

Toronto District School Board

Policy P062

Title: **ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS**

Adopted: June 27, 2007

Effectuated: June 27, 2007

Revised: 2009, March 2012; **October 26, 2022**

Reviewed: 2009, March 2012; **October 26, 2022**

Authorization: Board of Trustees

1. RATIONALE

This Alternative Schools Policy (the “Policy”) affirms the Board’s commitment to offering alternative schools across the TDSB.

The Policy aligns with the Mission, Values and Goals Policy (P002), Equity Policy (P037), Out-of-Area Attendance Policy (P013), and the Multi-Year Strategic Plan.

2. OBJECTIVE

- To ensure equitable access, admissions, and opportunities for all students in alignment with the priorities of the Multi-Year Strategic Plan;
- To provide direction to Alternative Schools on the development, monitoring and review of the school’s distinct pedagogy; and,
- To provide direction on the creation of Alternative Schools.

3. DEFINITIONS

Alternative School refers to a TDSB school in which flexible methods of teaching in non-traditional learning environments meet the needs of learners. Alternative schools are characterized by community collaboration, choice, inclusivity, and flexibility.

Board is the Toronto District School Board, which is also referred to as the “TDSB”.

Designated School refers to the school identified by the principal residence of the parent/legal guardian /adult student.

Distinct Pedagogy refers to flexible methods of teaching in non-traditional learning environments suited to individual learning styles, preferences, and needs.

Elementary Alternative School refers to a school offering grades Kindergarten to Grade 8, or a part thereof.

Secondary Alternative School refers to a school offering Grades 9 to 12, or a part thereof.

TDSB is the Toronto District School Board, which is also referred to as the “Board”.

4. RESPONSIBILITY

The Director of Education holds primary responsibility for the implementation of this Policy.

Within the Director’s Office, the responsibility for the coordination and day-to-day management of the Policy is assigned to the Executive Superintendent, Human Rights and Indigenous Education.

5. APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This Policy applies to all TDSB staff. The Policy also covers students, parents/legal guardians, and community members of alternative schools.

6. POLICY

6.1. General

- 6.1.1. The TDSB is committed to developing and promoting inclusive alternative schools as viable pathways and program choices.
- 6.1.2. All alternative schools will deliver educational programming that supports the Board’s commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Actions and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a framework for reconciliation.
- 6.1.3. All alternative schools will support anti-oppressive and anti-racist practices to engage, affirm, retain, and promote the success of students.
- 6.1.4. Admissions practices and program components of alternative schools will be equitable and anti-oppressive and address historical and ongoing marginalization that affects underserved and underrepresented individuals or groups as defined and covered under the TDSB’s Equity Policy (P037), Human Rights Policy (P031), and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

- 6.1.5. The TDSB recognizes and values the unique contributions of students, parents/legal guardians and staff, and communities in the success of alternative schools both at the local school and system level. The TDSB is committed to fostering this involvement.
- 6.1.6. Alternative schools, while retaining their distinct pedagogy, will operate in a way that is consistent with the operational practice of schools within the Board and in compliance with the *Education Act*, Regulations, Ministry of Education guidelines, Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action (2015), and Board policies.
- 6.1.7. Alternative schools will routinely review their distinct pedagogy as outlined in the Alternative Schools Procedure (PR584).
- 6.1.8. The TDSB will establish a process for the creation of any new alternative school centering student and parent/guardian voice, emphasizing the proposed school's distinct pedagogy, and staff's involvement throughout the entire process. All proposals for a proposed new alternative school(s) require Board approval.

6.2. Application and Admissions

- 6.2.1. In keeping with Truth and Reconciliation, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students will be prioritized outside of the centralized random selection process.
- 6.2.2. The application process for admission to an alternative school will be communicated annually to students and parents/legal guardians through the TDSB's website.
- 6.2.3. Available space at alternative schools will be determined by TDSB central staff based on current school enrolment and projected enrolment numbers.
- 6.2.4. The Board will prioritize admissions for students who self-identify as being from underserved communities that have been historically and currently underrepresented in alternative schools.
- 6.2.5. A centralized random selection process will be undertaken if the number of applications exceeds available spaces in an elementary alternative school.
- 6.2.6. Admission priority will also be given to students who are residents of the City of Toronto. Only after applicants that reside in the City of Toronto have been offered placement into an alternative school will students from outside of the City of Toronto be considered for placement. If the number of applications from students who reside in the City of Toronto exceeds the number of available spaces, no

offers will be made to students who reside outside of the City of Toronto.

7. SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES

The Director of Education is authorized to issue operational procedures to implement this Policy.

8. EVALUATION

This Policy will be reviewed at a minimum every four (4) years from the effective date.

9. APPENDICES

N/A

10. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Legislation

- *Education Act*
- *Ontario Human Rights Code*

Policies

- Equity (P037)
- Mission, Values and Goals (P002)
- Human Rights (P031)
- Out-of-Area Attendance (P013)

Procedures

- Alternative Schools (PR584)

Documents

- Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Actions, 2015
- United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007
- TDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan