

MY COMMUNITY



ELEMENTARY TEACHERS' FEDERATION OF ONTARIO

BUILDING INCLUSION

*My Community
Primary Division*

Background

In order for our classrooms to be culturally responsive and reflective, educators are urged to reach out to families and community members to build relationships of trust and inclusion. This lesson honours the diverse voices and lived experiences of parents, elders, families and community members, and integrates environmental inquiry by bringing the learning outdoors.

As students participate in a community walk, they will learn about how they interact with and connect to their local community. All members of the school community will begin to think critically about issues of accessibility and equity, which are impacted by power and privilege.

This lesson is inspired by land-based education, which is a First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) approach to teaching and learning about the environment that deepens our understanding of our responsibility and relationship to the land. It includes a territory/land acknowledgement, which is an important part of the reconciliation process.



Learning Goals

Students will describe their relationship with the local community before, during and after the community walk. They will identify the services and buildings found in the local community and examine if they meet the wants and needs of all community members.



Inquiry Goals

I wonder...

- How can I support my students to discuss issues that affect their community in empowering ways?
- Are there services and spaces in the community inclusive and accessible to all community members? If not, whose needs and wants are excluded?
- How do my students understand and experience privilege and/or marginalization in their local community?



Call for Action

Students write a letter that:

- Demonstrates their understanding of what an equitable and inclusive community needs.
- Identifies what is needed in their own local community to increase access and/or safety for all community members.



Curriculum Expectations

- ✓ Grade 1 Social Studies, Math: Geometry, Language: Writing, Oral Communication, Media
- ✓ Grade 2 Social Studies, Math: Geometry, Language: Writing, Oral Communication, Media
- ✓ Grade 3 Social Studies, Math: Geometry, Language: Writing, Oral Communication, Media

Materials

Chart paper

Markers

Grid paper (8.5 x 11)

Grid chart paper

Needs and Wants Cards ([Appendix A](#))

Clipboards for students

Suggested Prior Knowledge

- This lesson includes a territory/land acknowledgement, which recognizes the land being shared by community members is situated on traditional territory that many First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples live and have lived on since time immemorial.
- Lessons that have explored concepts of mapping (e.g., bird's-eye view perspectives, cardinal directions), place and space (terms such as *landmarks*, *location*, *direction*) will benefit the deeper learning in this activity.
- The mapping activity also connects to the four directions of the Medicine Wheel. There are many interpretations of this traditional teaching, however, there is a shared understanding and respect for how we are all connected and in relationship with each other and the land.
- This lesson focuses on the concepts of **community**, **access**, **diversity** and **privilege/marginalization**. A shared understanding of **equity** terminology, such as *identity* and First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples will provide more context to the discussion.

Lesson Structure

Task Component	Instruction	Assessment Focus
Before (Activation/ Review) 10 minutes	Needs and Wants Inventory Cards are provided for the sort – you may wish to include other community landmarks important in their community, as well as adding suggestions from students. Ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>What do we need in a community?</i> <i>What do we want in a community?</i> Sort the picture cards and record student thoughts on chart paper in a T-chart. Teachers might have a discussion before sorting with students about the purposes each of the card-holders has in supporting a community. The following prompts might serve for deeper discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>What does this service offer to people?</i> <i>Who might use this service?</i> <i>Are there people in the community who might not be able to use this service?</i> <i>Where else might they go for the same service? How might this service be the same or different depending on where your community is (in a city, country, etc.)?</i> 	Students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the difference between a 'need' and a 'want.' Have a shared understanding of the term community.
During (Working on it)	Map Your Community Before beginning the walk, read the following land acknowledgement (or	Students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow a map route with some assistance.

Task Component	Instruction	Assessment Focus
60-75 minutes	<p>one specific to your school): <i>We acknowledge and thank the First Peoples of this territory and other Indigenous Peoples for sharing this land in order for us to continue our work today. (Adapted from the ETFO First Nations, Métis and Inuit Statement)</i></p> <p>Plan a route incorporating the four directions from the school site (depending on location), noting the cardinal directions provided in the Medicine Wheel. See the Anishnaabeg Bimaadiziwin: An Ojibwe Peoples Resource for more information about these traditional teachings.</p> <p>Provide students with a blank map (streets only) on grid paper and each group will need to have one adult accompanying them (parent/guardian, volunteer, teacher, student teacher, etc.). Students will take walks through the community, noting different services, spaces and buildings and sketching what they see along the way.</p> <p>When they return to school, students will create a more complete map (with bird's-eye views of buildings) based on what they saw for each quadrant. Dependent on students' experience of mapping, an introduction or review of perspective might be helpful. See the National Geographic website for suggestions on bird's-eye view discussions.</p> <p>As each group draws their map, circulate and ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How do we choose what to include in our map?</i> <p>Each group will present their map to the class and collaboratively the class will create one big map (a giant one) that represents their own community. Again, ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How did we choose what to include in our map?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify community buildings and services. • Plot landmark buildings on a map. • Share personal experiences. <p>Questions to Consider for Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are students able to draw on their experiences and begin describing/identifying 'markers' shared (e.g., community spaces that address diverse identities and experiences such as faith, interests, cultural practices, social services, etc.)? • Are students beginning to articulate critical reasons for their choices of what is a community need and want? • Are they asking questions to deepen their understanding of themselves and their community?

Task Component	Instruction	Assessment Focus
	<p>If necessary, the teacher may wish to suggest buildings and/or services that have been omitted and talk about why these are also important.</p> <p>It is an opportune time to begin moving the discussion to more critical places by prompting questions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What did we include in the map that promotes necessary services? What are more entertainment and interest services? How do we decide what is necessary or entertainment?</i> • <i>What are places of gathering and socializing? What places support health, wellness and fair living?</i> • <i>Where do you see spaces that reflect the diversity and values of the community within and outward? Which services and buildings serve which members of the communities?</i> • <i>How can we make our community more accessible?</i> 	
<p>After (Reflecting/ Constructing/ Consolidating)</p> <p>20 minutes</p>	<p>Building Inclusion</p> <p>As a whole class, refer back to the Needs and Wants Inventory developed during the Minds-On activity. Place buildings and services from the walks into the chart according to category. Have students volunteer their thinking and planning to collectively build understanding.</p> <p>Ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What is missing from our map that we listed as a “need” in our community? Using the T-chart, highlight the missing needs.</i> • <i>What is missing as a “want” in our community? Using the T-chart, highlight the missing wants.</i> • <i>If we were to add some of these things, where would they go? Would you want to take something away to make room?</i> 	<p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect buildings/sites in their community to their co-created list of wants and needs. • Identify examples of inclusion and exclusion. • Share personal experiences. <p>Questions to Consider for Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are students expressing the complexities of

Task Component	Instruction	Assessment Focus
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>In what buildings/sites do you feel most comfortable/included? Who might feel excluded in the same building/site?</i> <i>In what buildings/sites do you feel you are not welcome/excluded? Who might feel included in the same building/site?</i> <i>Are there some people in your community who do not have to community space? How do you know this?</i> <i>Which groups of people might not have as easy access to certain spaces? Why do you think this happens?</i> <i>If someone were to visit your community from outside, who would they assume has power and privilege in the community (based on buildings and/or services allocation)?</i> <p>This activity and discussion can become nuanced and will require guidance from the adults especially with young children. Picking up from the earlier part of this lesson, it is very important to keep the discussion open and consider multiple aspects. It is less about judgement and more about observation. Examine both physical and figurative spaces of access.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although a building may be welcome to all, if it does not have a ramp, it may exclude people in wheelchairs, caregivers/parents with strollers, etc. A mosque that services Muslim worshippers can be an inclusive space for religious reasons. How might this discussion become layered if it is a space exclusively for men? A neighbourhood that does not have access to buy fresh produce at a reasonable price would limit opportunities for healthier living and eating. If a neighbourhood does not have an affordable daycare, which group 	<p>representations of inclusivity? Exclusivity?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can students begin to name the nuanced and contextualized ways spaces can be privileged and marginalized through what they observe and how they are making sense of it?

Task Component	Instruction	Assessment Focus
	<p>of people might this impact?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If there is a senior centre in the neighbourhood, who does this serve? Why is this necessary? 	
Individual Practice 20 minutes	<p>Building Inclusion – Individual</p> <p>Students will create their own building, site or service (e.g., park, store, restaurant, housing, art piece, daycare centre, etc.) to add to the community map. Using drawings and captions or models (e.g., plasticine, building blocks, etc.), students will describe the new addition, what purpose it serves and how it promotes inclusion within the community. They will also seek to provide space to those who they have identified as being excluded or who have less space.</p>	<p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply their understanding of inclusion in the creation of a new building, site or service. <p>Questions to Consider for Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are students identifying their purpose of the new addition? Can they articulate whom this building or service will impact? What kind of access or opportunity it will provide?
Call for Action 60 minutes or open-ended timeline	<p>Letter-Writing Campaign</p> <p>This task can be done in small groups, individually or as a collective through a whole class, shared writing process.</p> <p>Students decide on a 'gap' that they had observed in the neighbourhood where they would like to see a change so that the community space can be more accessible. They can write a letter to the organization, city councillor or business owner (dependent on what is appropriate), sharing their concerns and ideas.</p>	<p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider what 'acts of resistance' can be done as a collective or individual, one of which is letter writing. <p>Questions to Consider for Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are students identifying a gap or a need that is missing in their community?

Task Component	Instruction	Assessment Focus
	<p>Part of this letter-writing campaign is to also address the letter-writing format with primary students, so depending on student background experiences, this may be an ideal process to do as a shared writing.</p> <p>Examples of potential letter-writing contexts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students notice that in the local library, there is no representation in their displays and collections of books that depict cultural/racial diversity (whether the community is homogenous or not). • Students might observe that a farmer's market in their neighbourhood does not have access for wheelchair entry. Students realize that there is no ramp or electronic door for accessibility. • Students are made aware that in the neighbourhood where they live, there are no second-language signs for information in the local grocery stores or library, where the majority of the community speak a particular language outside of English. • Students observe that in the neighbourhood, there is a homeless person who often talks to themselves and asks for change. They wonder whether this person has proper medical care and shelter. This raises questions for the children about mental health and wellness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can students identify who this need would serve and in what way, if fulfilled? • Can they articulate to whom this 'call for action' might be directed?
Next Steps (Teacher Reflection)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whose voices (students) are loudest in the conversation about the community? • Are the buildings/services in the immediate community reflective of my students' racial/cultural backgrounds and other identities? • Were concepts of privilege, access, fairness and equity/inequity addressed and explored in ways that I was satisfied with? Why/Why not? 	

Extensions

Maps

How are maps made? Discuss with students the ways that maps are created looking at varying projections (e.g., Peters vs Mercator). How does the making of a map connect to our discussions about power and privilege? Whose perspectives are included? Whose perspectives are missing? Look at a *Treaty Map* of Ontario and generate critical inquiry questions together about land ownership, and equitable access to resources.

Street Names

Discuss the ways that street names are assigned. If living in an older community, trace the historic roots of the street names (e.g., European Settler families, historic figures, named after places in other countries). Whose names are included? Whose names are missing? If living in a newer community, how did the local government settle on the names? Who had a say (e.g., developers, community members)? Invite students to re-name a local street and justify their choices. Are there names which reflect the First Nations, Métis or Inuit roots in the area? How can we honour the traditional territory with place names?

Additional Resources



What is a Community? (Study.com)

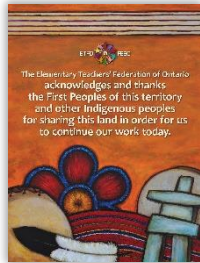


Who Are the People in Your Neighbourhood?

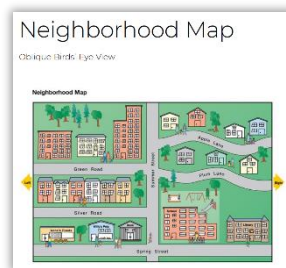
References



Anishnaabag Bimaadiziwin: An Ojibwe Peoples Resource (Aboriginal Resources Centre, Georgian College)

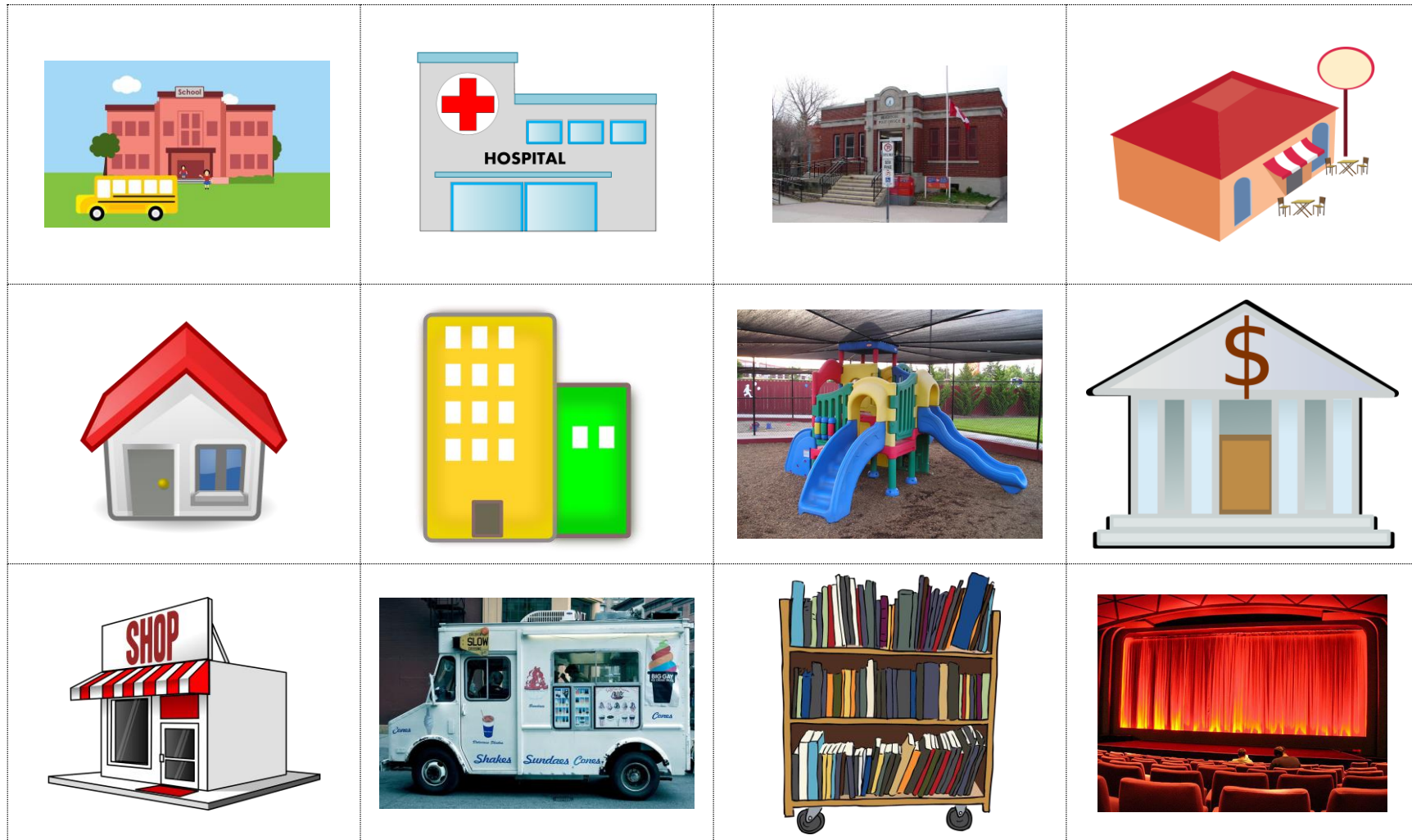


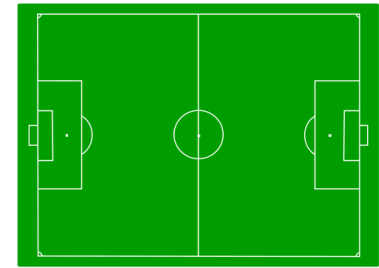
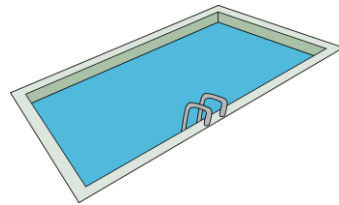
ETFO First Nations, Métis and Inuit Statement (Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario)



Neighbourhood Map: Oblique Bird's-Eye View (National Geographic)

Appendix A: Wants and Needs Inventory (Sorting Cards)





GLOSSARY



ELEMENTARY TEACHERS' FEDERATION OF ONTARIO

GLOSSARY

TERM	DEFINITION
Aboriginal peoples	Defined in section 35(2) of the <i>Constitution Act, 1982</i> , s: "... 'Aboriginal peoples of Canada' includes the Indian, Inuit, and Métis peoples of Canada." Other terms used to encompass these diverse groups include First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI), Indigenous, Native and First Peoples. For the purpose of this resource, Aboriginal and Aboriginal peoples will be used to respectfully acknowledge these original inhabitants of North America.
Activism	The action or policy of using vigorous campaigning to bring about political or social change.
Advocacy	The act or process of supporting a cause.
Affirmative action	Affirmative action policies were developed to address long histories of discrimination faced by minorities and women. This term is primarily in use in the USA. In Canada, we have used the term "employment equity" since the 1980's.
Ally	Someone who works against the oppression of a specific social group(s), even though they do not belong to that group, such as a man who works to end sexism or a White person who stands up against racism. Becoming an ally involves acknowledging your own privilege and taking action towards social justice.
Allyship	Allyship is not an identity – it is a lifelong process of building relationships based on trust, consistency and accountability with marginalized individuals and/or groups of people. Allyship is not self-defined – our work and our efforts must be recognized by the people we seek to ally ourselves with.
Assimilation	The process by which a person or persons acquire the social and psychological characteristics of a dominant or majority group: e.g., "Waves of immigrants have been <i>assimilated</i> into the American culture."

TERM	DEFINITION
Barrier	An obstacle to entry in societal activities, created by the culture of the community or the dominant group, i.e., people's behavior towards newcomers or persons seen as “the other” (e.g., marginalized groups).
Bias	An opinion, preference or inclination that limits an individual's or a group's ability to make fair, objective or accurate judgements.
Class	Class is a relative social rank in terms of income, wealth, education, status/position and/or power.
Community	A group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common; A feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests and goals.
Courageous conversations	<p>Educator Glenn E. Singleton outlines Four Agreements to guide educators, students and community stakeholders when discussing race:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay Engaged; • Expect to Experience Discomfort; • Speak your Truth; and • Expect and Accept a Lack of Closure.

TERM	DEFINITION
Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogy (CRRP)	<p>Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogy seeks to empower students intellectually, socially, emotionally and politically. Educators who ascribe to this pedagogy foster student voice by:</p> <p><u>Holding high expectations</u> Educators, students, families and community stakeholders work together to create a culture of high expectations in the classroom by engaging in high-yield teaching strategies, consistent assessment and caring relationships.</p> <p><u>Acquiring cultural competence</u> Educators use students' cultures and connections to communities as a vehicle for learning.</p> <p><u>Nurturing critical consciousness</u> Educators provide opportunities for students to critique the cultural norms, values and institutions that produce and maintain social inequities.</p>
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 identity, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation and socioeconomic status.
Employment equity	Federal legislation, encouraging the establishment of working conditions that are free of barriers, correcting the conditions of disadvantage in employment and promoting implementation of special measures and the accommodation of differences for the four designated groups in Canada: women, Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and racialized persons.
Equality	The state or quality of being equal; correspondence in quantity, degree, value, rank or ability.
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.
Eurocentric	Focusing on European culture or history to the exclusion of a wider view of the world; implicitly regarding European culture as preeminent.

TERM	DEFINITION
Exclusion	The state of group disempowerment, degradation and disenfranchisement maintained by systemic barriers and supported by an implicit ideology of superiority.
Fairness	Having or exhibiting a disposition that is free of favouritism or bias; impartial.
First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI)	<p><i>First Nation.</i> A term that came into common usage in the 1970s to replace the word “Indian,” which many found offensive. The term <i>First Nation</i> has been adopted to replace the word “band” in the names of communities.</p> <p><i>Inuit.</i> Aboriginal people in northern Canada, living mainly in Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, northern Quebec and Labrador. Ontario has a very small Inuit population. The Inuit are not covered by the Indian Act.</p> <p><i>Métis people.</i> People of mixed First Nation and European ancestry. The Métis history and culture draws on diverse ancestral origins, such as Scottish, Irish, French, Ojibwe and Cree.</p>
Gender expression	The Ontario Human Rights Commission (2012) defines <i>gender expression</i> as: “Gender expression is how a person publicly expresses or presents their gender. This can include behaviour and outward appearance such as dress, hair, make-up, body language and voice. A person’s chosen name and pronoun are also common ways of expressing gender. Others perceive a person’s gender through these attributes.”
Gender identity	The Ontario Human Rights Commission (2012) defines <i>gender identity</i> as: “Gender identity is each person’s internal and individual experience of gender. It is a person’s sense of being a woman, a man, both, neither or anywhere along the gender spectrum. A person’s gender identity may be the same as or different from their birth-assigned sex.”
Identity	The concept a person develops about themselves that evolves over the course of their life. This may include aspects of life that they have no control over, such as where they grew up or the colour of their skin, as well as choices they make in life, such as how they spend their time and what they believe.
Inclusion	Creating an environment where people have both the feeling and reality of belonging and are able to achieve to their full potential.

TERM	DEFINITION
Inclusive	To include all, to be comprehensive.
Infrastructure	Refers to structures, systems and facilities serving the economy of a business, industry, country, city, town or area, including the services and facilities necessary for its economy to function.
Liberation	The act of setting someone free from imprisonment, slavery, oppression.
Marginalized	This term is used to refer to the process of making a group or class of people less important or relegated to a secondary position.
Meritocracy	A social system, society or organization in which people have power because of their abilities, not because of their money or social position.
Mobilize	To make ready for action and movement.
Newcomer	A) A person who is new to Canada who has come here either as an immigrant or refugee. B) A person who is new to a school.

TERM	DEFINITION
The Ontario Human Rights Code 1962 (OHRC)	<p>The <i>Ontario Human Rights Code 1962</i> prohibits discrimination against people based on a protected ground in a protected social area.</p> <p>Protected grounds are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age; • Ancestry, colour, race; • Citizenship; • Ethnic origin; • Place of origin; • Creed; • Disability; • Family status; • Marital status (including single status); • Gender identity, gender expression; • Receipt of public assistance (in housing only); • Record of offences (in employment only); and • Sex (including pregnancy and breastfeeding). <p>Protected social areas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodation (housing); • Contracts; • Employment; • Goods, services and facilities; and • Membership in unions, trade or professional associations.
Oppression	How one group is dominated by another, more powerful, individual or group through physical, psychological, social or economic threats or force and frequently by an ideology of dominance.
Power	The capacity or ability to direct or influence the behavior of others or the course of events.

TERM	DEFINITION
Prejudice	A set of opinions about or attitudes towards a certain group or individuals within it that casts that groups and its members in an inferior light and for which there is no legitimate basis in fact. Usually a negative opinion formed before knowing all the facts.
Privilege	“Privilege exists when one group has something of value that is denied to others simply because of the groups they belong to, rather than because of anything they’ve done or failed to do. Access to privilege doesn’t determine one’s outcomes, but it is definitely an asset that makes it more likely that whatever talent, ability, and aspirations a person with privilege has will result in something positive for them.” – Peggy McIntosh
Racialized peoples	Recognizing that race is a social construct, the Ontario Human Rights Commission describes people as “racialized person” or “racialized group” instead of the more outdated and inaccurate terms <i>racial minority</i> , <i>visible minority</i> , <i>person of colour</i> or <i>non-White</i> .
Racism	According to the Ontario Human Rights Commission (2012): “Racism is a belief that one group is superior to others. Racism can be openly displayed in racial jokes, slurs or hate crimes. It can also be more deeply rooted in attitudes, values and stereotypical beliefs. In some cases, people don’t even realize they have these beliefs. Instead, they are assumptions that have evolved over time and have become part of systems and institutions, and also associated with the dominant group’s power and privilege.”
Sexual orientation	A person’s attraction to someone of a different sex, the same sex or both sexes.
Socio-economic status	An economic and sociological combined total measure of a person's work experience and of an individual's or family's economic and social position in relation to others, based on income, education and occupation.
Stakeholder	A group/individual that has an interest in a particular issue or project and can affect or be affected by the outcomes.

TERM	DEFINITION
Systemic oppression	Systematic oppression is the mistreatment of people within a social identity group, supported and enforced by the society and its institutions, solely based on the person's membership in the social identity group.
Union or trade union	<p>A union is an organized group of workers who collectively use their strength to have a voice in their workplace. Through a union, workers have a right to impact wages, work hours, benefits, workplace health and safety, job training and other work-related issues. (Los Angeles County Federation of Labor)</p> <p>“trade union” means an organization of employees formed for purposes that include the regulation of relations between employees and employers (Ontario Labour Relations Act)</p>
Unfairness	Lack of equality or justice.
White Privilege	White Privilege is about the concrete benefits of access to resources and social rewards and the power to shape the norms and values of society that Whites receive, unconsciously or consciously, by virtue of their skin colour in a racist society.