



Safe and Welcoming Schools

Inclusive education is central to the achievement of high-quality education for all learners.

The Ontario government has made a commitment to providing all students with the supports they need to learn, grow and achieve. The Ontario government recognizes that safe, equitable and inclusive schools are essential to student success and academic achievement.

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.

Each and every school in Ontario is obliged to ensure that the school environment is **safe and welcoming, a place where all members of the school community feel respected and have opportunities to participate in school life in a full and satisfying manner**. The school is a place that must be free from abuse or discrimination of any kind, such as race, ancestry, place of origin, skin colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, marital or family status.

Schools are obliged to help support students' learning needs, ensure their well-being and help them feel motivated to succeed and reach their full potential. This obligation is derived from a variety of laws – in the province of Ontario and in Canada.

In addition, the Ministry of Education has reinforced this obligation with a number of policies, including the Safe Schools Strategy (which focuses on ensuring that schools are free of bullying among students) and its Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, which was designed to promote fundamental human rights as described in the Canadian Charter

of Rights and Freedoms and the Ontario Human Rights Code. These are important signs that the Ontario government is actively committed to ensuring a healthy, welcoming and inclusive school environment.

If you have any concerns about the safety and well-being of your children at school, it is very important to speak about it as soon as possible, to the teacher or other school staff or principal, or the Settlement worker in your school.

Usually, the first step is to talk to the teacher involved and then the principal or vice-principal. If the problem is not solved you can speak to the School Superintendent.

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Reference:

[Ontario Ministry of Education](#)