PURPOSE:
It is the policy of the Waterloo Catholic District School Board (WCDSB) to provide the opportunity for all First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students and their parents to voluntarily and confidentially self-identify so that supportive programming can be provided.

The WCDSB also supports the self-identification of all First Nation, Métis, and Inuit staff to provide information and guidance on Indigenous initiatives.

The WCDSB embraces a vision of Catholic Education, which proclaims:
“Our Catholic Schools: Heart of the community ~ success for each and a place for all."

In order to fulfill this vision, the mission of the WCDSB is:
“As disciples of Christ, we educate and nurture hope in all learners to realize their potential to transform God’s world.”

REFERENCES:
- Building Bridges to Success for First Nation, Métis and Inuit Students (Ministry of Education, 2007)
- Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Education Policy Framework (Ministry of Education, 2007)
- Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy (Ministry of Education, 2009)
- APC037: Equity and Inclusive Education Policy
- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)
- Mission and Vision (WCDSB, 2010)

FORMS:
- APC039-01F: Indigenous Self Identification First Nations, Metis and Inuit Staff

REPORTS:
- N/A

APPENDICES:
- N/A
COMMENTS AND GUIDELINES:

DEFINITIONS

First Nation: Canada’s original peoples whose history is interwoven with the creation of 1876 Indian Act, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) and subsequent registry system. First Nation includes status and non-status Indians.

Status: people registered under the Indian Act who identify with a First Nation community/ancestral land.

Non-Status: people who identify with a First Nation community/ancestral land but are not registered under the INAC registry system.

Métis: those who trace their descent to mixed European and First Nation parentage. The Métis National Council defines Métis as a person who self-identifies as Métis, is distinct from other Indigenous peoples, is of historic Métis Nation Ancestry, and is accepted by the Métis Nation. In 2003, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled the term “Métis”, as referred to in Section 35 of the Constitution, does not encompass all individuals with mixed First Nation and European heritage. Rather, it refers to distinctive peoples who, in addition to their mixed ancestry, developed their own customs, way of life, and recognizable group identity separate from that of their First Nation or Inuit and European forbearers.

Inuit: means ‘the people’ in Inuktitut and generally refers to Canada’s original people whose homeland is the Canadian Arctic, which includes portions of the three Territories: Nunavut, Yukon and Northwest Territories in addition to Northern Quebec and Northern Labrador.

FIRST NATION, METIS, AND INUIT SELF-IDENTIFICATION GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

WCDSB is committed to providing programs and putting in place measures that respond to the needs of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit staff and students.

All First Nation, Métis, and Inuit staff have the right to voluntarily and confidentially self-identify. Please use form APC039-01F: Indigenous Self Identification First Nations, Metis and Inuit Staff

All First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students and their parents have the right to voluntarily, and confidentially, self-identify.

1. Voluntary and Confidential, Self-Identification of First Nation, Métis or Inuit students may be declared by:
   - Parents/guardians of students under the age of 18
   - Students 18 years of age and older
   - Students who are 16 or 17 years of age and are withdrawn from parental control
   - Voluntary self-identification shall include all First Nation, Métis or Inuit people, regardless of status
   - No proof of ancestry shall be required

2. Parents/guardians of students currently registered within WCDSB may voluntarily acknowledge their child’s First Nation, Métis, or Inuit ancestry on the Student Data Verification Form or a form created for self-identification purposes.

3. Parents/guardians of new students currently registering within WCDSB may voluntarily acknowledge their child’s First Nation, Métis, or Inuit ancestry on the Student Registration Form and will be invited to self-identify at time of registration.
4. Collection of voluntary First Nation, Métis, and Inuit self-identification data will assist the WCDSB in achieving the ultimate goal of ensuring the success of all First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students within the board. The collection of voluntary First Nation, Métis, and Inuit self-identification data will:
   - increase the capacity of the WCDSB to respond to the learning and cultural needs of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students;
   - provide quality programs, services, and resources to help create learning opportunities for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students that support improved academic achievement and identity building;
     a. information will be analyzed and shared explicitly for the purpose of developing supportive programming and interventions for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students
     b. individual First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students may be identified by designated WCDSB staff for the purpose of information sharing about upcoming opportunities and programs that may be of interest and/or benefit to the student(s); and
   - help to develop and implement strategies that facilitate increased participation by First Nation, Métis, and Inuit parents, students, communities, and organizations in working to support success within an existing colonial system.

5. Data will be treated in the same manner as Ontario Student Records and protected and governed by the Freedom of Information Act and the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA). The information gathered will be used in the aggregate only and for the purpose of developing and implementing supportive programs.

6. The Administrative Procedures Memorandum (APC039: First Nation, Métis and Inuit – Voluntary and Confidential Self-Identification) will continue to evolve as WCDSB seeks to improve achievement and program delivery for our First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students. The following principles will guide us:
   - Transparency
   - Inclusiveness
   - Innovation
   - Learner-centered
   - Equitable
   - Responsive
   - Collaborative
   - Respectful of individual privacy and dignity
   - Results-oriented
   - Acknowledge and reflect cultural diversity
   - Contribute to the knowledge base through research

EVALUATION

The data collected as a result of this policy will be assessed by WCDSB staff on an annual basis to support both Board and school improvement planning, and to develop or enhance programming that addresses the needs of First Nation, Métis and Inuit students.