

Policy 416: Anti-Ableism


Draft Administrative Procedures

June 17, 2025

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Policy 416: Anti-Ableism



1. Purpose

Ableism / Disablism is a form of discrimination in society that holds that some people are more valuable than others, which can limit the potential of people with disabilities. People with disabilities are then assumed to be less worthy of respect and consideration, less able to contribute and/or take part, and have less value than other people. Ableism / Disablism can be conscious or unconscious, and is embedded in institutions, systems, and the broader culture of society.

An ableist belief system includes negative attitudes, stereotypes, stigma, and attitudinal barriers associated with, and towards persons with visible and invisible disabilities. These create significant barriers or adversely impact equality, participation, dignity, and well-being. These barriers are harmful and perpetuate exclusion and discrimination.

North Vancouver School District Board of Education is committed to ensuring the full inclusion and equitable treatment of all students, employees, Indigenous rights holders, and school district partners. It recognizes that diversity and intersectionality is a source of social, cultural, and economic enrichment and strength. North Vancouver School District endeavours to provide a climate of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and rights of each individual with visible or invisible disabilities.

North Vancouver School District recognizes that Ableism/ Disablism represents a formidable barrier for many students, staff, and their families, having the effect of adversely impacting their lived experiences, self-agency, sense of belonging, and potential for success within their school community. Ableism / Disablism limits opportunities for persons with visible and invisible disabilities.

This policy and its administrative procedures commit North Vancouver School District, its Board of Education, students, families, staff members, and broader community, to develop a heightened awareness of Ableism / Disablism and to make conscientious efforts to diminish and eliminate its occurrences. These efforts include but are not limited to: creating learning opportunities and defining expectations; identifying language, behaviors, and purposeful actions to prevent Ableism / Disablism.

These goals and objectives align with the BC Human Rights code, Canadian Human Rights Act, North Vancouver School District's Accessibility Plan, Accessible British Columbia Act, and both the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.

Adopted December 19, 2023

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Subcommittee Members

Jayden Weiss - District Student Leadership Council (DSLC)
Jennifer Branston - North Vancouver Parent Advisory Council (NVPAC)
Vicky Sra - North Vancouver Parent Advisory Council (NVPAC)
Robin Deleurme - North Vancouver Teachers Association (NVTa)
Cindy Hudson - North Vancouver Administrators Association (NOVA)
Jennifer Wilson - North Vancouver Administrators Association (NOVA)
Kevin Pokasuwan - Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)
Janis Mann - Chair, NVSD Inclusion Committee
Vince White - Chair, Subcommittee to Develop Policy on Anti-Ableism

Meeting Dates

February 15, 2024
April 18, 2024
May 30, 2024
December 10, 2024
January 21, 2025
March 14, 2025
May 29, 2025

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Objective:

The North Vancouver School District is committed to actively addressing ableism and disablism by raising awareness, promoting and advancing inclusivity, and implementing concrete measures to diminish and eventually eliminate instances of ableism and disablism within its school communities. The North Vancouver School District is dedicated to ongoing collaboration with partner groups and the disability community to collectively pursue these objectives. The [North Vancouver School District Accessibility Plan 2023-2026](#) outlines specific measures to remove and prevent barriers stemming from ableism and disablism. These administrative procedures are informed by and intended to align with the plan's objectives.

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Questions / Discussion

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In a concerted effort to support the implementation of Policy 416: Anti-Ableism, the following administrative procedures should be applied:

Ableism/Disablism Training and Awareness:

- Develop and recommend a comprehensive guide identifying ableist language, euphemisms, and common ableist phrases.
- Create guidelines for reviewing resources through the lens of ableism, disablism, and disability to be provided to all staff.
- Review and create guidelines to plan for the inclusion and participation of all students within the North Vancouver School District to attend field trips, outdoor school, emergency preparedness drills and school community events and programs.

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Ableism / Disablism Training and Awareness



In collaboration with people with visible and invisible disabilities, select and/or create professional development, in-service, and/or training focused on the following:

- Understanding of disability, accessibility, barriers, inclusion, and ableism/disablism through an intersectional lens.
- Promote and acknowledge significant dates within the disability community including National Accessibility Week and the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.
- Enhanced understanding of Individual Education Plan development and implementation, and the application of adaptations, accommodations, and neuro-affirmative supports within the classroom.
- Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to enhance understanding of how to utilize UDL principles to increase equitable access to learning, specifically for students with disabilities or who are neurodivergent.
- K-12 Reporting Order – focus on assessment support needs, accommodations, and student-centered assessment.
- Neuro-affirmative practices for all staff.

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Technology Proficiency:

- Develop a comprehensive training plan for staff to enhance and ensure confidence in utilizing tools within Microsoft 365. This includes training on “Text to Speech” and “Speech to Text” tools.
- Ensure best efforts to communicate with students, staff, and families through multiple accessible formats.
- Advance staff training, understanding, and proficiency in Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC) devices aimed at communication skill acquisition and development, and coordinated efforts of utilization between home and school for nonspeaking students.

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Human Resources Practices:

- Undertake an audit of current practices, including reviewing job posting templates, application and interview processes to identify barriers to accessibility, ableist/disablist practices, and terminology.
- Ensure inclusive language with explicit commitment to provide accommodations and accessibility within all aspects of the hiring process, including applications, interviews and the onboarding process.
- Provide training on accessibility principles in recruitment, employment, awareness of unconscious biases, and ableism.
- Incorporate information on inclusion, ableism/disablism, and ableist/disablist practices within educational and societal contexts into the North Vancouver School District's orientation program for new staff members.

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Collaboration and Partnerships:

Collaboration is important for the creation of effective educational procedures, programs, and services.

- Continue to collaborate with parents/caregivers, staff, students, and community partners that support persons with disabilities and enrich/enhance neuro-affirmative and anti-ableist support systems for students, families, and staff.
- To eliminate ableism/disablism, ableist/disablist practices, and exclusion, the North Vancouver School District Inclusion Committee, the North Vancouver School District Accessibility Committee, and the Student Intellectual Disability and Autism Sub Committee will identify and collaborate on addressing barriers to accessing equitable education.

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Communicating and Reporting Instances of Ableism

- Proactive and collaborative parent-school relationships positively impact student success and well-being. The purpose of communication between parents/caregivers and school employees is to create, maintain and enhance positive relationships in support of the student's educational plan. (See [Collaborative Communications](#) and [Policy 406](#).)
- Encourage and empower students and their parents/caregivers to utilize the [Expect Respect and a Safe Education \(ERASE\) website](#) as an online reporting tool available to students and their parents/caregivers to seek help or submit reports if they see, hear, or experience instances of ableism.
- When barriers are experienced, any member of the North Vancouver School District community can share feedback through the [Accessibility Feedback Mechanism](#).

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Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Monitor the implementation of these administrative procedures to ensure adherence, consistency, and effectiveness, and to identify and implement potential updates or enhancements.
- The North Vancouver School District Inclusion committee will gather feedback from students and parents/caregivers on services and support provided. Use the feedback to identify areas for enhancement and to improve accessible and equitable educational programming and services for students with disabilities or who are neurodivergent.

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Through the implementation of these administrative procedures, the North Vancouver School District is committed to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment. Actively working to address ableism and disablism ensures a welcoming sense of belonging for students, parents/caregivers, and staff with disabilities or who are neurodivergent.

Additional administrative procedures may be developed in the future to adapt to evolving needs.