

## EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

May 23, 2000

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Dosdall, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: District Brochure and Booklet re: Discrimination and Harassment

ORIGINATOR: Angus McBeath, Department Head School and District Services

RESOURCE

STAFF: Gloria Chalmers, Bob Holt, Faye Parker, Committee Representing CUPE  
Locals 3550, 474 and 784

### INFORMATION

#### **Background**

The district's 1998-2000 collective agreements with our three CUPE Locals each included a letter of intent creating a committee that would prepare a district communication to staff "regarding rights and responsibilities relating to discrimination and harassment and avenues of redress." The committee, with twelve members representing CUPE Locals 3550, 474 and 784, as well as district administration, was facilitated by Gloria Chalmers. Appendix I contains a list of the committee members.

The purpose of this report is to share with trustees the brochure and booklet on discrimination and harassment (Attachments 1 and 2) that have been produced as a result of the committee's work.

#### **Process**

The committee met over the seven months from December 1998 through June 1999. Its final report provided recommended text for two proposed district communication vehicles: a brochure and a more extensive information booklet. The committee also recommended that the district's current board policy and administrative regulation related to discrimination and harassment be reviewed, and provided a number of suggestions in that regard.

Over the current school year, a thorough review has been done of the brochure and the booklet drafted by the committee. A number of possible revisions were identified, and the administration has held three additional meetings with the committee to arrive at a consensus on documents that will be acceptable to the three Locals and the district administration. The Edmonton Public Teachers Local of the ATA has also been given the opportunity to review the materials.

The communications materials incorporate one fairly significant change to the district's current approach. The documents indicate that, in Edmonton Public Schools, individuals have the right to an environment free of "intimidation, abusive treatment, and other forms of

harassment.” Currently, board policy ACA.BP (Appendix II) only references discrimination and sexual harassment. Our administrative regulation ACA.AR (Appendix III) does refer to harassment in the more general sense. The communication materials, then, are consistent with the existing policy and regulation, although they do extend a step beyond the current policy statement.

The rationale for including in the brochure and booklet an explicit statement that harassment in the form of intimidation, abusive behaviour and abuse of authority is not acceptable in Edmonton Public Schools is:

- We do not tolerate such behaviour among our students
- We do not condone abuse and intimidation between and among employees, or between employees and students.
- Many public sector employers are taking the initiative to protect employees against all forms of discrimination and harassment, and are conducting inservice and education campaigns in this regard.

The administration plans to review the board policy and administrative regulation during the course of the next school year.

#### **Next Steps**

The administration will work with the CUPE Locals to develop a distribution and implementation plan, including some joint inservicing for staff. The brochure and booklet will be made available to all schools and decision units prior to the end of the current school year.

FP:fp

APPENDIX I – Committee Membership: Discrimination and Harassment Project

APPENDIX II – Board Policy ACA.BP

APPENDIX III – Administrative Regulation ACA.AR

ATTACHMENT 1 – Brochure on Discrimination and Harassment

ATTACHMENT 2 – Booklet on Discrimination and Harassment

**COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP  
DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT PROJECT**

**Local 3550 – Support Staff**

Tina Jardine  
Ian Crichton  
Renee LaFrance

**Local 784 – Maintenance Staff**

Claude Blais  
Jay Bunker

**Local 474 – Custodial Staff**

Felix De Los Santos  
Kathleen Kohlman  
Jo-Ann Kolmes  
Mario Pailamilla

**District Administration**

Karen Bardy  
Marion de Man  
Edgar Schmidt

**Facilitator**

Gloria Chalmers