or denoting a particular ethnic group. **ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS CODE (the "Code"):** A provincial law that gives everyone equal rights and opportunities, without discrimination, in specific areas such as education, jobs, housing, and services. The goal of the Code is to address and ultimately prevent discrimination and harassment.

Equality and Inclusive Education

An equitable, inclusive education at MSK is one in which all students, parents, (or guardians/caregivers) and other members of the school community are welcomed and respected. It means that every student is supported and inspired to succeed in a culture of high expectations for learning. Equity and inclusive education are fundamental to a child's growth and development.

The goals for education at MSK include:

- **Achieving excellence:** Children and students of all ages will achieve high levels of academic performance, acquire valuable skills, and demonstrate good citizenship. Educators will be supported in learning continuously.
- **Ensuring equity:** All students will be inspired to reach their full potential, with access to rich learning experiences.
- **Promoting well-being:** All students will develop enhanced mental and physical health, a positive sense of self and belonging, and the skills to make positive choices.

Intersecting Grounds of Discrimination

Two or more of the prohibited grounds of discrimination under the Ontario Human Rights Code, and other factors, can intersect in one individual or group and create additional biases or barriers. For example, the prohibited grounds of race, religion, and disability can intersect in one individual.

1. **Shared and committed leadership** by MSK plays a critical role in eliminating discrimination through the identification and removal of bias and barriers. Achieving equity is a shared responsibility; establishing an equitable and inclusive school requires commitment from all.
2. **Equity and inclusive education policies and practices** support positive learning environments so that all students feel engaged in and empowered by what they are learning, supported by the teachers and staff from whom they are learning, and welcome in the environment in which they are learning. Students, teachers, and staff learn and work in an environment that is caring, safe, inclusive, and accepting of all.
3. **Accountability and transparency** are effectively demonstrated through the use of clear measures of success (based on established indicators) and through communication to the public of progress towards achieving equity for all students. Accountability is necessary to maintain and enhance confidence in MSK. Equity and inclusive education

principles are to be embedded, as part of a strategic plan, in the school effectiveness, in school improvement plans, and in classroom practices.

Guiding Principles

In reviewing, revising, or refining its policy, MSK will adhere to the guiding principles:

Guiding Principles of the Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy Equity and inclusive education:

- is a foundation of excellence; In a diverse society, equity is a fundamental requirement for educational excellence and high standards of student achievement.
- meets individual needs; Equity does not mean treating all students in the same way but, rather, responding to the individual needs of each student and providing the conditions and interventions needed to help him or her succeed.
- identifies and eliminates barriers; All students are supported equitably through the identification and removal of discriminatory barriers that limit their ability to achieve to their full potential.
- promotes a sense of belonging; Equity and inclusive education contribute to every student's sense of well-being.
- builds on and enhances previous and existing initiatives; Sound research and analysis of successful policies and practices form the basis for the development and sharing of resources.
- is demonstrated throughout the school.

Caring and Safe Schools

Every student has a right to learn in a safe, caring and supportive environment. MSK promotes safe, caring and supportive school and work environments in order to optimize student and staff learning, safety and effectiveness. MSK focus on safety, responsible citizenship and civility as defined by the standards of behaviour for the province of Ontario in the Provincial Code of Conduct. Safe, caring and supportive learning cultures are at the heart of all of our efforts to promote student achievement and wellbeing, and in turn, student success.

Discipline of students begins at home with parents who are the first and primary educators for their children. This includes responsibility for social development, behaviour and discipline. We work in partnership with parents in the support of students' social, emotional and academic growth.

For most students, effective school discipline is ensured through student engagement in interesting and challenging programs that meet individual needs. Clear behavioural

expectations support student engagement and are based on meaningful communication between students, parents or adult students and the school. In reinforcing appropriate behaviour, staff use a continuum of positive practices that strive to teach, promote and reinforce positive and productive behaviours while providing predictable and supportive consequences to behaviours that are identified as being inappropriate. It is the intent in all situations involving aggression to achieve fairness in consequences for the aggressor and support for the victim. Information will be shared with the victim and parents of the victim to the extent that legislation allows.

We embrace a progressive approach to discipline in schools. In partnership with parents and the community, the development of good character, cultural proficiency, and appropriate social skills that build healthy relationships is the priority.

GOAL

- students see themselves reflected in the curriculum;
- assessment strategies are equitable and permit students to demonstrate their learning in relationship to curriculum expectations;
- systemic barriers are removed for students from low income environments, racialized students, Indigenous students, students who identify as LGBTQ or Two-Spirited, children and youth in care, students with disabilities, and students with special education needs; and
- safe, healthy, and caring school communities are created by ensuring disciplinary practices and procedures are fair and equitable for all students.

GROWING SUCCESS ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION AND REPORTING IN ONTARIO SCHOOLS

The actions in this plan support the fundamental principle articulated in Growing Success – Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools (2010) that assessment and evaluation practices and procedures be “...fair, transparent, and equitable for all students.”

Professional Learning, Collaboration, and Engagement Evidence-based Strategies:

- Engage in professional learning focused on inquiry, equity, and culturally responsive school and classroom practices
- Engage in a cyclical learning process of inquiry: plan, act, observe and reflect, with a focus on culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/growsuccess.pdf>

Policy devised with the use of:

<http://www.yrdsb.ca/Programs/SafeSchools/Pages/default.aspx>

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/inclusiveguide.pdf>