

# The OCDSB Journey to Building an Equitable, Diverse and Inclusive Culture



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# Why do we do what we do?

**Our mission is educating for success – inspiring learning and building citizenship using the pillars of well-being, engagement, learning and leadership to support and inspire students and staff by:**

- Promoting student and staff well-being
- Developing a culture in which all people are welcome
- Enhancing leadership and governance capacities and practices
- Improving student achievement



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# Factors Transforming Relationships & Communities

- Changing Demographics (aging population, immigration, increasing Aboriginal population)
- Shifting Social Structures (family dynamics)
- Globalization
- Technology



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# Census 2006

Census results from 1991 to 2006 show that Ottawa's overall population of Canadian citizens has increased in ethnic and linguistic diversity as follows:

- First Nations, Inuit and Métis population increased by 50 per cent
- Racialized group members grew by nearly 40 per cent
- The population whose mother tongue is neither English nor French also grew by almost 25 per cent

This increasing diversity is changing the client and employee bases of many organizations, including the OCDSB.



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# 2008 Board Decision

To celebrate our commitment to community through responsible citizenship, collaborative partnership and the stewardship of resources by: recognizing the diversity of our community through the development and implementation of a diversity strategy.



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## Key Work At A Glance

### Well-Being

1. Student Survey Analysis
2. Workforce Census Analysis
3. Mental Health Framework
4. Accessibility

### Engagement

1. Parent Engagement
2. Student Voice
3. Communications
4. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy

### Leadership

1. Governance
2. Ontario Leadership Framework
3. Organizational Effectiveness
4. Succession Planning
5. Creative and Innovative Leadership

### Learning

1. Instructional Leadership
2. Board and School Improvement Plans for Student Achievement
3. Secondary School Review
4. Digital Learners
5. Early Learning



# Strategic Measures

- High Student Achievement rate & reduction in student achievement gaps
- Stronger client/community relationships
- Increase in employee engagement (sharing info., reduced turnover and sick leave rates)
- Representative workforce (close labour gaps)
- Expand opportunities – locally/regionally/nationally/internationally
- Enhance organizational effectiveness
  - Increase creativity and decision making
  - Enhance organization's reputation



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# Developing Common Language

## Equality vs Equity

Equality = sameness

when we treat people equally, we ignore differences

Equity = fairness

when we treat people equitably, we recognize differences

**Equity means more than treating people in the same way; it may also require special measures and the accommodation of differences.**



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# Inclusion

- Inclusiveness is about creating a climate where diversity is valued
- In an inclusive environment each person is recognized and developed, and their talents are routinely tapped into
- ***In an inclusive organization, people are valued because of, not in spite of, their differences***
- ***An inclusive environment is equitable for all***



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# Building Culturally Proficient Leaders

## Organizational Leadership and Effectiveness

- Ability to build and lead diverse teams by utilizing their skills, knowledge, experience
- Ability to build and sustain relationships with diverse communities and clients
- Ability to identify and eliminate barriers
- Ability to institute positive policies and practices
- Ability to make reasonable accommodation
- Ability to integrate diversity into core business functions: strategic planning, HR, administration, communications, school operations etc.



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# What have we done to build the foundation for an Equitable, Diverse and Inclusive Culture?

Character Education (since 2006)

Cultural Proficiency Training (since 2007)

Employment Systems Review (2009)

Diversity & Inclusion Taskforce (2009-2012)

Workforce Census (2010)

Equity and Inclusive Education Policy (2011)

Religious Accommodation Policy (2011)

Student Survey (2011)

Advisory Committee on Equity (renewed mandate 2012)

Diversity, Equity and Inclusive Education Framework (2012-2013) – in progress



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# OCDSB Diversity Vision

The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board is committed to equity of educational **opportunities and outcomes**. We know that diversity enriches the educational and employment experience of all. Our success rests in our ability to **respect, appreciate and value people's differences**. We champion an **atmosphere of openness and respect** which **builds trust and enduring relationships** with our communities. We lead by example.



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# Employment Systems Review

The purpose of the ESR is to identify and eliminate actual or potential barriers that impede the full participation of every qualified individual in the workplace.



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# ESR Findings & Recommendations

- In general, OCDSB policies, procedures and practices support equity and inclusion
- 20 recommendations offered to make human resource practices more inclusive and equitable:
  - expand recruitment/outreach beyond traditional sources;
  - embed cultural competency in selection, promotion and performance evaluation processes;
  - continue/expand training (cultural competency, respectful workplace, harassment, developing culturally competent/proficient leaders);
  - exit interviews



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# 2010 OCDSB WORKFORCE CENSUS

 April 19th to 30th

**Give yourself a chance to win  
one of five iPod Touch units!**



A census will allow us to:

- know who we are – especially the unique and diverse characteristics of our workforce population
- understand our capacity to serve an increasingly diverse student and parent population
- identify employee needs – which may inform training and development opportunities, policies and procedures



**TOGETHER WE COUNT**  
for student success



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# Workforce Census

- All employees (regular, part-time, casual) were invited to participate
- Anonymous and confidential
- Union support and encouragement sought and obtained
- On-line completion (paper copies available on request)
- Administered over a two week period (April 19 – 30)



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# Workforce Census

- Census questions included:
  - Organizational and work related information (role, hours worked, education, professional qualifications, retirement date)
  - Demographic information (marital status, sexual orientation, gender, age, family status, ethnic origin, place of birth, religion, disability)
  - How employees spend their time (hours worked, dependent responsibilities, activities outside of work, volunteer time)



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# The OCDSB Employee Story

- Highly educated and skilled workforce
- Committed to working long hours and to on-going learning and professional development
- Balancing work and family commitments
- Generous with time within and outside OCDSB
- Majority are married
- Majority are female
- Majority have a religious or spiritual affiliation
- Represent three generations
- Represent more than 100 ethnic and cultural groups
- Speak more than 80 languages



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# Workforce Census - Retirement Potential

## Succession Planning

- 17% respondents eligible to retire within 5 years
- 16% respondents eligible to retire within 6 – 10 years
- 33% respondents eligible to retire within 11–20 years

Key organizational roles that may be impacted by potential retirements:

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| ▪ Principals                             | 74% |
| ▪ Managers/Supervisors/Senior Staff      | 66% |
| ▪ Vice Principals                        | 50% |
| ▪ Central Admin/<br>Professional Support | 49% |
| ▪ Clerical Support Staff                 | 47% |



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# Workforce Census - Key Considerations

- Nature and degree of diversity of workforce (generational, ethnic and cultural, family status, etc.) must be considered for purposes of:
  - Policy Development and Implementation
  - Recruitment and retention strategies
  - Training & Development
  - Respectful Workplace strategies
  - Wellness strategies
  - Communications (internal and external)
  - Employee & Student Relationships



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# Together - We Count for Student Success

## 2010-2011 OCDSB Student Survey



**April 18<sup>th</sup> – May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011**

### *Why a survey?*

- we believe a comprehensive demographic survey will give us a better understanding of our student population and will help us to better meet student needs
- we are required to complete a bi-annual school climate survey; and
- we are required to complete an Aboriginal self-identification survey



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# Why did we do it?

- The Board's commitment to better understand the changing dynamics of our student population and the communities it serves
- The Ministry's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy
- Ontario school boards are required to conduct an Aboriginal Self-identification Survey.
- Ontario school boards are required to conduct a bi-annual school climate survey.
- The OCDSB chose to conduct a more inclusive survey because we believe a comprehensive demographic profile will give us a better understanding of our student population and will us to better meet student needs.



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# Some Key Findings

- We have four generations within our learning and working community (staff and students)
- 3.9% of jk-6, 6.9% of grades 7-12 and 2.4% of our staff are members of First Nations, Métis and Inuit groups compared to 1.5% of the Ottawa area
- 12% jk-6 and 14% of grades 7-12 respondents reported having a disability, exceptionality or special need compared to 5% of our workforce
- 87% of jk-6 and 76.7% of grades 7-12 respondents were born in Canada compared to 84.9% of current OCDSB staff and 76.8% of Ottawa's population



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# Some Key Findings

- 53% of jk-6 and grades 7-12 respondents identify with ethnic or cultural groups from more than one origin family compared to 48% of OCDSB's workforce respondents.
- 41% of jk-6, 45% of grades 7-12 and 8% of our staff reported being a member of a racialized group compared to 20% of Ottawa's 2006 Census rates
- 70% of jk-6 respondents have a religious or spiritual affiliation and 30% do not; 60% of grades 7-12 respondents have a religious or spiritual affiliation, 28% do not; and, 74% of workforce census respondents have a religious or spiritual affiliation and 26% do not.
- 50% of grades 7-12 respondents identify as Male, 49% Female, and 0.4% transgender; OCDSB's Workforce Census respondents' breakdown was as follows: 60% Female, 40% Male, and <0.1% are transgender.



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# Our Process

## Senior Staff, Trustees involved and engaged

- Reviewed instruments
- Provided on-going updates

## Strong project team(s)

- Team included: superintendents, principals, vice principals, teachers, instructional coaches, reception centre representatives, learning and support services representatives; communications, IT, and school teams)
- Diversity & Inclusion Taskforce (generated staff and community feedback)
- Training for School Team Leads



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# Our Process

**Comprehensive Communications plan to raise awareness, share benefits and how information will be used**

- Posters (*census and survey*)
- Info Cards and Letters (*census and survey*)
- Website updates (*census and survey*)
- Consultations with & presentations to various stakeholders (principals, vice principals, unions, community of schools, student leaders, immigrant, faith and parent communities) (*census and survey*)
- Community Radio (*survey only*)
- Community publications (*survey only*)
- Synervoice messages to all student households (translated when needed) (*survey only*)
- Translated documents (Arabic, Spanish, French, Cantonese, Farsi, Somali, Urdu) (*survey only*)



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# Our Process

## *Workforce Census*

Voluntary

Confidential

**Anonymous**

## *Student Survey*

Voluntary

Confidential

**Not Anonymous**



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# Key Considerations: Student Survey

- Random unique codes assigned to each student survey. Code expired after survey is entered.
- Multiple security measures to protect link between student and unique code
- Completed surveys were provided directly to the firm conducting the survey on our behalf.
- Aggregate reports will be used (by district and schools). Results will never be reported on an individual student basis.



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# Key Considerations: Student Survey Ethics and Privacy

Following media coverage of the District Survey, the school district was contacted by the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (IPC) of Ontario and advised that the IPC was undertaking an investigation of privacy issues relating to the student survey. The district decided to delay the implementation of the survey pending completion of the IPC investigation.

In February 2011, the district received formal notice from the IPC that the investigation was complete and that the school district's plans for the student survey were compliant with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

The IPC report did not make any recommendations for change to the Survey, rather it expressed confidence in the proposed survey data management plan and the phases of data analysis.



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# Key Challenges (Census & Survey)

## Planning

### Length of Survey

- Striking balance between what we may want to know and what we need to know to inform our practices (research guided the final selection)

### Limited Room in Yearly Calendar if delays

- October/November or April/May best periods for us
- School teams in a crunch given multiple priorities

### Listening and addressing fears around data collection

- How will the information be used? Will results show something negative about my school, my child, my community?
- Who will have access to the information? How will the information be stored?
- Consultation fatigue



# Key Challenges (Census & Survey)

## Communications

- Enhanced communications around sensitive questions (sexual orientation and religion questions) and link to safe, welcoming and inclusive learning and working environments
- Informed consent (*survey only*)
  - Parents who did not want their children to complete the survey in school, could select to opt out of the survey



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# Key Challenges (Census & Survey)

## Administration

### Periodic network and computer glitches

- employees and students having difficulty connecting to external site
- Impact very tight schedule with labs (very little room for error)  
*(survey only)*

**Family Dynamics:** Split families/Adoption families (who completes survey)

### Special student circumstances

- Students who did not have an official homeroom
- Students who were transferred from inside or outside the district close to the survey's launch date
- Students who were in specialized programs who did not show up for school during the survey period



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# Key Opportunities

- An invitation engage with key stakeholders about who we are and expanding our understanding of our capacity to serve an increasingly diverse student population
- Build/expand relationships internally
  - e.g. students, teachers, community of schools
- Build/expand relationships externally (*survey only*)
  - e.g. parent, immigrant and faith based communities
- Be open to teachable moments
  - e.g. listen for the concerns embedded in complaints



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# Key Next Steps

- Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Working Group – Applying an Equity and Inclusion Lens on HR priorities; Employee Resource Councils (ERCs), Mentoring opportunities
- Develop and deliver training that supports valuing, managing and leveraging a diverse workforce (includes training on cultural proficiency, human rights, recruitment, and supporting diverse staff and students)
- Integrate relevant findings into OCDSB's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Framework (in alignment with OCDSB's Strategic Plan and the Ministry's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy)
- Engage in on-going conversations with internal and external partners and stakeholders to enhance opportunities that support the District's strategic objectives related to equity and diversity



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# Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

- Expanded Communication/Engagement with Staff
- Diversity Café (A Date with Diversity)
- Equity Lens on Human Resources
- Employee Resource Groups
- Learning and Development
- Short and long term workforce planning



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# Opportunities

- New partnerships with non-traditional recruitment centers such as JobMatch Ottawa
- Expand cultural proficiency training around equitable hiring, client relations (i.e. Hire Immigrants Ottawa workshops)
- Increase awareness that every employee is accountable and responsible for culturally responsive service
- Build diverse workforce across all occupational groups (i.e. ECE, Finance, HR, Research etc.)
- Value, manage and leverage the diverse talent, skills and experience of all our employees



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# What will we do with the Survey information?

## *Six Levels of Analysis:*

Phase I: District Wide Demographics Report on Student Survey

Phase II: Aboriginal Self-Identification Summary Report

Phase III: School Level Demographic Reports on Student Survey

Phase IV: Sub-group Student Group Population Analysis

Phase V: Thematic Research Analysis

Phase VI: Research Arising out of the Survey Data

## *The Survey results will inform:*

- The Board Improvement Plan
- School Improvement Plans
- Future decisions about programs, research and partnership opportunities

## *Key Next Steps*

- Detailed analysis of survey findings and workforce census results
- Share findings with internal and external stakeholders.
- Integrate findings in strategic diversity framework and equity and inclusion lens.



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# Lessons Learned

- Be very clear, concise and consistent about the purpose of your data collection
- Ensure all leaders are in the loop with any major changes (trustees, senior staff, principals, school leads). During unexpected surprises, it helps for all to be singing from the same song sheet.
- Conduct consultations or hold presentations with stakeholders, partners and allies
- Staff's perception that Census was only an affirmative action exercise
- Conversation with Privacy Commission (at the beginning not the middle of planning; formalized vs. informal conversations)
- Parent and community's lack of understanding of the complexities that may impact learning in today's classroom
  - Instead of asking about sexual orientation (focus on reading, writing and math)
  - Why ask about religion in a public board?
- Be patient – a question does not automatically mean rejection or resistance to the exercise.



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# Questions?



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