

# **GORDON SCHOOL**

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR MULTICULTURAL PRACTICE**

### **CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT**

#### **How do I create an inclusive classroom environment?**

1. I ensure an equitable classroom in which all students have voice, are empowered, and are valued.
2. I organize my classroom so that the physical landscape includes images, materials and resources that reflect a wide range of diverse people and perspectives.
3. I create a safe and comfortable classroom climate in which biased remarks are addressed and discussed and where students are encouraged to share and examine their perspectives, values, and beliefs.
4. I believe all students can experience academic success in classrooms that help them build positive identities as learners.
5. I provide a classroom environment where all interactions are mutually respectful and characterized by the willingness to acknowledge differences and gain knowledge through the sharing of different perspectives.

### **INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**

#### **How do my instructional strategies assist me in teaching multiculturally?**

1. I develop and use a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking and problem solving.
2. I teach each lesson using the students' experiences and prior knowledge to allow them to be a part of the knowledge construction process.
3. I determine the success of my instructional strategies by noting if each student has participated and if a range of viewpoints has been considered.
4. I use a variety of assessment strategies to allow students to demonstrate an understanding of content and mastery of skills.
5. I initiate and facilitate discussions with children about topics related to social justice and diversity.
6. I engage students in analysis of key concepts and facts through activities and questions that consider multiple perspectives within and across subject matters.

### COMMUNICATION

#### **How do I enhance my communication skills to include all members of the community?**

1. I am sensitive to both verbal and non-verbal communication when working with families and colleagues.
2. I value both listening and speaking as integral parts of relational dialogue in my interactions with families and colleagues.
3. I initiate and sustain connections with all families in my classroom and I provide equitable access to information.

### CURRICULUM

#### **How do I approach basic skills, content integration, and knowledge construction multiculturally?**

1. I recognize that each child's mastery of all basic skills in a multicultural curriculum is an essential requirement for his or her success in later life, and my practice reflects the responsibility to fulfill this requirement.
2. I use creativity and imagination to develop a curriculum that is about a world wider than the one in my classroom.
3. I address biases, stereotypes, inaccuracies, and marginalization in curricular content.
4. I encourage students to compare, critique, evaluate, and use their own experiences as bases for understanding and action.

### RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

#### **How do I exhibit nurture and caring in my multicultural classroom?**

1. I know my students' individual strengths and challenges, and provide opportunities for each child to be successful in an environment of high expectations for all.
2. I understand how race, gender, socioeconomic status, and sexual identity are powerful factors that shape my students' identities and therefore impact their educational experience.
3. I build relationships with my students based on trust and respect and enable my students to build similar relationships amongst themselves.
4. I attend to the social, emotional, and psychological health of all students to support and strengthen academic skill development.

5. I actively seek connection with each of the families in my classroom to ensure the success of each student.

### **MATERIALS AND RESOURCES**

#### **How do I gather effective and appropriate multicultural materials and resources?**

1. I seek information about useful texts and materials from fellow faculty members and collaborate with colleagues to enhance curriculum resources.
2. I educate myself on an ongoing basis about what materials and resources can enhance my curriculum and seek input from colleagues that may provide guidance.
3. I review and evaluate materials and resources to be certain that I don't reinforce stereotypes and social norms.
4. I educate myself about people who are leading practitioners, thinkers, and publishers of resources that relate to my content area and multicultural practice.
5. I employ a variety of developmentally appropriate media to stimulate student discussion and inquiry.
6. I choose materials and resources that expose students to a variety of perspectives that may or may not be part of their daily life experience.

### **PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH**

#### **How do I engage in personal professional development to enhance my multicultural teaching practice?**

1. I value a professional environment in which active risk taking, diverse perspectives, and honest feedback support a multicultural practice.
2. I aim to be fully effective in my teaching by revitalizing my learning, adjusting and growing my practice, and revising my curriculum content to exhibit commitment to furthering multicultural teaching.
3. I solicit my division director's support in setting annual professional development goals creating multicultural curricula, and advancing the teaching practice that supports it.
4. I recognize that my teaching practices either reinforce student biases and misinformation or can overturn their biases with new information and the embracing of multiple perspectives.
5. I understand that, in order to increase the learning opportunities for all students, I must be knowledgeable about the social and cultural contexts of teaching and learning.

6. I identify assumptions and biases that affect my ability to provide all students with an equal opportunity to attain academic and social success.
7. I actively seek opportunities to expand and deepen my personal knowledge about multicultural issues in consultation with the Director of Diversity.
8. I understand that I will not always have all the answers, and that part of being a teacher requires that I seek out others for further discussion.
9. I expect to have open and honest conversations regarding the expectations and implementation of the Guiding Principles for Multicultural Practice.