

Executive Report to Policy and Priorities Committee
Human Rights@UGDSB Update

To: Policy and Priorities Committee

From: Peter Sovran, Director of Education/CEO

Prepared by: Alicia Ralph, Human Rights, Equity and Accessibility Commissioner
Brent McDonald, Associate Director/COO
Deirdre Pyke, Superintendent of People, Leadership & Culture
Heather Loney, Senior Manager of Communications and Public Relations
Wendy Donaldson, Superintendent of Student Achievement

Date: April 14, 2026

Report Type: MONITORING

Recommendation

1. That the Human Rights@UGDSB Update be received.

Purpose

This report provides an update on Human Rights work at UGDSB and the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan.

Background

Following the Independent Human Rights Review and the development of the Human Rights Strategic Action Plan, UGDSB has entered a critical phase focused on operationalizing human rights commitments. While foundational structures, including Draft Policy 217 and the Human Rights, Equity and Accessibility Office (HREA-O), have been established, the Review identified the need for greater clarity in governance, more consistent processes, and improved transparency in how concerns are reported, addressed, and monitored.

In response, the work has shifted to structured implementation. This includes strengthening governance, formalizing advisory and engagement structures, and finalizing policy supported by clear procedures, defined timelines, and system-wide accountability measures. This phase is grounded in the Board's obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code and informed by the Review findings and additional human

This document is available in alternative formats upon request.

rights frameworks such as the *Dreams Delayed* Report, by the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

Summary of Progress and Next Steps

Progress continues to focus on establishing the conditions necessary for consistent and transparent system implementation. Advisory tables are being established to provide structured, strategic input into policy, workforce conditions, and system priorities.

Policy 217 has advanced into its final refinement phase. This includes integrating Independent Review recommendations through the development of standardized complaint processes, clearly defined response timelines, and a Hate Incident Protocol. The emphasis is on ensuring that the policy is supported by the procedures and tools required for consistent application across all schools and departments.

Transparency remains a central priority. Work is underway to establish accessible, public-facing reporting pathways, including a “Report a Concern” process supported by clear definitions, process maps, and guidance for students, staff, and families. As part of this work, a dedicated Human Rights website is being launched to provide a centralized and accessible platform for the UGDSB community. The website will include reporting tools, clear explanations of processes, Policy 217 and supporting procedures, frequently asked questions, and accessible contact pathways.. This platform is intended to strengthen transparency, reduce ambiguity, and ensure clarity in how concerns are addressed and how accountability is enacted across the system.

Identity-based data continues to be used to monitor patterns of disproportionality and inform targeted interventions, ensuring alignment with system priorities and student achievement outcomes.

This work is progressing through a phased timeline. Spring 2026 is focused on finalizing Policy 217 and advisory structures. The policy will then be presented to the Board for approval, with initial rollout anticipated in Fall 2026, including the launch of reporting pathways, and leadership training. Full system implementation will continue through the 2026–2027 school year, alongside the first annual Human Rights report

Learning

Learning continues to be a cornerstone of this work. Staff will engage in ongoing Human Rights professional learning aligned to their roles and responsibilities, with targeted focus on specific Code grounds and system-level application. Parent and community engagement will be strengthened through existing structures, including the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) and the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), where human rights will be embedded as a standing area of focus. Across operational

programming, human rights principles will continue to be integrated into decision-making, with a focus on learning and application across the system.

Data, Monitoring, and Action

Tools and materials are currently in development to support schools and system leaders in accessing and using identity-based data in a consistent and meaningful way. This includes the ability to monitor patterns across achievement, attendance, discipline, pathways, and complaints, and to identify early indicators of disproportionality.

This approach will support schools in aligning interventions with system priorities, monitoring progress over time, and embedding human rights considerations into student achievement and school improvement planning. It will also support structured leadership accountability through regular review cycles, ensuring that data informs decision-making and drives measurable outcomes.

Resourcing

As UGDSB continues to prioritize human rights as fundamental to its strategic planning and operations, resourcing will be aligned accordingly. This includes both structural and material investments through budget planning processes to support implementation, sustainability, and system-wide impact.

Summary

Human Rights @ UGDSB is focused on consistency, transparency, and measurable impact. The structures, processes, and tools currently being developed are designed to ensure that human rights are not experienced as isolated initiatives, but are embedded within governance, decision-making, and everyday practice across the system.

This next phase of work is critical to ensuring that commitments are operationalized in a way that is visible, consistent, and accountable. By aligning policy, governance, learning, and data, UGDSB is establishing the conditions necessary to address systemic barriers, improve student outcomes, and uphold its obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Next steps will include the allocation of resources to support implementation, which will be brought forward to the Board as part of the 2026–2027 annual operating budget process.