



## YORK REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

### Policy and Procedures #601.0, First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Procedure 601.1, Supporting Students, Procedure 601.2, Supporting Staff, Procedure 601.3, Community Engagement and Awareness Building Procedure 602.4, Using Data to Support Student Achievement

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#### Executive Summary

The Board shares the vision, articulated in the [Ontario First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework \(2007\)](#) and recognizes the significant historic contributions of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples and their cultures. The Board also understands the important role that Indigenous communities play today and into the future.

#### Stakeholder Groups with Responsibilities under this Policy

- Board of Trustees
- Director of Education
- Coordinating Superintendent of Education, Indigenous Education and Equity
- Chief Financial Officer
- Superintendents
- First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Team
- Principals and Managers
- Staff
- School Councils

#### Relationship to Board Priorities

##### Foster Well-Being and Mental Health

Build safe, healthy and inclusive learning and working environments where students and staff feel they matter and belong.

- Promote cognitive, emotional, social and physical well-being.
- Create mentally healthy learning and working environments.
- Strengthen resilience.

## **Champion Equity and Inclusivity**

To raise the achievement and well-being of our underserved and underperforming students, we will:

Build a collective understanding of:

- the ongoing impact of colonialism on Indigenous Communities,
- Anti-oppression, and Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogy (CRRP).
- Create safe spaces.
- Ensure student achievement through equitable access to learning.
- Identify, interrupt and eliminate barriers.

## **Build Collaborative Relationships**

To raise the achievement and well-being of our underserved and underperforming students, we will:

- Build trust and collaborative relationships with students, families and staff through respectful and
- Responsive communication focused on shared solutions.
- Nurture a culture of trust and respect.
- Honour differing perspectives and decision-making processes.

## **Empower Ethical Leadership**

To raise the achievement and well-being of our underserved and underperforming students, we will:

- Elevate student voice in learning, assessment and decision-making.
- Develop innovative and courageous leaders.
- Elevate student voice.  
Expect growth and encourage curiosity

## **Related Documents and/or Legislation**

[Anishinabek Education System](#)

[Anishinabek Education System Master Agreement](#)

[Building Bridges to Success for First Nation, Métis and Inuit Students – Developing Policies for Voluntary, Confidential Aboriginal Student Self-Identification: Successful Practices for Ontario School Boards](#)

[Caring and Safe Schools](#)

[Education Act](#)

[Equity and Inclusivity](#)

[Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework](#)

[Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework Implementation Plan](#)

[Strengthening Our Learning Journey. Third Progress Report on the Implementation of the Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework.](#)

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- Voluntary, Confidential Self-Identification Policy for First Nation, Métis and Inuit Students. Policy #81* [Peel District School Board. Policies and Regulations.] (2013). Mississauga.
- Voluntary, First Nation, Metis and Inuit Students. Policy P.077*. [Toronto District School Board]. (2011). Toronto.



# Policy #601.0, First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education

## 1. Policy Statement

As Indigenous peoples of North America, the First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities have a unique historic relationship with Canada. This policy acknowledges their role as the First Peoples.<sup>1</sup>

In response to the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action](#), the Board recognizes the impact that colonization and residential schools have had on First Nations, Métis and Inuit families and experiences within the education system both past and present. To create an environment of trust in the school system it will take time and intentional ongoing demonstration of commitment to First Nations, Métis and Inuit student well-being.

The Board shares the vision, articulated in [Ontario First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework \(2007\)](#) and recognizes the significant historic contributions of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples and their cultures. The Board also understands the important role that Indigenous communities play today and into the future.

## 2. Application

York Region District School Board is committed to providing First Nations, Métis and Inuit students with access to programs to support student achievement and well-being. It is the Board's priority to enhance confidence in public education by ensuring that culturally appropriate services are being provided.

## 3. Responsibilities

### 3.1. The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- a) reviewing the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education policy in accordance with the priorities in the Multi-Year Plan and the approved review cycle;
- b) approving trustee participation on the Indigenous Education Advisory Council and the First Nation Education Liaison Committee;
- c) becoming familiar with Indigenous community members; and
- d) understanding and communicating with members of the community about the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education policy, as required.

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<sup>1</sup> *Aboriginal Education*. [Edmonton Public Schools. Board Policy]. (2007, May 22). Edmonton.

### **3.2. The Director of Education is responsible for:**

- a) implementing and operationalizing the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education policy and related procedures.

## **4. Definitions**

### **4.1. Aboriginal Peoples**

The descendants of the original inhabitants of North America. Section 35(2) of the Constitution Act, 1982, states: “In this Act, ‘Aboriginal peoples of Canada’ includes the Indian, Inuit, and Métis peoples of Canada.” These separate groups have unique heritages, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs. Their common link is their indigenous ancestry. ([Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Framework, 2007](#))

At times, ‘Aboriginal’, ‘Indigenous’ and ‘First Nations, Métis and Inuit’ are used synonymously.

### **4.2. First Nations**

A term that came into common usage in the 1970s to replace the word “Indian”, which many found offensive. The term “First Nation” has been adopted to replace the word “band” in the names of communities. (Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Framework, 2007)

### **4.3. Indigenous Peoples**

The term Indigenous is synonymous with Aboriginal. It has however, become the more widely accepted general term to refer to First Nations, Métis and Inuit people. In 2015 Aboriginal Affairs Canada changed its name to Indigenous affairs at the request of many Indigenous groups.

### **4.4. Inuit**

Aboriginal people in northern Canada, living mainly in Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, northern Quebec and Labrador. Ontario has a very small Inuit population. (Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Framework, 2007)

### **4.5. Métis**

People of mixed First Nations and European ancestry. The Métis history and culture draws on diverse ancestral origins, such as Scottish, Irish, French, Ojibwe and Cree. (Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Framework, 2007)

“The term Métis refers to distinctive Métis collectives who, in addition to their mixed ancestry, developed their own customs, way of life, and group identity—separate from their Indian, Inuit or European forebears.”<sup>2</sup>

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## 5. Related Legislation and Documents

[Anishinabek Education System](#)

[Anishinabek Education System Master Agreement](#)

[Building Bridges to Success for First Nation, Métis and Inuit Students – Developing Policies for Voluntary, Confidential Aboriginal Student Self-Identification: Successful Practices for Ontario School Boards](#)

[Caring and Safe Schools](#)

[Education Act](#)

[Equity and Inclusivity](#)

[Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework](#)

[Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework Implementation Plan](#)

[Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework](#)

[Strengthening Our Learning Journey. Third Progress Report on the Implementation of the Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework.](#)

## 6. Contact

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Team  
Inclusive School and Community Services  
Education and Community Services

## 7. History

Approved: 2007

Revision drafted: May 2, 2019

Working Document: April 2013, June 2019

Revised: February 2014, March 2020

# Procedure #601.1, First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education: Supporting Students

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## 1. Procedure Statement

The Board will provide culturally responsive and community-based supports for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.

## 2. Application

Accordingly, First Nations, Métis and Inuit student achievement and well-being will be supported holistically, culturally, mentally, physically and spiritually as outlined in the [Indigenous Education and Equity Strategy](#). The Board will provide all students access to inclusive programs that include First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures, histories and perspectives.

## 3. Responsibilities

### 3.1. The Director of Education shall:

- a) allocate staff and resources to support the Using Data to Support Student Achievement procedure.

### 3.2. Coordinating Superintendent of Education, Indigenous Education and Equity shall:

- a) recommend and support Board programs for the First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and their families in the areas of transition, literacy, numeracy and career development;
- b) ensure teaching strategies are appropriate for First Nations, Métis and Inuit learner needs;
- c) support principals to provide Native Languages opportunities for all students and particularly in areas where significant numbers of students have self-identified; and
- d) maintain partnership education agreement with Georgina Island.

### 3.3. Superintendents of Schools shall:

- a) provide leadership and promote capacity building to support the implementation of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education policy and related procedures and the [Indigenous Education and Equity Strategy](#).

### 3.4. Coordinator responsible for Indigenous Education shall:

- a) provide leadership and promote capacity building to support the implementation of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education policy and related procedures;
- b) support the development of opportunities for Indigenous students to participate in leadership and cultural gatherings;



- c) support opportunities for Indigenous student mentoring; and
- d) support opportunities for Indigenous students to learn traditions from Elders, knowledge keepers and other community members.

**3.5. Principals shall:**

- a) demonstrate leadership to ensure an understanding of the diversity within current school and workplace cultures and to promote and support the implementation of the First Nation, Metis and Inuit Education policy and related procedures and the support the implementation of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education policy and related procedures and the [Indigenous Education and Equity Strategy](#);
- b) provide staff with access to accurate and up-to-date resources that include the First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspective to address the needs of all students;
- c) promote and support Native Languages opportunities for all students and particularly in areas where significant numbers of students have self-identified;
- d) provide cultural spaces to reinforce Indigenous students' sense of identity, belonging, security and cultural pride, where appropriate; and
- e) address racist attitudes in schools through education and by creating an environment that makes it clear that racist attitudes and behaviours will not be tolerated.

**3.6. Indigenous Student Facilitators shall:**

- a) seek out, cultivate and support opportunities for Indigenous students to participate in leadership, cultural gatherings and workshops;
- b) seek out, cultivate and support opportunities for Indigenous student mentoring;
- c) facilitate connections to support services, community organizations, and cultural supports for students and families;
- d) reach out to and facilitate relationships with crisis prevention and management services;
- e) provide opportunities for Indigenous students to learn traditions from Elders, knowledge keepers and other community members; and
- f) offer school support for Indigenous students who are living away from home.

**3.7. Indigenous Transition Liaison shall:**

- a) coordinate between Anishinabek Education System education authorities and school administrators where Anishinabek Education System students attend to provide the following;
  - disseminate First Nations student transition information through continuous data collection in order to support strategic planning for the board;
  - develop pathway connections for Indigenous students through community and post-secondary connections;
  - provide educators and administrators with in-service training on transition topics, Indigenous education and cultural awareness;

- coordinate culturally relevant local and regional events, encourage core values/student visions for success through consistent individualized counseling and support through contact with students, teachers and families; and
- coordinate the daily operation of a First Nation study centre to foster a diverse support network from across the region and to maintain an inclusive learning environment.

**3.8. Teachers shall:**

- a) foster a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment that affirms pride in cultural identity among First Nations, Métis and Inuit students; and
- b) support the implementation of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education policy and related procedures and the [Indigenous Education and Equity Strategy](#).

**4. Contact**

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Team  
Inclusive School and Community Services  
Education and Community Services

**5. History**

Working Document: June 2019  
Revised: January 2020

# Procedure #601.2, First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education: Supporting Staff

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## 1. Procedure Statement

This procedure outlines how York Region District School Board provides opportunities for staff to have access to teaching strategies and supports that are appropriate to First Nations, Métis and Inuit learner needs.

## 2. Application

First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives will be integrated across the curriculum and through intentional staff learning to further cultural competency, understanding and efficacy in supporting First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, families and their cultures.

All students in Ontario will have knowledge and appreciation of contemporary and traditional First Nation, Métis and Inuit traditions, cultures and perspectives. Curriculum delivery will reflect accurate First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures, histories and perspectives. These perspectives will be embedded across curriculum areas and grade levels for all students.

## 3. Responsibilities

### 3.1. The Director of Education shall:

- a) allocate staff and resources to support the Supporting Staff procedure.

### 3.2. Coordinating Superintendent of Education, Indigenous Education and Equity shall:

- a) represent the Board at Ministry level meetings for Indigenous education leads;
- b) support cultural learning opportunities for staff, that provide opportunities for them to increase their knowledge and understanding of culturally responsive practices;
- c) support collaboration with Indigenous communities to provide professional development to trustees and staff;
- d) sit on Indigenous Education Advisory Council (IEAC);
- e) support the development of First Nations, Métis and Inuit knowledge networks in schools; and
- f) support the creation of curriculum-focused learning strategies and materials for application in the classroom.

### 3.3. Superintendent of Education, Curriculum and Instructional Services shall:

- a) ensure that all curriculum includes accurate and up-to-date First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives.

**3.4. Superintendent of Schools shall:**

- a) Support voluntary, confidential staff self-identification by co-developing a guideline with education partners, including Indigenous staff;
- b) support school staff in implementing necessary supports for the First Nations, Métis and Inuit students at the individual student, classroom and school levels;
- c) ensure staff have access to training on trauma-informed strategies specific to historical trauma, including the intergenerational impact of residential schools; and
- d) work to ensure First Nations, Métis and Inuit graduation rates are on par with the provincial graduation rate.

**3.5. The Superintendent of Curriculum and Instructional Services shall:**

- a) ensure that all curriculum and resources are current and inclusive of First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives; and
- b) provide ongoing professional learning to develop teaching strategies that are appropriate to First Nations, Métis and Inuit learner needs.

**3.6. First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Coordinator shall:**

- a) represent the Board at Ministry level meetings for Indigenous education leads;
- b) coordinate cultural learning opportunities for staff, that provide opportunities for them to increase their knowledge and understanding of culturally responsive and appropriate practices;
- c) support collaboration with Indigenous communities to provide professional development to trustees and staff;
- d) coordinate Indigenous Education Advisory Council (IEAC);
- e) support the development of First Nations, Métis and Inuit knowledge networks in schools; and
- f) coordinate the creation of curriculum-focused learning strategies and materials for application in the classroom.

**3.7. First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Consultants shall:**

- a) facilitate cultural learning opportunities for staff, providing opportunities for them to increase their knowledge and understanding of culturally responsive and appropriate practices;
- b) facilitate collaboration with Indigenous communities to provide professional development;
- c) support the Indigenous Education Advisory Council (IEAC);
- d) facilitate First Nations, Métis and Inuit knowledge networks in schools;
- e) facilitate the creation of curriculum-focused learning strategies and materials for application in the classroom;
- f) consult with principals and teachers to ensure resources and teaching strategies are appropriate for First Nations, Métis and Inuit learner needs; and
- g) ensure that the perspectives of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples applied in classrooms are accurate and address the needs of all students.

**3.8. Principals shall:**

- a) work with teaching staff, student success teachers and special education staff to assess the needs of self-identified students, and address achievement and well-being where necessary;
- b) provide and communicate opportunities that increase the knowledge of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures, histories and perspectives among all staff members;
- c) provide access to accurate resources that include the First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspective to address the needs of all students, including, but not limited to, schools where significant numbers of students have self-identified;
- d) ensure recruitment, hiring and promotional practices are supportive of First Nations, Métis and Inuit student achievement and well-being; and
- e) increase the knowledge of Indigenous cultures, histories and perspectives among all staff members.

**3.9. Teachers shall:**

- a) implement teaching strategies and resources that are appropriate to First Nations, Métis and Inuit learner needs;
- b) implement the inclusion of perspectives of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples that are accurate and address the needs of all students;
- c) foster a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment that encourages the First Nations, Métis and Inuit student and parent family engagement; and
- d) commit to ongoing learning about First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples, cultures and various pedagogies.

**3.10. Support staff shall:**

- a) be culturally aware and supportive of First Nations, Métis and Inuit identities; and
- b) engage in culturally relevant and supportive practices that encourage First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, parent(s)/guardians and family engagement.

## **4. Contact**

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Team  
Inclusive School and Community Services  
Education and Community Services

## **5. History**

Working Document: June 2019  
Revised: January 2020

# Procedure #601.3, First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education: Community Engagement and Awareness Building

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## 1. Procedure Statement

This procedure outlines how York Region District School Board engages the parent(s)/guardian(s) and families of Indigenous students and First Nations, Métis and Inuit community partners and organizations in meaningful collaboration on common issues and priorities.

## 2. Application

The parent(s)/guardian(s) and families of Indigenous students and First Nations, Métis and Inuit community partners and organizations shall be engaged by the Board in meaningful collaboration on common issues and priorities.

## 3. Responsibilities

### 3.1. The Director of Education shall:

- a) allocate staff and resources to support the Engagement and Awareness Building procedure.

### 3.2. Coordinating Superintendent of Education, Indigenous Education and Equity shall:

- a) support cooperatively, the provision of leadership opportunities and promote partnerships with First Nations Métis and Inuit educators, parent(s)/guardian(s), families, students and community members;
- b) provide leadership and build capacity to ensure the effective implementation of Board programs and supports that address the achievement and well-being of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students;
- c) provide representation and participate actively on the Indigenous Education Advisory Council and the First Nations Education Liaison Committee; and
- d) support school environments to encourage First Nations, Métis and Inuit student and parent engagement.

### 3.3. Superintendents of Schools shall:

- a) work cooperatively, providing leadership opportunities and promoting partnerships with First Nations Métis and Inuit educators, parent(s)/guardian(s), families, students and community members;

- b) provide leadership and build capacity to ensure the effective implementation of Board programs and supports that address the achievement and well-being of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students; and
- c) ensure school environments encourage First Nations, Métis and Inuit student and parent engagement.

**3.4. First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Coordinator shall:**

- a) develop formal networks for collaboration with First Nations, Métis and Inuit community partners and organisations;
- b) meaningfully engage Indigenous Education Advisory Council and First Nations, Métis and Inuit community partners and organizations by co-developing Board Action Plans for Indigenous Education with them; and
- c) include local community members, particularly Elders and Senators, knowledge keepers and residential school survivors, in the delivery of the curriculum.

**3.5. Principals shall:**

- a) ensure that the School Improvement Plan addresses the teaching and learning of accurate First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures, histories and perspectives for all students and that supports the engagement of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and families;
- b) invite First Nations, Métis and Inuit parent(s)/guardian(s) and extended family to share their expertise in the classroom, in connection school programs and events;
- c) work with First Nations, Métis and Inuit Community Partners and organizations to facilitate community-based events, where appropriate; and
- d) promote and support First Nations, Métis and Inuit studies programming for all students.

**3.6. Teachers shall:**

- a) foster a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment that encourages the First Nations, Métis and Inuit student and parent engagement.

**3.7. School councils shall:**

- a) encourage parent(s)/guardian(s) of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students to participate in parent engagement activities and school council meetings.

## **4. Definitions**

### **4.1. First Nation Community**

Under the Indian Act, First Nation communities are referred to as Indian Bands that are recognized by the Governor in Council. In the case of YRDSB the closest First Nations community is Georgina Island. The Board acknowledges that there are members of other First Nations living in York Region.

#### **4.2. First Nations, Métis and Inuit Community Partners and Organizations**

Community partners and organizations work to facilitate and support Indigenous peoples living in York Region. This includes, but is not limited to, Ontario Friendship Centres, Native Canadian Centre of Toronto, Métis Nation of Ontario, Enaahdig Healing Lodge.

### **5. Contact**

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Team  
Inclusive School and Community Services  
Education and Community Services

### **6. History**

Workings Document: June 2019  
Revised: January 2020



# Procedure #601.4, First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education: Using Data to Support Student Achievement



## 1. Procedure Statement

This procedure outlines how York Region District School Board collects data for measuring, tracking and monitoring First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. The Board provides opportunities for students of First Nations, Métis and Inuit origin to [self-identify](#) and access supports for their achievement and well-being.

## 2. Application

In order to assess the progress of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, the Board recognizes it is important to have reliable and valid data. The Board invites all First Nations, Métis and Inuit students to voluntarily and confidentially self-identify their indigenous ancestry.

All data collected will be used in agreement with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Privacy Act or other applicable legislation. All personal information is treated as confidential, and is collected, used, disclosed and disposed of only in accordance with relevant legislation and regulations. Individual data will not be reported and will be used to develop and implement supportive programming.

## 3. Definitions

### 3.1. Self-Identification

A process that will allow students to voluntarily and confidentially declare their origin as First Nations, Métis or Inuit.

## 4. Responsibilities

### 4.1. The Director of Education shall:

- a) allocate staff and resources to support the Using Data to Support Student Achievement procedure.

### 4.2. Coordinating Superintendent of Education, Indigenous Education and Equity shall:

- a) ensure accurate and timely reporting of assessment data related to the First Nations, Métis and Inuit student achievement and well-being.

**4.3. Superintendents of Schools shall:**

- a) support opportunities to inform parent(s)/guardian(s) and families of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students about the rationale and goals of self-identification.

**4.4. The Chief Financial Officer shall:**

- a) ensure appropriate resources and training for the accurate collection of First Nations, Métis and Inuit self-identification and student achievement information;
- b) support schools to ensure accurate and timely reporting of First Nations, Métis and Inuit self-identification and student achievement information;
- c) provide accurate and timely reporting of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit financial and other statistical information internally and to the Ministry of Education; and
- d) ensure that all data that is collected is securely stored and used only for purposes related to assessing and supporting achievement and programming needs of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.

**4.5. Principals shall:**

- a) ensure that self-identification for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students is promoted through annual communication to the school community;
- b) ensure that students who are already attending school are aware of how to and are provided with an opportunity to declare their First Nations, Métis and Inuit ancestry by completing a [First Nation, Métis and Inuit Self-Identification Form](#) at their home school;
- c) ensure that students who are registering are informed of the opportunity for the First Nations, Métis and Inuit self-identification and that if they choose to self-identify, their ancestry is recorded on the student registration form;
- d) obtain parent/guardian approval for students under the age of 18 who self-identify;
- e) ensure the update of student record in Trillium following the completion of the self-identification form; and
- f) attach the original copy of the student's the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Self-Identification Form to the student's registration form.

**4.6. Teachers shall:**

- a) work with principals to support student self-identification; and
- b) implement teaching strategies and curriculum that are appropriate to First Nations, Métis and Inuit learner needs; and
- c) foster a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment that encourages the First Nations, Métis and Inuit students to self-identify.

## **5. Contact**

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Team  
Inclusive School and Community Services  
Education and Community Services

## **6. History**

Formerly Board Procedure #601.0 Supports for First Nation, Métis and Inuit Students

Working Document: June 2019

Revised: February 2014, January 2020