



**HALTON CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
HALTON DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**



To: All Principals and Vice-Principals

From: Fiammetta Mazzetti, Superintendent of Education, HCDSB
Mark Zonneveld, Superintendent of Education, HDSB

Date: February 10, 2010

Re: ***Supporting the Aboriginal Self-Identification Process***

The Ministry of Education has identified Aboriginal education as one of its key priorities, with a focus on meeting two primary challenges by the year 2016. It is determined to improve achievement among First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students; and to close the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in the areas of literacy and numeracy, retention of students in school, graduation rates and advancement to post-secondary studies.

The Ministry of Education launched the ***Ontario First Nation, Métis and Inuit Policy Framework Document 2007 and Building Bridges for First Nations Métis and Inuit Students; Developing Policies for Voluntary Confidential Aboriginal Student Self Identification: Successful Practises for Ontario School Boards*** are intended to assist school boards in developing these policies and directing resources to facilitate Aboriginal student success.

The availability of data on Aboriginal student achievement in the school system is a critical foundation for the development, implementation and evaluation of programs that support the needs of Aboriginal students. The development of effective self-identification policies by Ontario school boards is a significant step toward ensuring that First Nation, Métis and Inuit students receive the highest possible quality of education, and that all Ontario students benefit from an appreciation of the richness of Aboriginal cultures and the important contributions of First Nation, Métis and Inuit communities to Ontario's cultural, economic and social future.

The 'Self-Identification Policy' is a voluntary policy where First Nations, Métis or Inuit students/parents self-identify themselves as Aboriginal will allow Halton Catholic School Board to collect data (i.e. EQAO, attendance, suspension, etc.) specifically to identify trends, issues and areas of need based on racial affiliation.

Aboriginal community partners and parents are invited to participate in open dialogue about these *Ministry* initiatives regarding Aboriginal education and the development of the *Voluntary and Confidential Aboriginal Student Self-Identification Policies* at one of the following public forums:

All meetings begin at 7:00 p.m.

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| Halton Hills – February 22, 2010 | Acton District High School (21 Cedar Road) |
| Milton – February 23, 2010 | Milton District High School, Studio Theatre (396 Williams Street) |
| Burlington – February 24, 2010 | Catholic Education Centre, Halton Catholic District School Board (802 Drury Lane) |
| Oakville – February 25, 2010 | Education Resource Centre, Halton Catholic District School Board (2123 Hixon Street) |



Aboriginal Education News

Halton School Boards Invite Community Members to Provide Input on Joint Boards' Aboriginal Self-Identification Policies

Burlington, ON – February 10, 2010 - The Ministry of Education has identified Aboriginal education as one of its key priorities, with a focus on meeting two primary challenges by the year 2016. It is determined to improve achievement among First Nation, Métis, and Inuit students; and to close the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in the areas of literacy and numeracy, retention of students in school, graduation rates and advancement to post-secondary studies.

The Ministry of Education encourages school boards to develop policies on *Voluntary and Confidential Aboriginal Student Self-Identification* that would provide a basis for gathering relevant information. Two Ministry documents: *Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework* and *Building Bridges to Success for First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Students* are intended to assist school boards in developing these policies and directing resources to facilitate Aboriginal student success. The joint Halton Boards' Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee (AEAC) has developed a working draft policy on Aboriginal Self-Identification and is requesting comments from Aboriginal community partners, parents and interested individuals. For more information, please contact Sherry Saevil, Aboriginal Liaison Officer at 905-632-4814, ext. 5687 or at saevils@hcdsb.org.

Aboriginal community partners and parents are invited to participate in open dialogue about these *Ministry* initiatives regarding Aboriginal education and the development of the *Voluntary and Confidential Aboriginal Student Self-Identification Policies* of the two Halton Boards at one of the following public forums:

All meetings begin at 7:00 p.m.

Halton Hills – February 22, 2010
Milton – February 23, 2010
Burlington – February 24, 2010

Oakville – February 25, 2010

Acton District High School (21 Cedar Road)
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For further information, please contact:

Sherry Saevil

Aboriginal Liaison Officer

Halton Catholic and Halton District School Boards

905-632-4814, ext. 5687

saevils@hcdsb.org