

## 103.1.A Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression

### Definitions

**Anti-racism:** is the proactive and consistent process of identifying, challenging, preventing, and eliminating racism. It uses direct action to acknowledge where privilege exists, raise awareness, advocate for change, and challenge beliefs (such as prejudice, bias and stereotypes) at the personal and institutional level to create and implement action to fight racism for individuals and within an organization, workforce or group.

**Anti-oppression:** a process that actively seeks to identify, remove, prevent, and mitigate inequitable outcomes and power imbalances between groups and change the structures that sustain inequities.

**Colonialism:** the pervasive domination of a people or area by a foreign state or nation, the practice of extending and maintaining a nation's political and economic control over another people or area. The word *colonialism* is sometimes considered to encompass non-state forms of influence and domination, as by corporate or religious entities, it can also be understood as an extension of state power.

**Cultural Diversity:** refers to the presence of all diverse groups in an organization and community and acknowledges and values their socio-cultural differences and their cultural expressions and contributions within the organization and community.

**Discrimination:** is negative differential treatment of a person or group on the basis of race, religious beliefs, ethnicity, language, colour, gender, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, financial status, family status, gender identity and/or gender expression, or sexual orientation.

**Diversity:** refers to the uniqueness of human differences. It includes ways of being, doing and knowing.

**Equity:** the systemic fair treatment of all people. It is achieved in an educational context when people with diverse backgrounds, lived experiences, and needs are fully able to participate in the system. Equity involves providing each member in the system with the type and amount of support needed to be successful, including culturally relevant and responsive environments and resources. Individuals are provided the opportunity to experience success and human dignity while developing the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to contribute as citizens in society.

**Historical Oppression:** describes the chronic, pervasive, and intergenerational experiences of oppression that, over time, may be normalized, imposed, and internalized into the daily lives of people (including individuals, families, and communities)

**Inclusive:** an inclusive education system is a way of thinking and acting that demonstrates acceptance of, and belonging for, all. It is founded on the belief that all individuals can learn and reach their full potential given opportunity, effective teaching and appropriate resources. An inclusive education system supports every student and staff member to be included and feel represented within the school division.

**Intercultural Understanding:** learning from and engaging with diverse cultures in ways that support commonalities and differences, create connections with others, and cultivate mutual respect.

**Oppression:** a situation in which people are governed in an unfair and cruel way and prevented from having opportunities and freedom

**Racism:** includes conscious and unconscious discriminatory or derogatory attitudes, microaggressions, comments, or actions directed at marginalized groups relative to race or culture. It is based on assumptions, perceptions, social constructs, lack of knowledge, or personal beliefs of superiority. Racism occurs in the context of a power and privilege imbalance and can be experienced at the individual, institutional or systemic level. In this context:

- **Individual racism** refers to an individual expressing racist assumptions, beliefs, or behaviours and is a form of racial discrimination, whether expressed overtly or covertly.
- **Institutional racism** occurs when institutions create or maintain racial inequity, often as a result of hidden biases in policies, practices and procedures that privilege some groups and disadvantage others.
- **Systemic racism** occurs when racist assumptions, beliefs, or behaviours are reinforced by systems of power that perpetuate racial group inequity. Systemic racism involves dimensions of our history and culture that have allowed racial privileges and inequities to endure and adapt over time.

**White Supremacy:** in this context, is the systematic marginalization of People of Colour based on a socially constructed racial hierarchy that privileges people who identify as white. It does not refer to extremist ideologies which believe that white people are genetically or culturally superior to non-whites.