

November 2021

**Executive Summary of
Justice, Equity,
Diversity, and
Inclusion Gap Analysis
Report**

New Westminster Schools



presented by



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Overview

New Westminster Schools – SD40 (referred to as "the District" from here on) engaged Bakau Consulting to complete a review and analysis in 2021. As a consultancy service that approaches community and client well-being through an intersectional feminist lens, Bakau looked to identify areas for growth and opportunity within the District in line with their development of the Anti-Racism Plan. In order to continue serving their community, the District agreed to ask themselves difficult questions on how to effectively and authentically incorporate anti-oppressive and intersectional values.

Methodology

The team at Bakau Consulting gathered and analyzed both qualitative and quantitative data from;

- 2 Digital surveys with:
 - 1219 respondents for the external survey.
 - 422 students ranging from elementary to high school.
 - 797 parents and community members.
 - 248 respondents for the internal survey.
 - 219 teaching and support staff.
- 7 focus groups from different stakeholders including parents, staff, students, and the district leadership team.
- 18 internal documents including the website and Facebook page.

Your Consultants

Bakau Consulting (formerly Cicely Blain Consulting) is a full-service equity, inclusion and anti-racism consulting company based in Canada, with a global, intersectional approach. We believe in collective liberation, meaningful social change and the power of equity.



Our work takes place on the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations. This report was written in part on the unceded territories of Tk'emlúpsə te Secwepémc and the territories of the Haudenosaunee people near O:se Kenhionhata:tie.

New Westminster Schools recognizes and acknowledges the Qayqayt First Nation, as well as all Coast Salish peoples, on whose traditional and unceded territories they live, learn, play and do their work.

Limitations

Every survey has limitations that can impact the results; this is important to keep in mind so as not to take data at face value, rather use it for further investigation.

- Typically, lower-paid or marginalized workers have less time, capacity or access to complete workplace surveys.
- We could not include anecdotes in order to maintain confidentiality.
- Limitations on the technology and moderation of groups mean that they were only provided and run in English. This may have been a barrier for some around language. Cultural concerns may have also reduced participation for some students, staff, or families.

EXPECT SPACIAL LIMITATIONS

This report is a micro-representation of nuances within the District. Be advised it is a reference point for your unlimited capacity for growth. The majority of the gap analysis is constructive criticism, rather than an outline of current strengths (which of course do exist). If we were to include both, you would be here all day! All examples (typically presented in I.E. format) are "including, but not limited to." In order to create a succinct, accessible report, we include some examples, when in reality there could be infinite others (maybe even ones that come to mind as you read this)! We invite you to bring creativity and critical thinking to this work, always. As well, please ensure you click the underlined words, as they have important articles linked.

IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING DATA

Chart and table percentages may not add exactly to 100% due to rounding.

Key terminology

CALL-INS

Calling in, coined by Ngoc Loan Tran in 2013, is an alternative to calling out. Rather than calling out problematic, harmful, or microaggressive behaviour, calling in compassionately invites the antagonist to examine their behaviour and its impacts, reflect, and learn from it. Calling in is an act of community care; demanding accountability and respect for all.

It draws someone's attention to their behaviour and contextualizes it so that they understand the harm and are welcomed into shared knowledge. By learning about why their behaviour was harmful, they are able to assess how to do better and mediate the harm caused. Call-ins provide an opportunity and space to dive in deeper. It works when there is true collaboration and a desire to learn and understand. It is based on clarifying intentions and moving past assumptions.

Calling in also expends emotional labour, which marginalized folks are expected to practice at disproportionate rates.

Calling out someone may be necessary to set a boundary and to mitigate further harm from being caused. Call-outs can feel personal and may not be the most effective, as it may instill fear and tension if that is our default way to name harmful behaviour. Call-outs happen in the moment to let someone know that their words/actions are not acceptable.

A SAFE(R) SPACE

At Bakau Consulting, we like to think of ourselves as realists. This means that we want to continually seek to mitigate the risk of oppression and that of harm in our world. Moreover, this means that we cannot fully create a truly "safe" space, because of the varying degrees of lived experience that people bring into a conversation and a room.

By agreeing that there cannot be a fully safe space, we can foster discussion and collaboration on topics that often cause us discomfort, but can meet people where they are in order to support marginalized groups in every way we can.



EQUITY

Where equality means each individual or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities, equity recognizes that each person has **different** circumstances, and allocates the resources and opportunities needed to help make our experiences more equal. An equitable lens is one of the most powerful tools in this work, as it helps us acknowledge we are **not** all the same, and we do not all have the same access as everyone around us. Historically and currently, some folks have been centred – treated as neutral or default – while others have been treated as different, exceptional, or 'other.' Equity tells us to:


- Notice how different folks are treated in society
- Think critically about the effects
- Strategize how to make things more equal based on current circumstances.

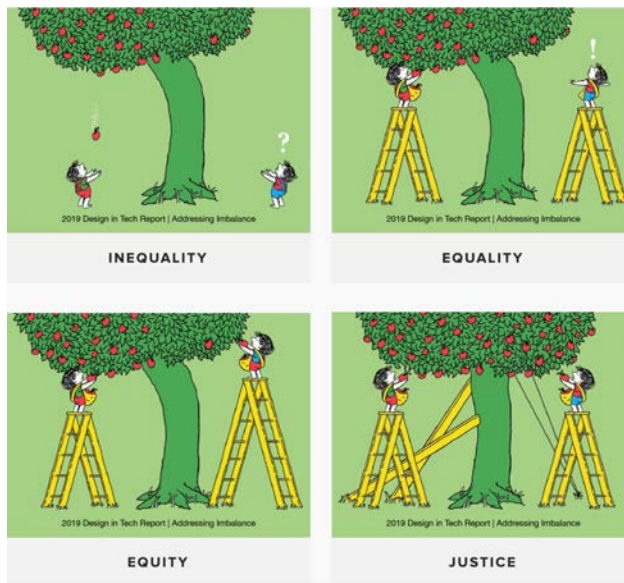
Golden rule: Treat others how **you** want to be treated.

Platinum rule: Treat others how **they** want to be treated.

This is a principle of equity, because it acknowledges that our diverse experiences impact how we wish to be treated in this world; and that how I wish to be treated may differ from how **you** wish to be treated. Our analysis works with equity and the platinum rule.

 Equity: needs based, grounded in current realities

 Justice: hopeful, innovative; existence of structures that proactively ensure equality for all



INTERSECTIONALITY

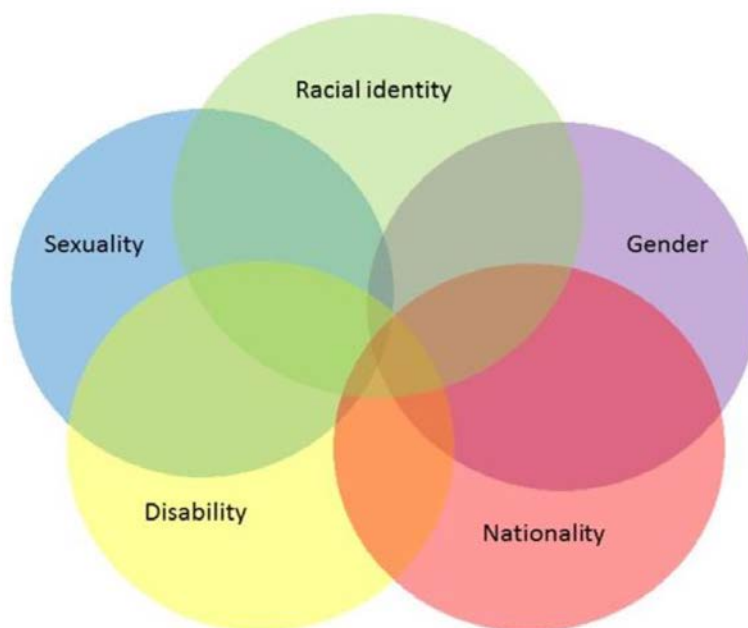
Intersectionality, coined in 1989 by Kimberlé Crenshaw, is the concept that all oppression is linked. We have multiple identities such as gender, race, sexuality, ability, religion, and more. These identities overlap and interact with one another, making our experiences unique and complex.

Intersectionality helps us see that we must consider everything and anything that marginalizes people. It pushes us to challenge our assumptions by seeing further detail and complexity. Shared lived experiences are a real thing, and other identities at play will lead to diversity **within** those shared experiences.

See the example identities on the image below (many more can be added too). Picture how where certain ones overlap, folks at the intersection of 2 identities would have distinct experiences from those who just held 1 of those identities.

Someone existing at the intersection of gender and race, for instance an Asian woman, will experience not only the affects of both racism and sexism, but also may experience harm specific to Asian women; unique from other non-Asian racialized folks. Her experience is unique from others within categories of gender and race, and unique even from the section where the categories overlap. Identities are complex and unique!

Intersectionality reminds us there is often more detail that must be considered in the ways we see the world. As you read this report, remember to use an intersectional lens; understanding how oppressions are complex and interconnected.



MARGINALIZED & CENTRED

Many standards exist in society, even unspoken ones! Those who are centred in society are treated as neutral, or the default. Because unconscious bias is a first instinct that attempts to save us time (so we're not constantly pondering what to wear, what to eat, etc.), if we think of someone **first**, our brains may prevent us from spending the time thinking of others, which leaves them out (exclusion).



Identities that have been **centred** in North America include white, heterosexual, cisgender (same gender as assigned at birth), middle to upper class, non-disabled, Christian or areligious, and more.

Identities that have been **marginalized** include ones that fall outside of those listed above. These experiences are treated as different, or 'diverse,' and often aren't the first thought. A detriment of not being a 'first thought' is that in a rapidly moving society, you may not be thought of at all. Your needs, desires and magic may be missed altogether.

Equity means widening the centre to accommodate everyone; ensuring they are treated as important and sacred. It also means **prioritizing** folks who have been pushed to the margins (marginalized). Folks who have historically been centred are not in danger of losing their central spot; room is just being made for others.

When you welcome in a new roommate, you clean the house so they feel excited and comfortable entering the space. Once they enter, it doesn't mean **you** have to leave! Rather, maybe it means they help you keep the place neat and beautiful, share their strengths like their eye for interior design, and celebrate **your** strengths like your fragrant cooking and excellent taste in music. The space evolves based on a collective presence, which makes it better and better. It is equitable in that you've done what was needed to make your roommate feel just as central in the space as you do, even if you were there first, and now both of you enjoy the results.

When we centre a group, it doesn't mean we marginalize everyone else. It means we continue to place various folks at the centre based on needs and experiences.

People's needs fluctuate, so who is centred depends on context. Keep in mind, centring someone does not mean **hierarchizing** them or treating them as though they are better. Let's look at an example, I.E. Pride:

Pride is about fighting for LGBTQIA2S+ rights, honouring oppressive histories, and celebrating queerness in its many forms. On Pride, we specifically centre LGBTQIA2S+ folks because that is who we're talking about, commemorating, grieving, and celebrating. We don't centre cis straight folks because cis straight folks do not have the **same** histories and struggles that stem from their gender/sexuality as LGBTQIA2S+ folks do, and we're allowed to centre different things at different times (still thinking intersectionally – see [this article](#)).

This does not mean cis straight rights are compromised; it just means we focus on topics at hand, acknowledging their past and ongoing marginalization.

Centring is an exercise in equity and intersectionality. We will recommend centring throughout the report.

UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

Unconscious bias is interesting because it's such a universal thing that we all experience and have. It means that we lean more toward or more against something or someone, which usually looks like different groups, topics, or even foods. Bias causes us to forget the nuance in certain conversations, or to sidestep it by accident. It means that we jump to decisions that might be good for us, but neutral or even bad for other folks. Unconscious bias is often referred to as implicit bias, but just because something is implicit doesn't mean that it's harmless at all.

PART ONE

Students



Demographics

Diversity tells us 'who's in the room.' It allows us to see who is present and represented; it's a good indicator of the reach an organization has and its commitment to a wide variety of communities. However, diversity does not tell us how those people feel, whether they are included or their levels of trust in the organization.

WHO RESPONDED?

We heard from 422 students across elementary, middle, and high schools. The majority of students who participated in this survey were high school students, less than 5% of respondents were elementary students.

ETHNICITY

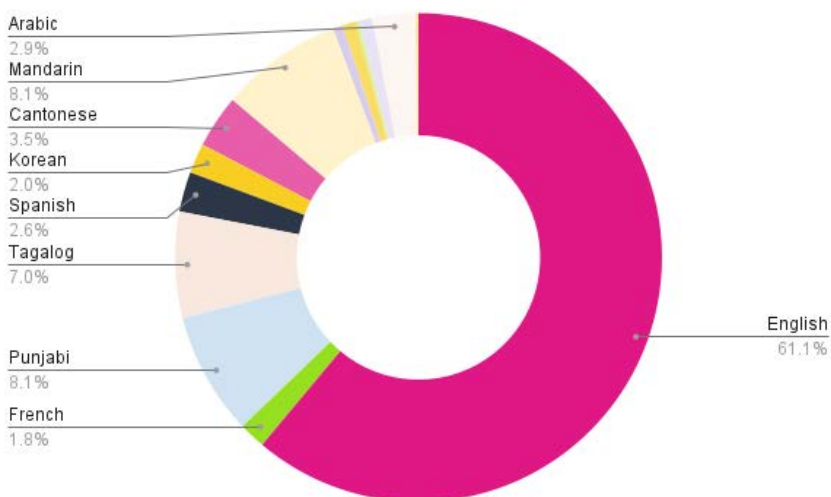
We heard from students that a majority of them identify as white (31.3%), with the next largest contingent identifying as East Asian (22.5%), and South Asian (10.4%). It's important to note other groups of folks as well, specifically those who identify as mixed race (8.8%), Black (7.0%), or Indigenous (2.2%).

GENDER IDENTITY AND SEXUALITY

A majority of respondents identified as either cis-gender men or women (95.7%), with cis-gender women making up just over a third of the total sample (34.7%). It is interesting to note that a very small amount of respondents identified as non-binary (2.5%), or transgender (0.7%). Similarly, a majority of respondents identify as straight or heterosexual (71.8%), while the next largest contingent identifies as bisexual (12.9%).

LANGUAGES SPOKEN

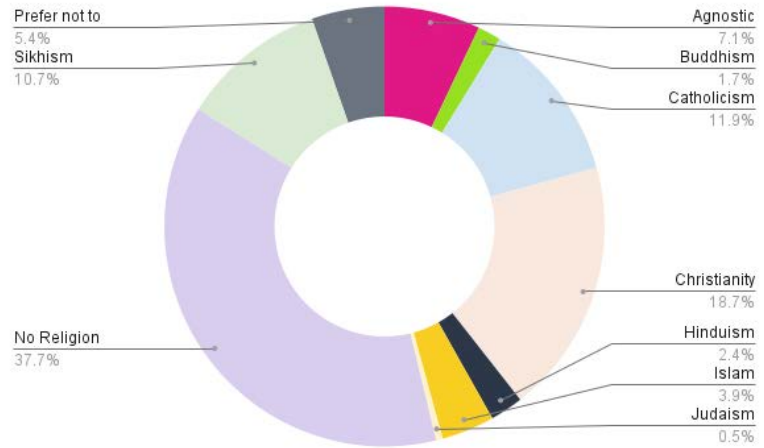
Respondents highlighted that while most overwhelming speak English as a first language (61.1%), there's a wide variety of languages spoken in the District.



This includes .2% Bengali, .2% German, .9% Hindi, .7% Persian, .9% Vietnamese speakers who are not labelled on the above graph.

RELIGION

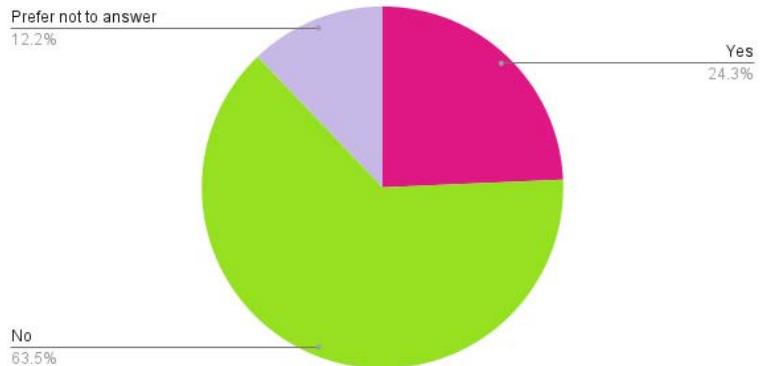
Just over a third of respondents identified as having no religion, and the next largest contingents were those who identified as Christian (18.7%), Catholic (11.9%), and Sikh (10.7%).



MENTAL ILLNESS

When asked about mental illness, the majority of students highlighted that they do not have a formally diagnosed or undiagnosed mental illness, noting that over a tenth of students highlighted that they prefer not to answer.

Do you live with any mental illness (formally diagnosed or undiagnosed)?



MENTAL AND/OR PHYSICAL DISABILITY

When asked if they live with any physical or mental disabilities, the majority of respondents highlighted that they do not live with physical or mental disabilities (85.8%), a small portion of folks highlighted that they do live with them, either physical (1%) or mental (13.2%).

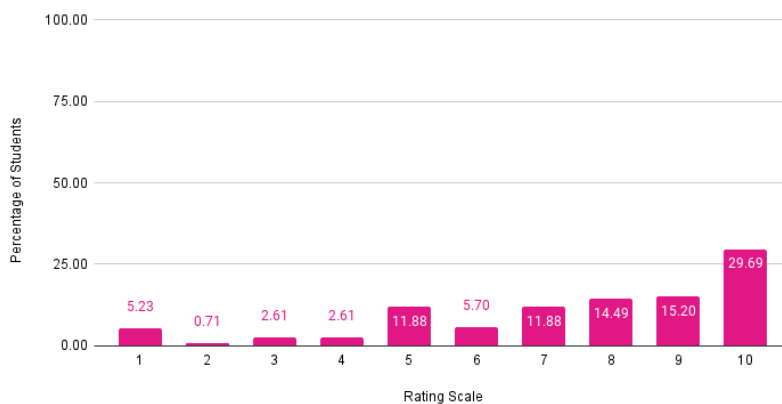
NEURODIVERGENCE

An overwhelming majority of respondents highlighted that they do not identify as neurodivergent (78.3%), whereas just over a tenth of respondents do identify as neurodivergent (13.1%), and another portion of respondents chose not to answer (8.6%).

Ratings and Value Statements

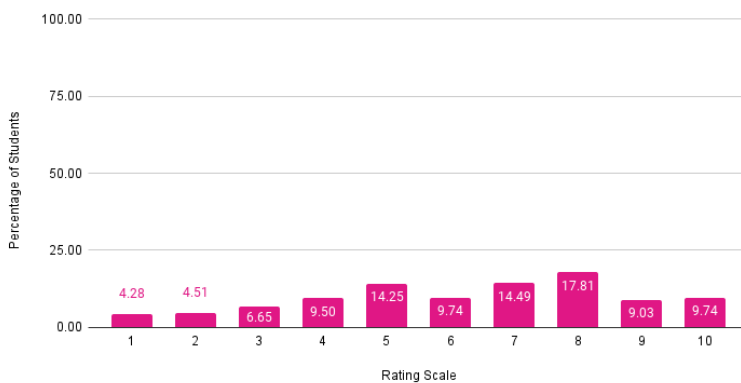
In order to better understand what students think of New Westminster Schools, we asked them for their perspectives on several topics related to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) work (1 denotes the lowest score while 10 is the highest).

How important is it to you that New Westminster Schools engages in the development of a Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Framework?



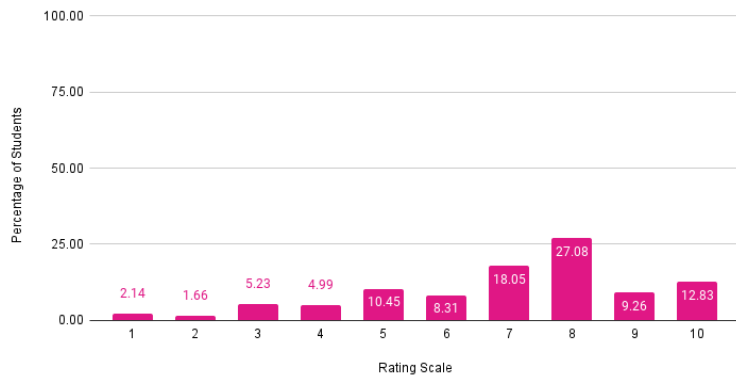
The majority of students regard Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) work as important. The highest votes for the importance of JEDI work fall into the 10, 9, and 8 ratings (meaning they are of great importance to students).

How would you rate New Westminster Schools when it comes to addressing discrimination?



Students were asked to rate their schools on their ability to address discrimination, and the most voted ratings were in the 8, 7, and 5 categories. This indicates there is an overall feeling amongst students that their schools are addressing discrimination.

How would you rate New Westminster Schools when it comes to supporting diversity and inclusion?

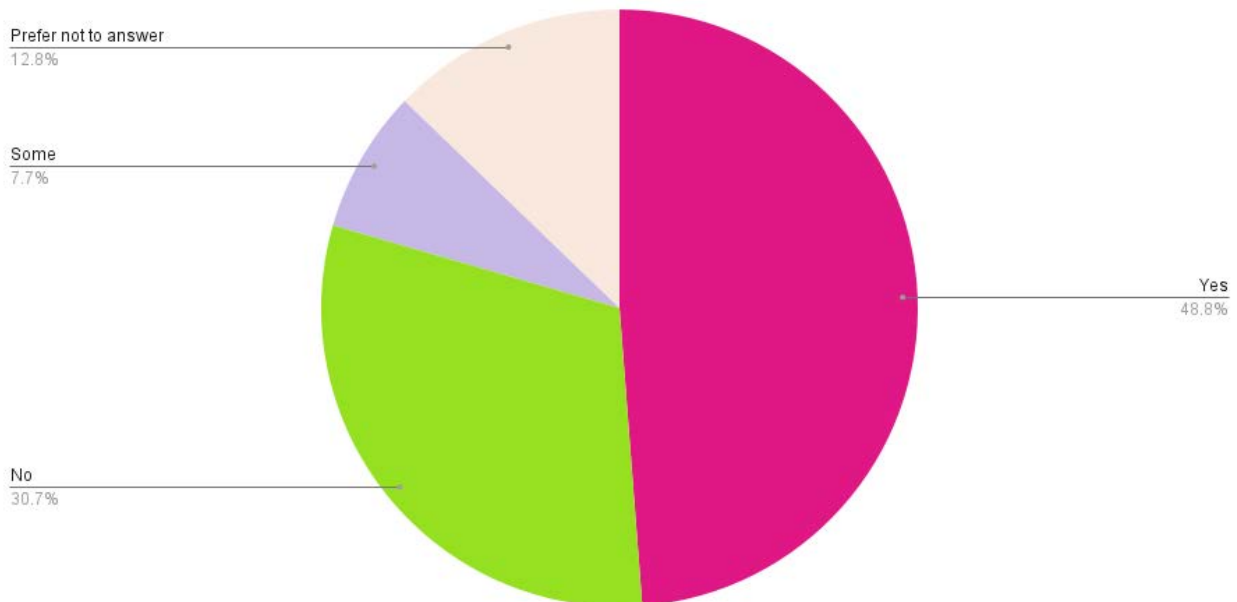


When students were asked to rate New Westminster Schools on supporting diversity and inclusion, the majority of students responded with a rating of 8.

+75% of students rated New Westminster schools a 6 or above on supporting equity and inclusion.

NEW WESTMINSTER CORE VALUES EXAMINED

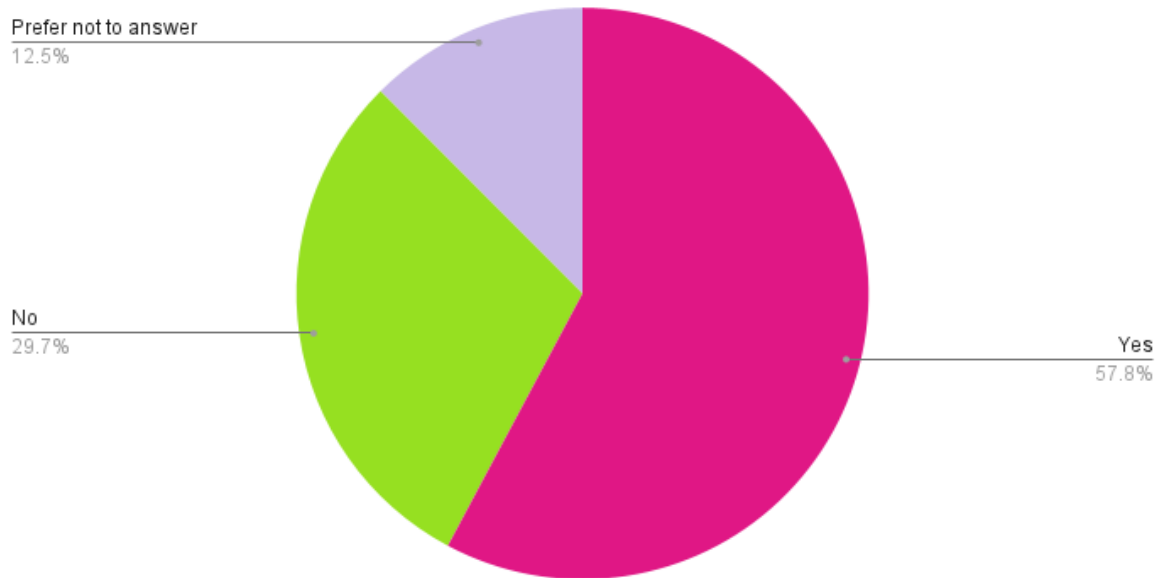
New Westminster Schools' core values are collaboration, engagement, equity, inclusion, innovation, and integrity. Do you see these values reflected in your own experiences with the District and its schools?



This question gauges how students feel about New Westminster values being reflected within the school. While nearly half of students agree that the values of the district are reflected in their schools, close to a third of students do not see the core values reflected or only see some of the core values reflected. A few students specified which values they experienced and which they did not experience within the district.

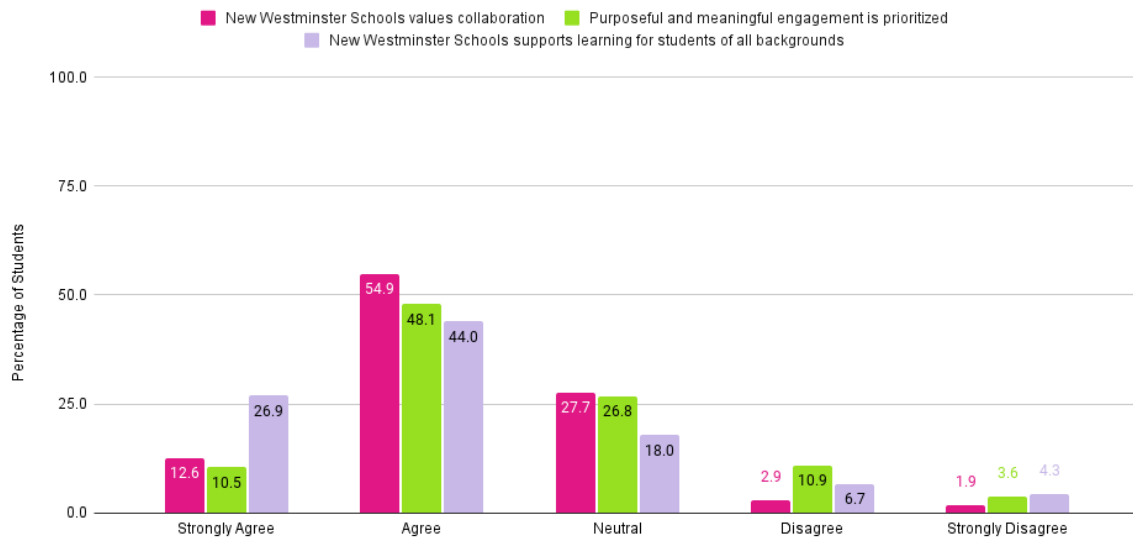
NEW WESTMINSTER ATMOSPHERE

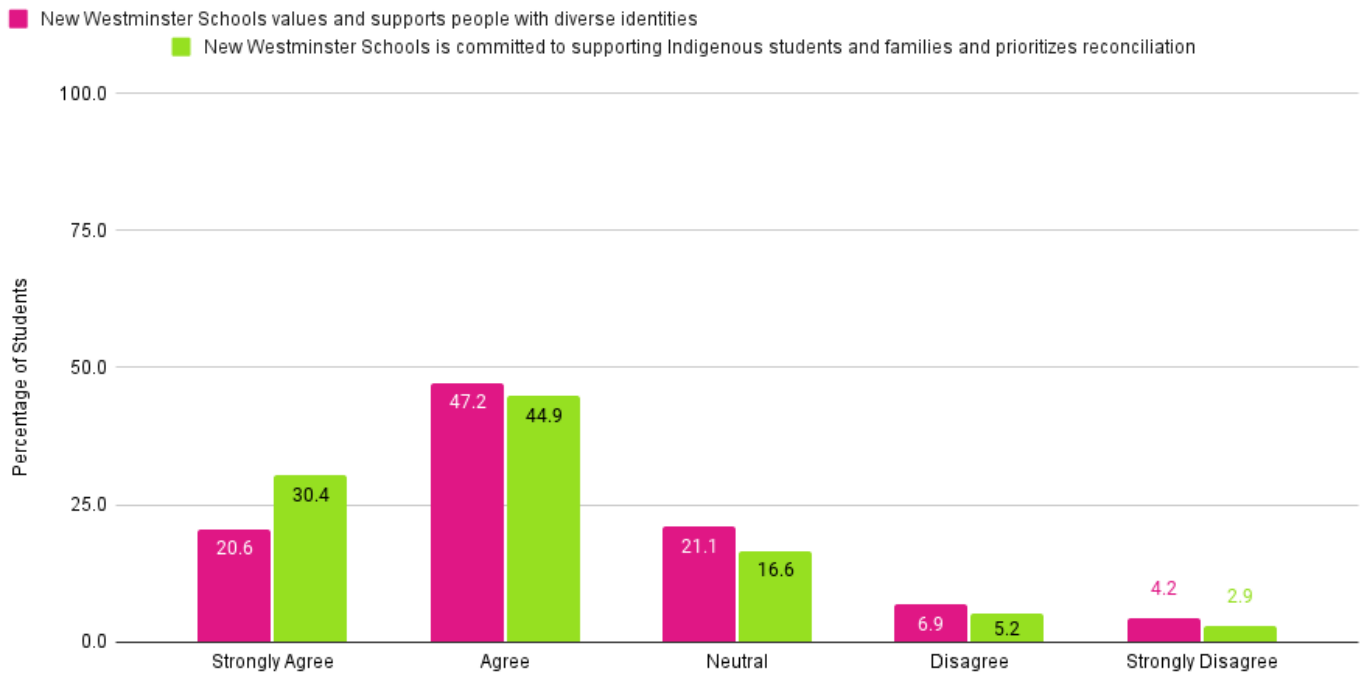
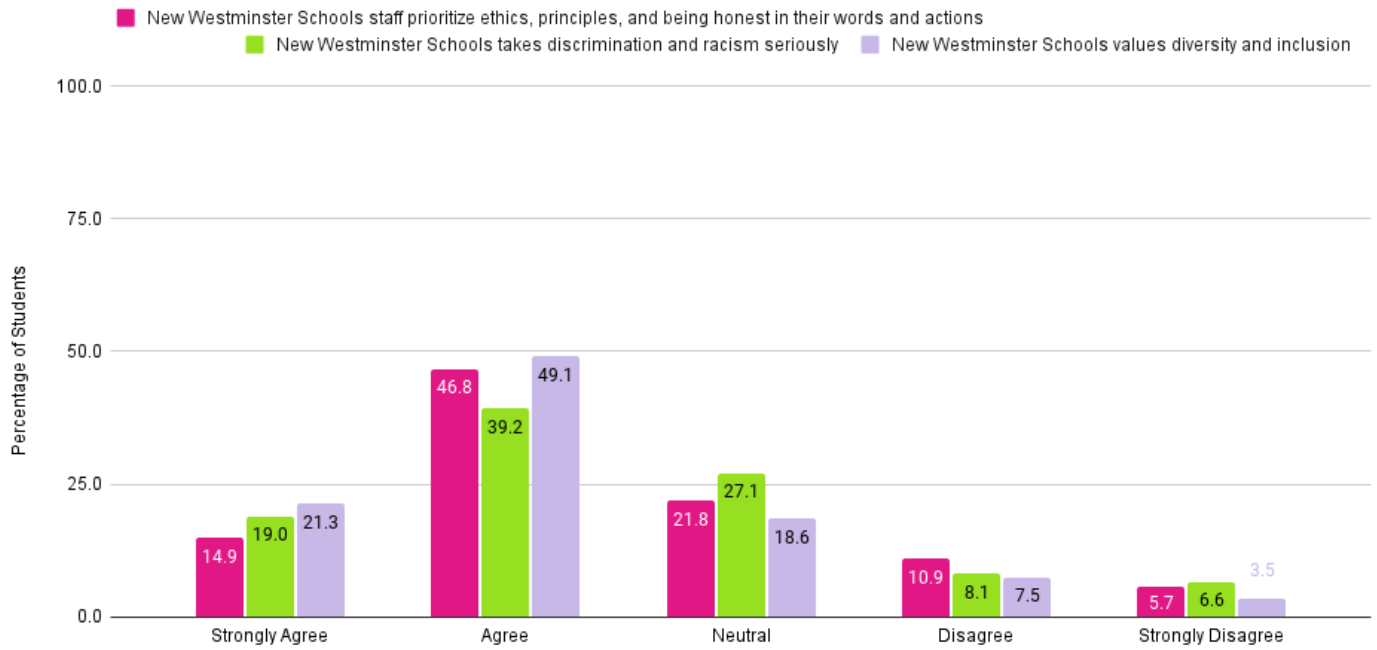
When you enter the physical spaces of New Westminster Schools (schools, offices, etc), does it feel open and welcoming to you?



Inclusion and Belonging

Feeling included and like you belong in a space looks different for everyone, but we asked students at New Westminster Schools what that might be for them and got some varying responses.





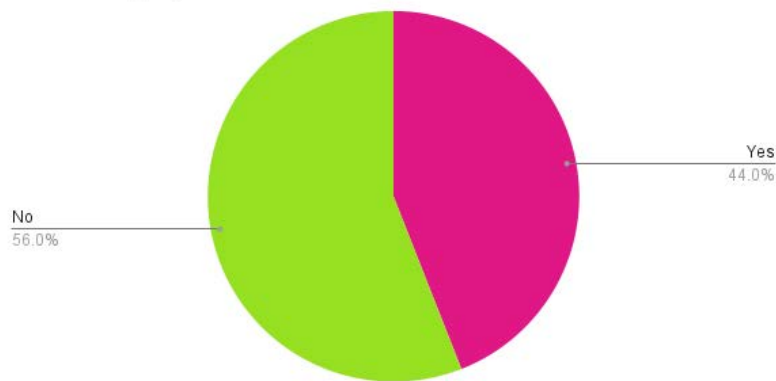
Incidents and Reporting

Conflict is inevitable in school settings, but making sure that students of all backgrounds feel safe in bringing up incidents to school employees is important. In this part of the report, we're looking to determine who feels or doesn't feel comfortable reporting incidents of harm to district staff.

COMFORT IN REPORTING

When asked if they feel comfortable bringing up incidents of violence or discrimination to a school district employee, students were nearly split evenly between **yes (44.0%)** and **no (56%)**. Over three-quarters of students have never brought up an incident with a school district employee. When asked whether they have ever brought up an incident to a school district employee, 75.1% answered no and 24.9% answered yes.

Would you feel comfortable bringing up an incident to a school district employee?



The below graph describes the experiences of the quarter of students who did report an incident to staff.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
It was clear to me how to report the incident	16.4	44.1	21.7	13.8	3.9
Reporting was simple and easy to do	14.6	42.4	25.2	10.6	7.3
I felt confident my issue would be addressed	9.1	44.5	22.0	14.0	10.4
The issue was addressed in a timely manner	10.9	39.7	26.3	12.8	10.3
The issue was addressed with sensitivity and compassion	12.4	40.7	30.3	8.3	8.3
I felt supported during the process	10.6	37.1	31.8	11.9	8.6
The resolution was acceptable to me	9.8	42.7	21.3	14.0	12.2

PART TWO

Staff



Demographics

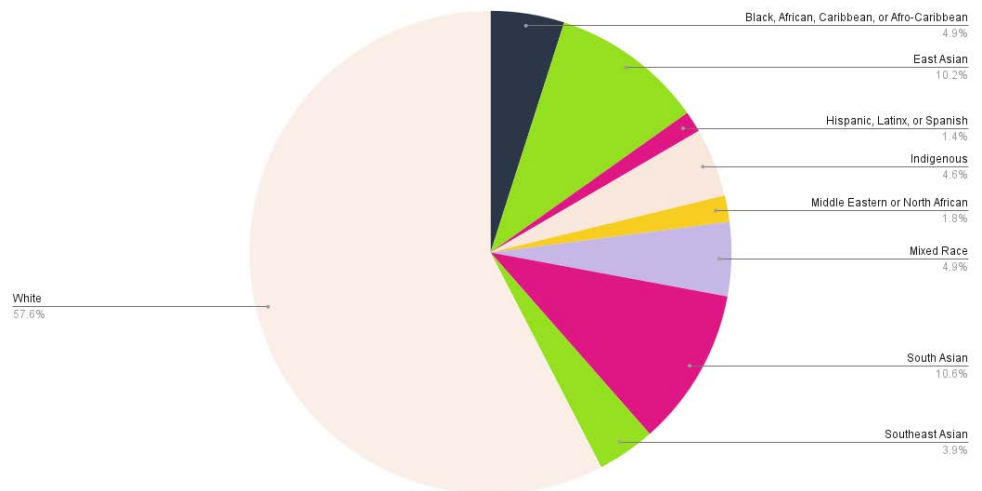
Staff are essential to the operation of the District, and we want to better understand who they are so that we can strategize to better support them.

HOW LONG HAVE THEY WORKED HERE?

The majority of respondents noted that they've only been at the school district for one year to five years (48.4%), with the next largest contingent being at the district for over twenty years (20.6%). Others noted that they've been at the district for about six to ten years (16.3%), and while others relatively new to the district, being there for only less than a year (14.5%).

RACE AND ETHNICITY

The majority of respondents identify as white (57.6%), with the next largest contingents being those who identify as East Asian (10.2%), and South Asian (10.6%).



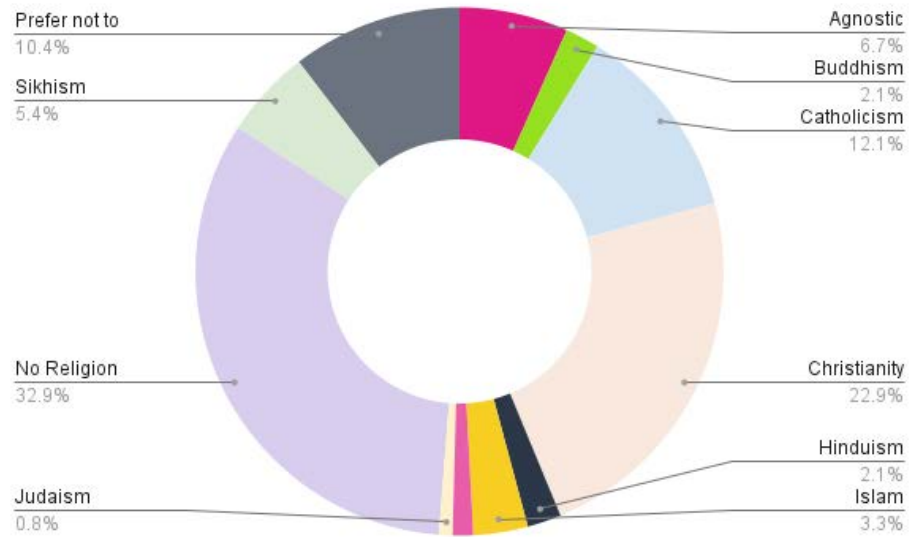
GENDER IDENTITY AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION

The overwhelming majority of respondents identified as cisgender (98%), with a small percentage of individuals identifying as genderqueer (ex. non-binary, transgender, etc). The overwhelming majority of respondents also identified as straight (83.1%), with the next largest contingent identifying as bisexual (4.2%).

Respondents also identified as a range from asexual, demisexual, gay, pansexual, or two-spirit (12.2%).

RELIGION

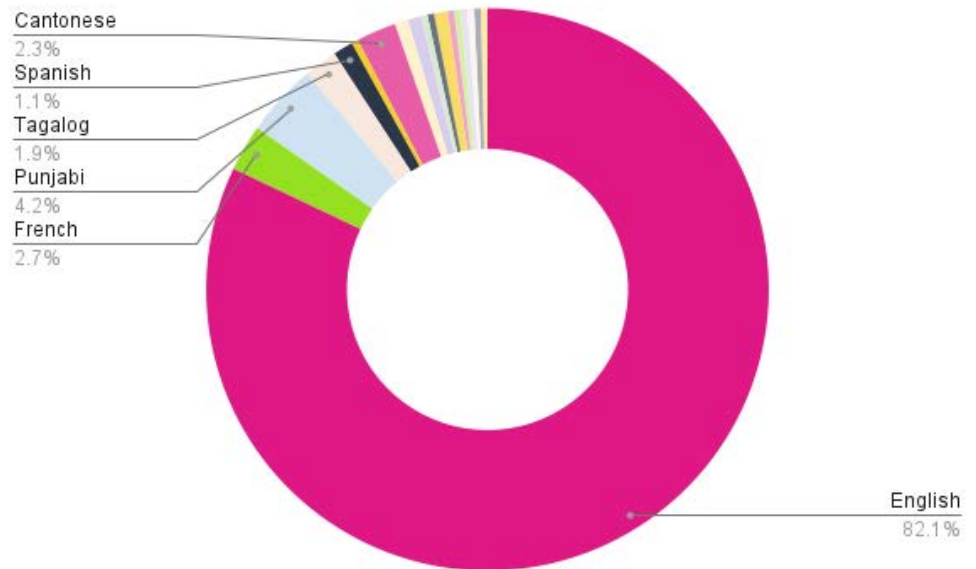
We heard that respondents identified from a variety of different faiths, making an extremely diverse group.



*This includes 1.3% Indigenous spirituality that was not labelled on the above graph.

LANGUAGE

Respondents noted that the majority of them spoke English as a first language (82.1%), while the others noted that they speak a wide variety of languages.



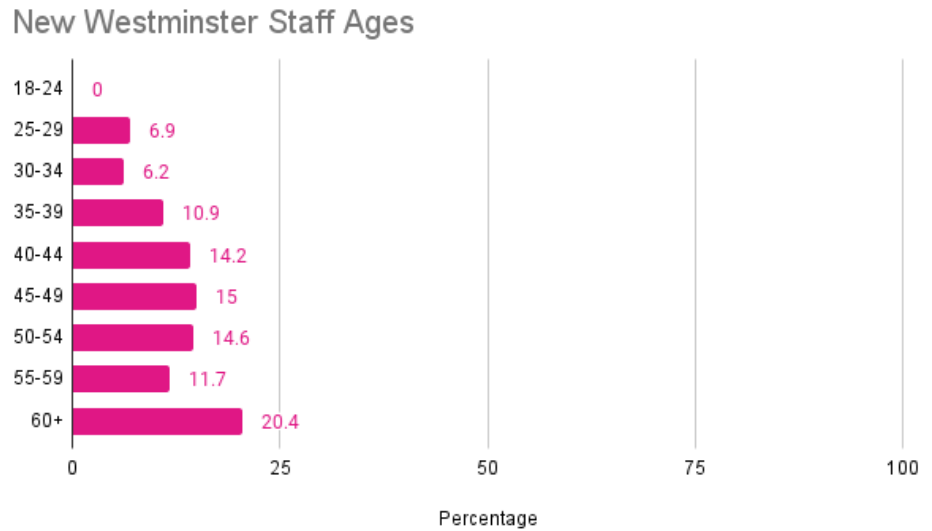
*This includes 0.4% Flemish, 0.4% German, 0.4% Gujarati, 0.4% Hindi, 0.4% Kachi, 0.4% Korean, 0.4% Kurdish, 0.8% Mandarin, 0.8% Persian, 0.4% Thai, 0.8% Ukrainian, 0.4% Urdu not labelled on the above graph.

FORMAL EDUCATION

Respondents noted that the majority of them have achieved at a minimum of a bachelor's degree (46.3%), while a smaller percentage achieved a master's degree (35.9%).

AGE

Respondents noted that they come from different ages. The largest age cohort is 60+.



DISABILITY

Respondents noted that the majority of them do not have physical or mental disabilities (94.4%), but a very small number of those who responded highlighted they have either a physical or mental disability (3% and 2.6% respectively).

MENTAL ILLNESS

A majority of respondents highlighted that they do not live with a mental illness (78.7%), while a small group do (14.4%), the rest chose not to answer (6.9%).

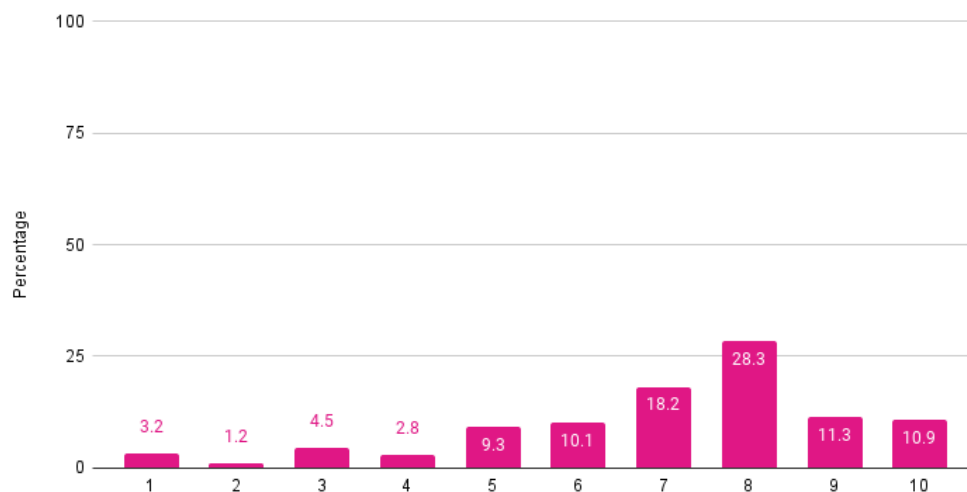
NEURODIVERGENCE

Respondents noted that a large majority of them are not neurodivergent (89.7%), while a small proportion of respondents are (7.1%). We see that this in relation to student data (13.1%) is lower.

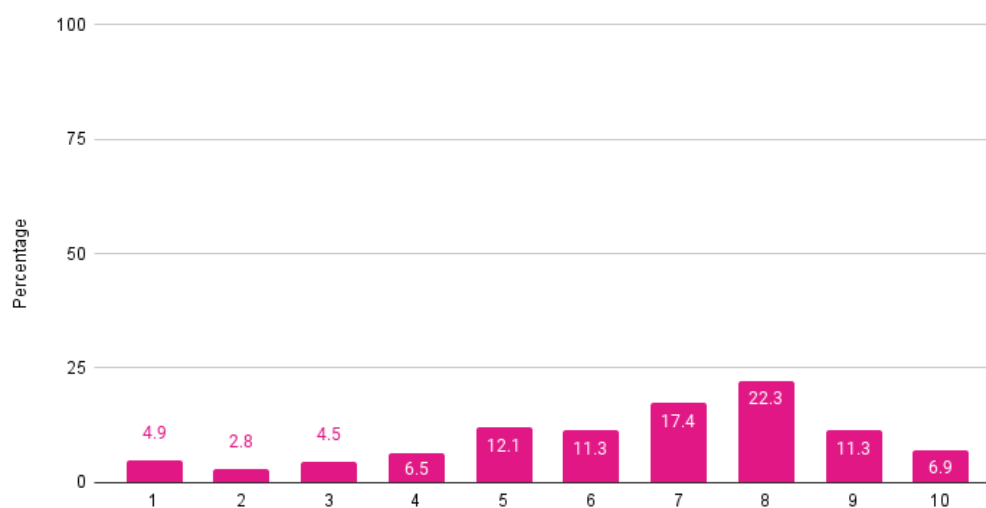
Ratings and Value Statements

In order to better understand what staff think of New Westminster Schools, we asked them for their perspectives on several topics related to JEDI work (1 denotes the lowest score while 10 is the highest).

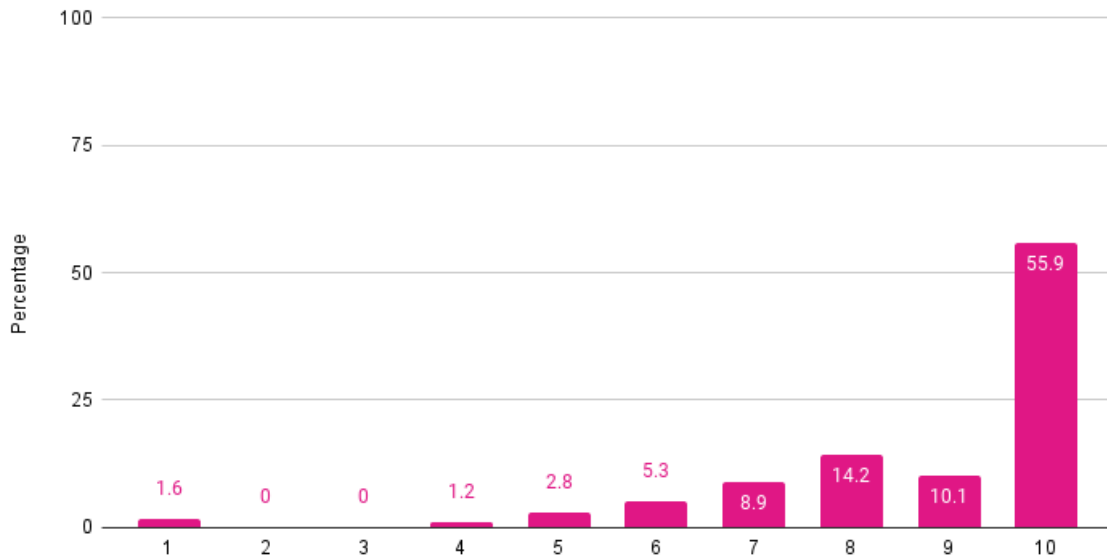
How would you rate New Westminster Schools when it comes to supporting diversity and inclusion?



How would you rate New Westminster Schools when it comes to addressing discrimination?

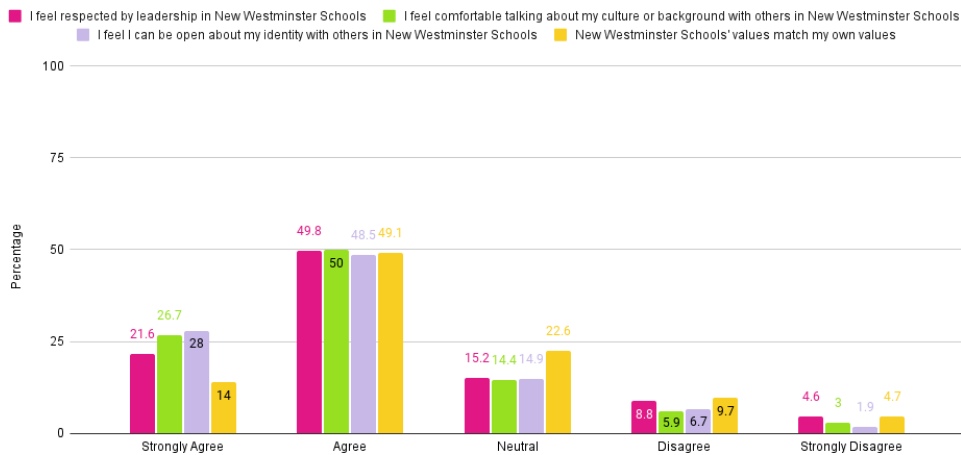


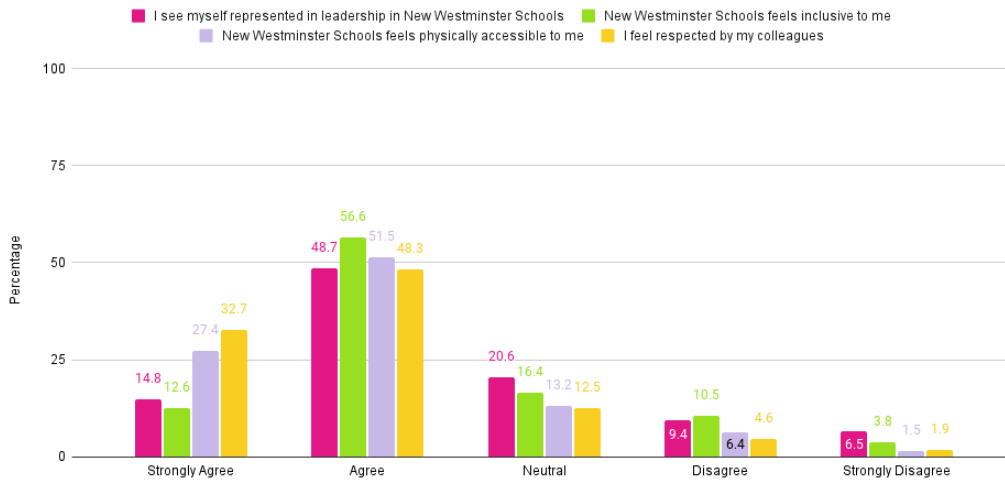
How important is it to you that New Westminster Schools engages in the development of a Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Framework?



Inclusion and Belonging

Feeling included and like you belong in a space looks different for everyone, but we asked staff at New Westminster Schools what that might be for them and got some varying responses.



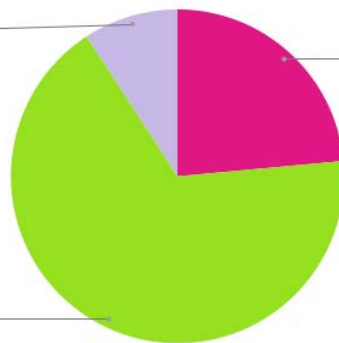


Incidents and Reporting

Conflict is inevitable in school settings, but staff often experience varying levels of conflict from different areas and avenues. From working with students to parents, and working with different administrators, we sought to understand conflict at New Westminster Schools from the perspective of staff.

Have you been a bystander to an incident of racism or discrimination in New Westminster Schools?

Prefer not to answer
9.2%



Yes
23.5%

When asked whether they have reported an incident:

16.7%

answered "Yes"

83.3%

answered "No"

Staff were asked to rate the following statements in regards to their experience of reporting an incident at their school.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I don't know
It was clear to me how to report the incident	12.7	45.5	16.4	18.2	7.3	0
Reporting was simple and easy to do	11.5	44.2	21.2	13.5	9.6	0
I felt confident my issue would be addressed	4.6	49.2	10.8	21.5	13.8	0
The issue was addressed in a timely manner	6.9	48.3	13.8	15.5	12.1	3.4
The issue was addressed with sensitivity and compassion	5.4	48.2	17.9	10.7	14.3	3.6
I felt supported during the process	5.6	44.4	27.8	9.3	13	0
The resolution was acceptable to me	4.9	44.3	18	19.7	11.5	1.6

PART THREE

PARENTS

AND COMMUNITY

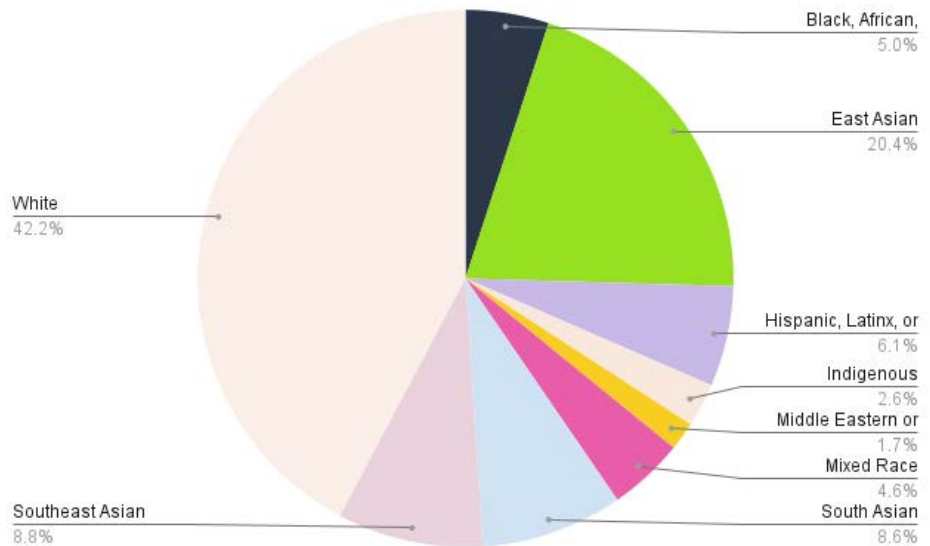


Demographics

Parents, guardians, and community members are often the major source of socialization, support, and encouragement for students. We want to better understand who they are, what their needs are, and how we can show up for them so that we can create meaningful change.

RACE AND ETHNICITY

We heard that a majority of respondents identified as White (42.2%), with the next largest contingents identifying as East Asian (20.4%), then Southeast Asian (8.8%).

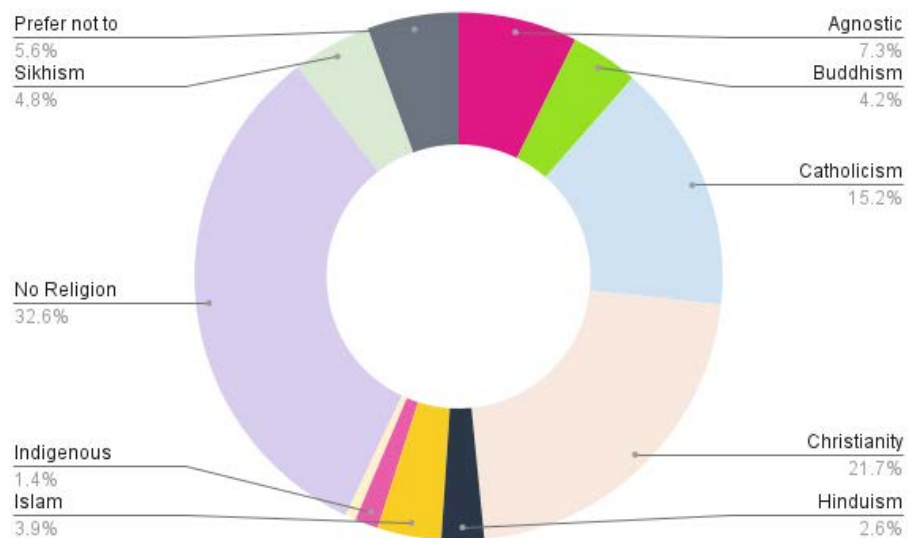


GENDER IDENTITY AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION

We heard that the overwhelming majority of respondents are cisgender men or women (58.6% and 41%), with a small contingent of genderqueer folks. We also heard that the sample is overwhelmingly straight or heterosexual (89.2%), with the rest of the respondents identifying as asexual, bisexual, gay, lesbian, two-spirit, or queer.

RELIGION

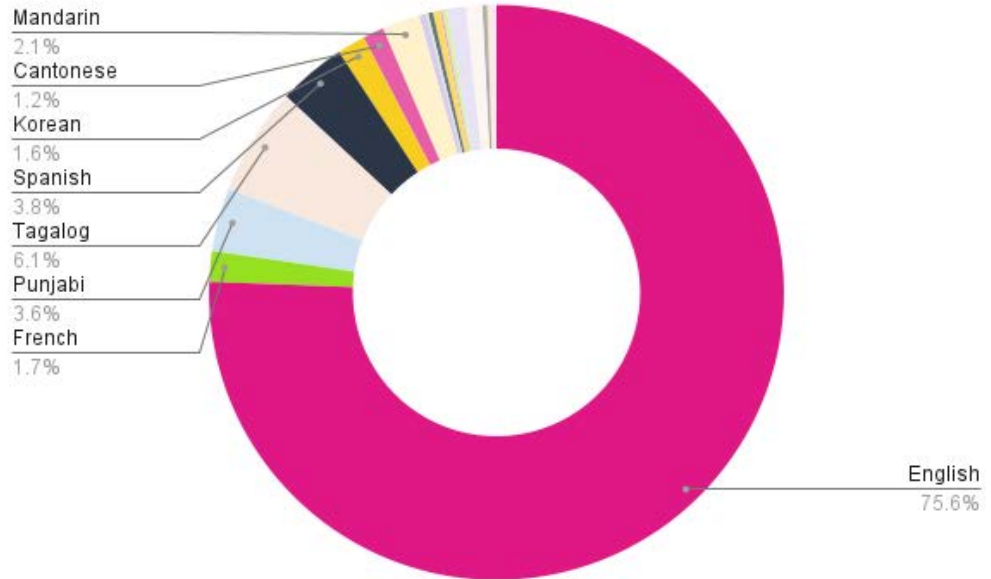
We heard that respondents have a very diverse group of faiths and beliefs represented.



*This includes 0.5% Judaism not labelled on the above graph.

LANGUAGE

An overwhelming majority of respondents noted that they speak English as their first language (75.6%), with the next largest contingent speaking Tagalog (6.1%), then Spanish (3.8%), then Punjabi (3.6%).



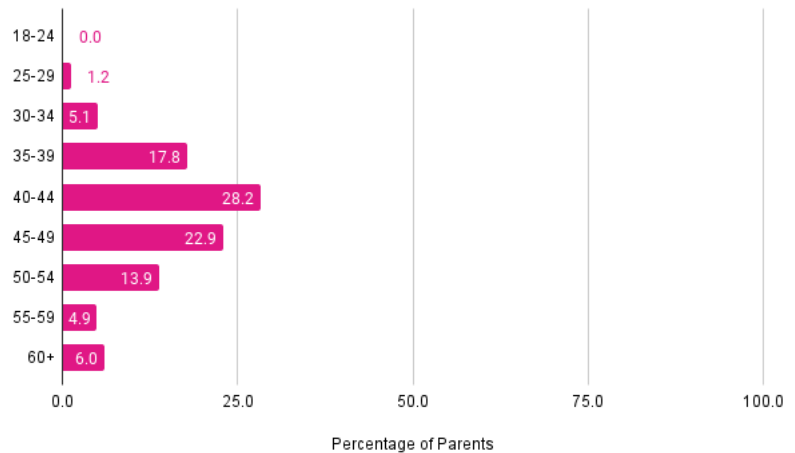
*This includes 0.9% Arabic, 0.1% Afrikaans, 0.1% Bengali, 0.3% German, 0.4% Hebrew, 1.1% Hindi, 0.1% Kurdish, 0.4% Persian, 0.3% Thai, 0.3% Urdu, 0.4% Vietnamese, that is not labelled on the above graph.

FORMAL EDUCATION

The majority of respondents identified that they obtained a Bachelor's degree or higher (75.6%), with some receiving a master's degree (23.3%). Others also noted that they have completed a certificate of some kind (23.6%).

AGE

We found that ages for parents and community members were almost perfectly distributed around the mean. We also saw that some community members were a bit older.



DISABILITY

We heard that an overwhelming majority of respondents do not have a disability (93%), but a small percentage have either a physical or mental disability (7%).

MENTAL ILLNESS

A majority of respondents do not live with mental illness (81.2%), while a small percentage do (14.8%).

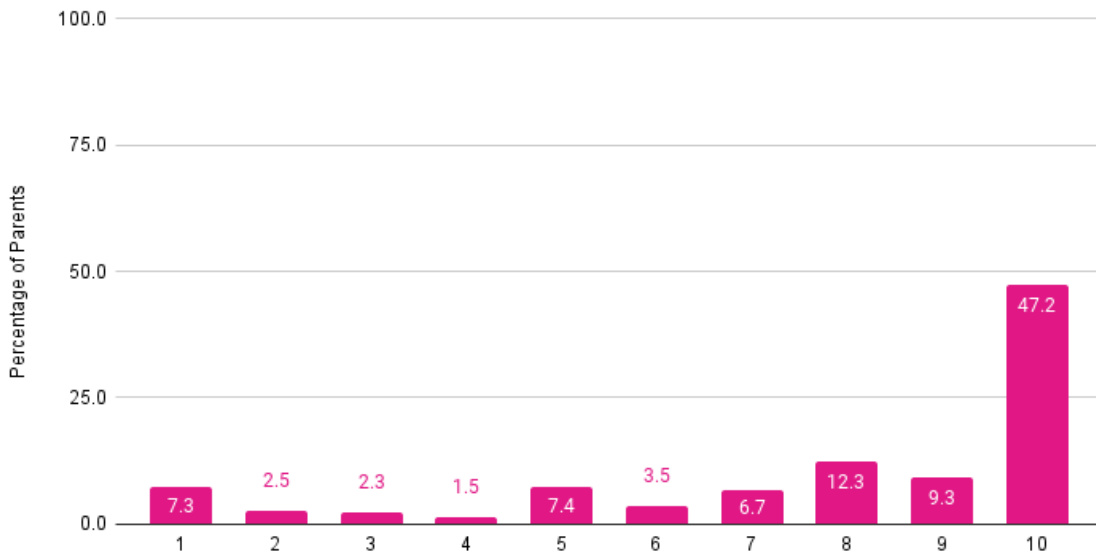
NEURODIVERGENCE

The majority of respondents identified as neurotypical (91.1%), with a small percentage identifying as neurodivergent (6.2%).

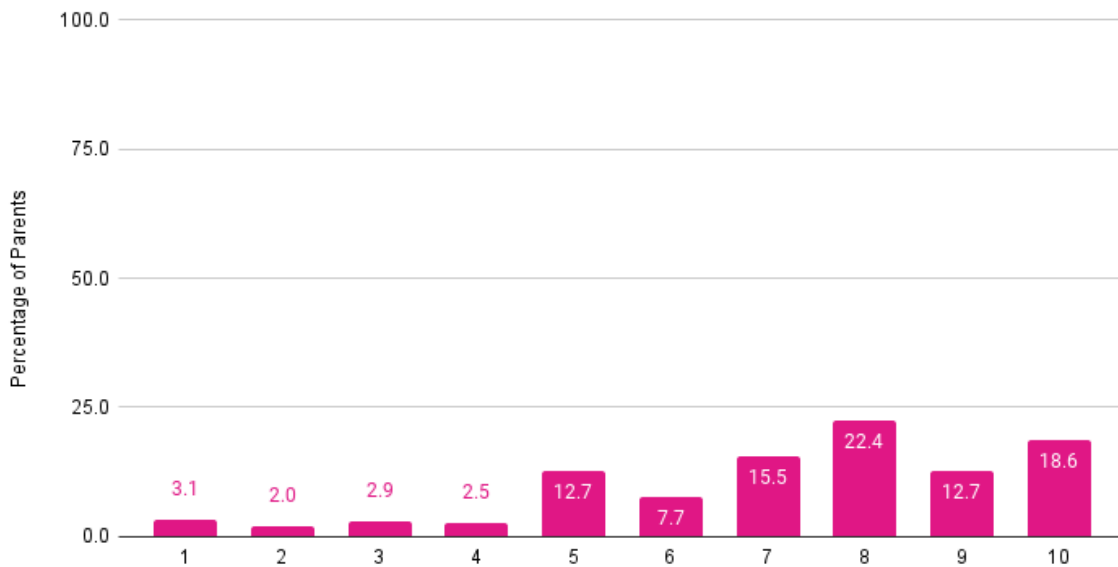
Inclusion and Belonging

Since parents and community members interact with the District in a bit of a different way, we were curious about how they feel about inclusion and belonging (1 denotes the lowest score while 10 is the highest).

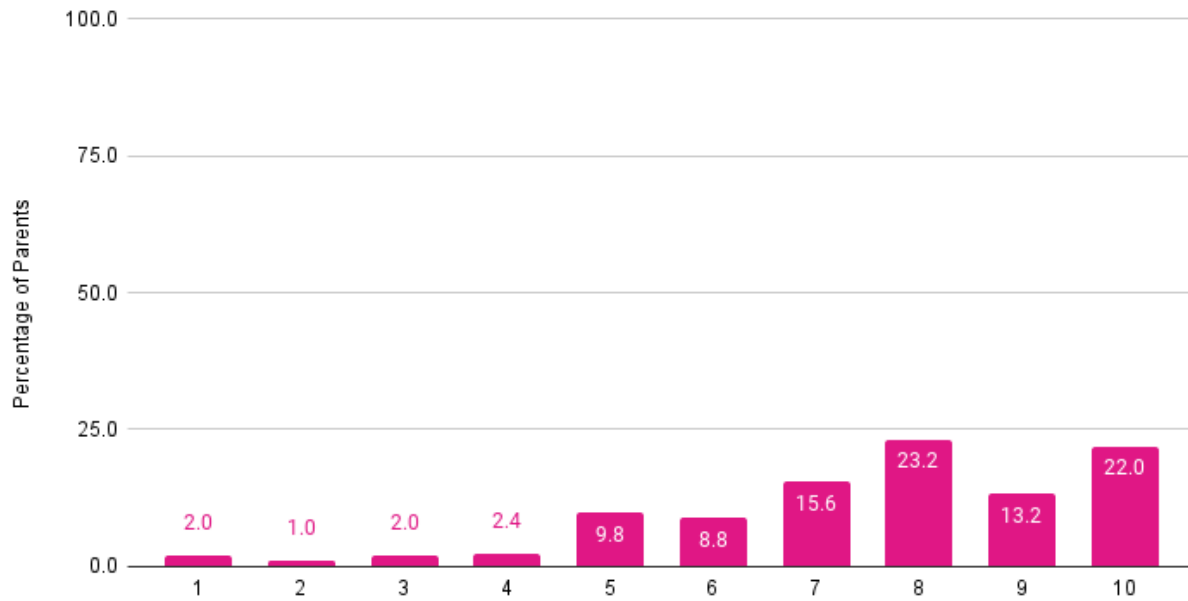
How important is it to you that New Westminster Schools engages in the development of a Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Framework?



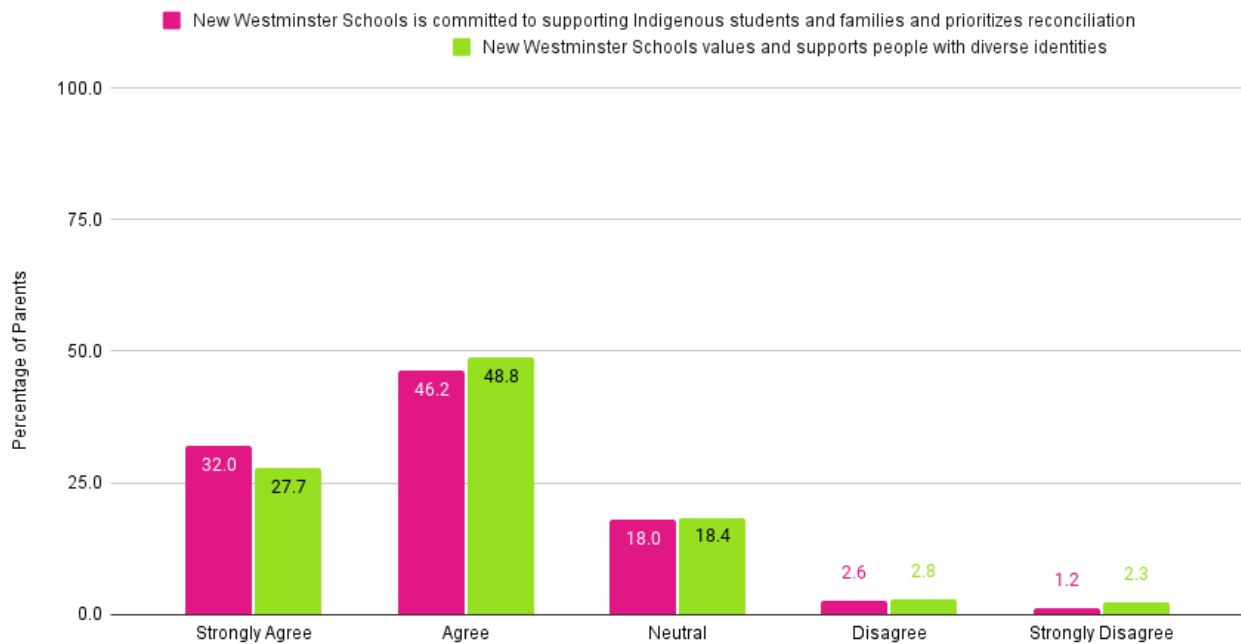
How would you rate New Westminster Schools when it comes to addressing discrimination?

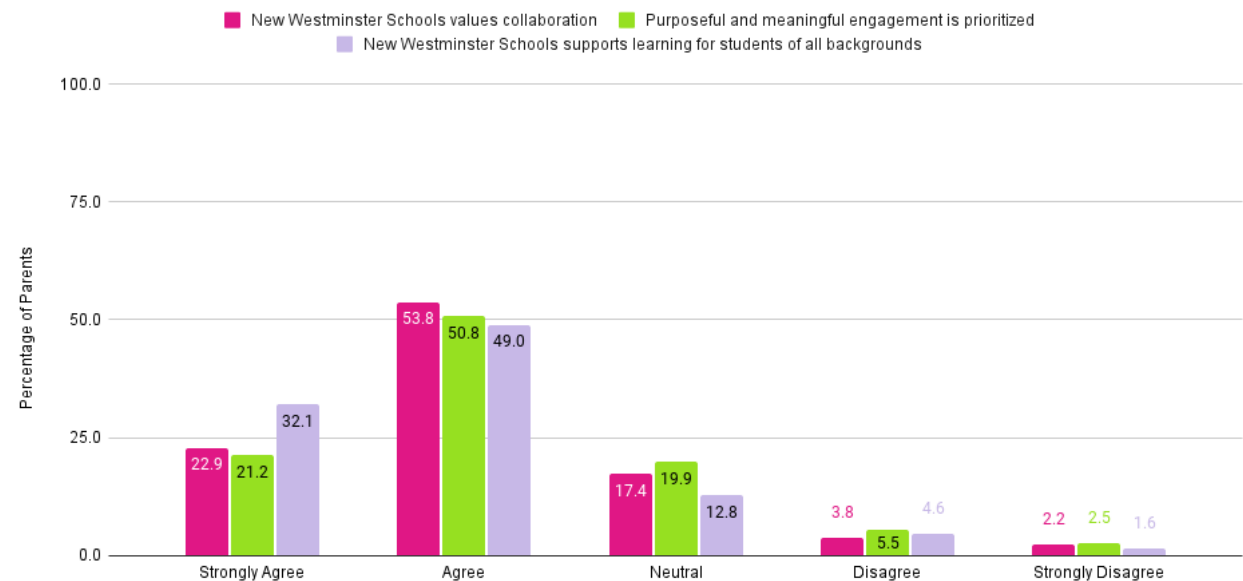
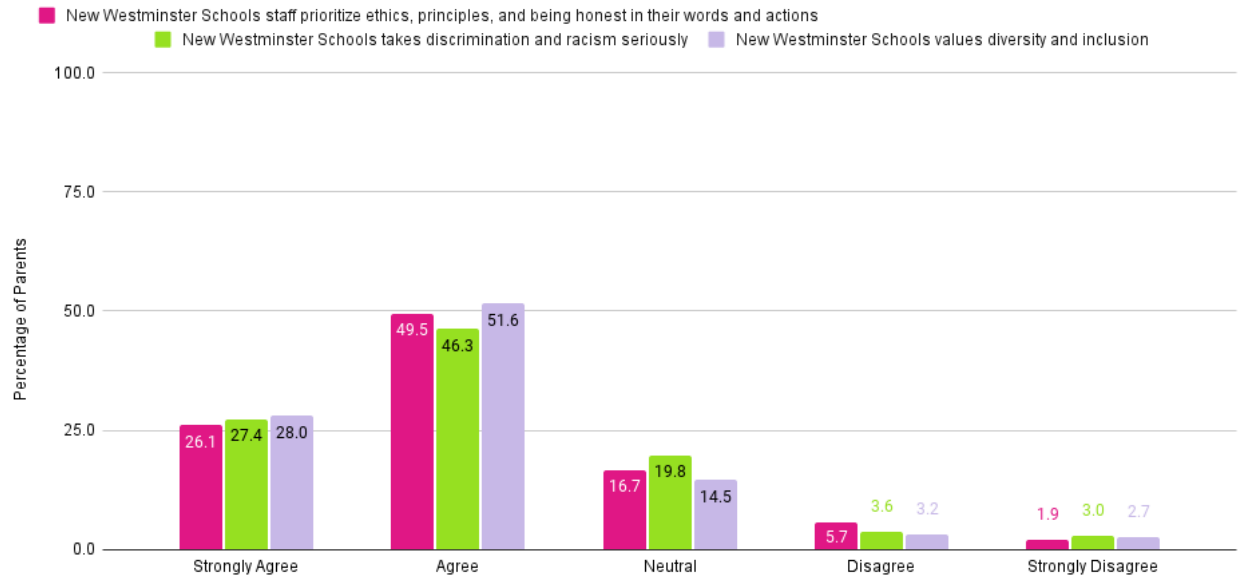


How would you rate New Westminster Schools when it comes to supporting diversity and inclusion?



How diversity and inclusion is supported as well as how claims of discrimination are handled had 15–20% of respondents selecting brackets 8,10, and 7.





Incidents and Reporting

Parents, guardians, or community members are often not the first people who interact with conflict in the District, but are deeply affected by it as well. In this part of the report, we want to better understand how and why this group reports things to the District, and how we can support them.

COMFORT IN REPORTING

The majority of respondents reported that they would feel comfortable bringing up an incident to a school employee (82.1%), while 17.9% highlighted they would not. Additionally, the majority of respondents have never brought up an incident to a school district employee (73.1%). However, we want to better understand the minority of folks who did report incidents in an effort to make changes.

The following table shows the responses in percentages.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
It was clear to me how to report the incident	13.9	47.6	18.4	15	5.1
Reporting was simple and easy to do	13.7	50.5	17.9	13.7	4.2
I felt confident my issue would be addressed	12.6	45.6	17.2	19.1	5.5
The issue was addressed in a timely manner	14.2	48.8	15.3	14.6	7.1
The issue was addressed with sensitivity and compassion	13.7	46.4	18.9	14.4	6.5
I felt supported during the process	13.6	44.7	17.9	16.6	7.3
The resolution was acceptable to me	12.1	46	15.2	16.5	10.2

PART FIVE

Focus Groups Analysis



Overview

As part of the qualitative work done for School District 40, Bakau Consulting was contracted to complete seven focus groups with several stakeholder groups within the school district environment. These focus groups centred around the topics of engagement with the school district, staff and students, exploring the relationships within and the power dynamics there, and providing background knowledge on these experiences through the use of personal interviews. As these focus groups represent an even smaller sample, the purpose of them is to identify additional trends within the quantitative data through this storytelling. Overarching themes are presented as discussed in a conversation of different topics so that greater cohesion can be determined across the groups and provide a means of tackling changes. Recommendations for this section are included toward the end of the analysis summary.

The relevant stakeholder groups were identified by Bakau Consulting and the District and contained up to twelve participants each. For the student focus group, a member of district staff was available specifically for emotional support.

- Two student focus groups
- Two staff focus groups
- Two parent and community member focus groups
- One district leadership group

OVERARCHING TRENDS

Conversations centred around specific but major topics concerning the experiences of staff, students and district leadership. For the purposes of clarity multiple overarching trends contained discussions of other topics, and will contain some overlap from different coding (ex. Topics concerning representation coming up in discussions about advancing inclusion within the school district and some challenges that are faced).

- Proposals about immediate steps forward that the District can take forward in order to support justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Conversations concerning the difficulty in discussing issues such as anti-racism, social justice, or discrimination.
- Discussions about issues concerning representation at the District

ADVANCING INCLUSION AT SD 40

Respondents noted across all focus groups that advancing inclusion is a stated and confirmed priority of district leadership, which is confirmed by healthy participation of the surveys disseminated by Bakau. Some of the common statements included that for some folks, there's a clear cut desire to prioritize anti-racism at the district level, but difficulty is found when it comes to working at lower levels. Some respondents mentioned that while some options or changes are clear cut and can be taken on immediately, support can come from facilitated discussions and learning sessions concerning anti-racism to educate staff members on these issues.

DIFFICULTY IN DISCUSSING SOCIAL JUSTICE

Respondents also noted across focus groups that negotiating discussions and topics concerning social justice is difficult and they often face multiple competing crises at the same time when it comes to what takes priority. In the staff focus groups, funding was often cited as an issue when it comes to what causes these discussions and actions to move slower, with one person stating that all groups want more funding but it's near impossible to prioritize social justice meaningfully with multiple events occurring.

REPRESENTATION OF MARGINALIZED GROUPS AT THE DISTRICT

When asked if respondents felt represented in the school district, the focus groups contained varying responses. For many in the district leadership team, they felt that they were often represented and that for parents, their children were represented in the school, whereas staff members felt that they could identify people who looked similar to them. However, when staff in the larger staff focus groups were asked if they felt represented or not, this changed. Staff often noted that it is often older, white, and cisgender for those in the District and that they don't feel represented and do not "see themselves" despite being in specific student-facing or staff-facing roles. This is due to a number of factors, specifically surrounding those of race, sexuality, and gender. Others noted that because of their overlapping intersections, it's hard to find others who share similar backgrounds to them, but overall feel supported by those in their immediate surroundings.

PART SIX

Recommendations



Recommendations

In this section, we aim to provide a deeper analysis of the District through recommendations based on the data from students, District staff including teachers and parents. Recommendations provided should be understood to be introductions and a non-exhaustive list. It should be treated as a starting point for further learning and as a pathway to reaching your JEDI goals. Many of the recommendations listed in some sections will also be relevant in other sections. I.E something listed in race, ethnicity and religion may apply to gender and sexuality. This is due to intersectionality, or the fact that these systems have lots in common so that the recommendations can be useful across the board. We also acknowledge that there is significant amounts of overlap between stakeholder groups as well, so these will be prepared in aggregate.

RACE, ETHNICITY, RELIGION & LANGUAGE

Intentional hiring

- Hire more diverse teachers, staff, and leadership in order to create a more inclusive organization in the long term.

Continued learning for the entire District education community

- Cultural competency and anti-oppression training for all District employees, with a specific focus on those in school-based roles to mitigate harm. Recommend extending this to students and parents.
- The frequent inclusion of social justice topics within district-wide professional development days, such as training or speakers with a focus on applied learning for the classroom.
- Provide routine training on unconscious bias for hiring teams and district leadership to ensure the mitigation of bias and the discussion of nuanced understandings on bias and systemic oppression.

Adequate compensation

- The resourcing of employee committee groups with financial compensation for those in leadership roles on the groups should be considered. Consider also providing financial compensation for those who are part of committees.

Bringing the learning to life

- What is learned through Pro-Ddays and additional training should be shared and discussed with students, parents, and staff members. We know that this can be uncomfortable and difficult to navigate, often not wanting to make a mistake and say the wrong thing. The District should encourage especially those with student-based roles to be transparent in their learning and their knowledge of these topics. Students do not expect educators to be perfect.

Indigenous solidarity and decolonization

- Engage an Indigenous consultancy firm, as well as members of the committee for the Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee in order to enact the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action surrounding Education at the District level.
- Ensure hiring for decision-making positions include Indigenous persons.
- Consider how celebrating Thanksgiving 10 days after the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation can be reconciled. Consult with the Aboriginal Education Committee and Indigenous Education community members on how to navigate decolonizing practices like this.

Performance vs Real Action

- Explore how the District can be more inclusive to those who celebrate other holidays. Allowing folks to celebrate with their families and communities how they see fit is a step towards authentic inclusion and celebration of differences.

- Learning about issues and systems of oppression as well as celebrating days such as the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and Black History month is important. However, we can often busy ourselves with feeling like we are taking real action in doing so. We believe it's not one or the other. You can celebrate Asian Heritage Month and facilitate discussions on how the District can help Asian families, students, and staff feels safe and protected in the wake of anti-Asian hate and attacks.

GENDER IDENTITY & SEXUAL ORIENTATION

As gender and sexuality are often assumed (to be cisgender and heterosexuality), it is even more important that the District makes a continued effort to educate folks on fluid gender identities and sexual orientations and encourage folks not to assume someone's gender or sexuality.

Listening to those with lived experience

- Leaning on teachers who are members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and who are gender diverse to close the gaps in terms of access to information and highlight barriers that may be in place currently within the District.
- Ensure that they are encouraged to bring their full selves to the District. This not only means having SOGI policies but also on a deeper and harder-to-see level of authentic inclusion. Authentic inclusion means voices are heard and lived experience is given the same weight, if not more, to qualifications, it means representation at all levels – especially in leadership roles.

SOGI Policy Updates

- Implement the suggested updates for SOGI related policies and procedures in Part 2 of the report.

Resources

- Ensure that within the curriculum, there is literature written for and by 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals.
 - This includes areas of health and sexual education.

Hiring with Intention

- Establish targeted hiring and recruitment for gender-diverse individuals at the leadership level.
 - Provide mentorship opportunities to existing staff should they decide to remain inside the District.
 - Provide mental health support for staff, especially those from marginalized backgrounds to talk about issues facing them in the classroom.

Supporting survivors of sexualized violence

- Ensure education for upper year high school students and trauma-informed training for teachers can ensure that survivors can be supported and a culture of care created.

DISABILITY, NEURODIVERGENCY & ACCESSIBILITY

Disability is diverse in itself. It encompasses things like physical impairments, chronic pain, temporary disabilities, learning disabilities, and so much more.

Neurodivergence is also connected to disability, which some folks voiced as part of their lived experiences.

Ensuring inclusive language.

- Ensure the District is using person first language.
- We have made suggestions in the policy section regarding specific language updated and phrases that are ableist.

Examine the messaging around disability in the District.

- Determine how language in the district can be more inclusive of those with disabilities, moving beyond just reducing ableist language but encouraging their participation and safety.
- Examine how the District interacts with students that behave "differently". Is the information gathered from a place of compassion and understanding? How are students who learn at a different pace treated? Are staff encouraged and trained in versatile ways to teach?

Educate staff, parents, and students on disability and neurodivergence.

- Invite speakers with lived experience to come and speak to staff, students and parents.
- Provide continuous training on disability, neurodivergency, and accessibility from an intersectional lens.

Access to information.

- Ensure that information is available for those who want to do more research on disability and neurodivergence. If there is not a dedicated representative in each school as there is for SOGI, create a point of contact where students, parents, and teachers can go to consult.
- Encourage discussions in class and create a safe space where students with different learning styles are celebrated and encouraged to explore what works for them.
 - Normalizing having open discussions which will reduce stigma around disability and neurodivergency.

Support student mental health and take it as seriously as physical health.

- Normalizing conversations surrounding mental health that go deeper than simply acknowledging it can foster deeper inclusion with these students.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION, REPORTING, AND SAFE SPACE

Examining the reality of everyone being a "tellable adult".

- Examine how the concept of "tellable adults" (As stated in [AP104](#)) is communicated to students.

Training from a trauma-informed and restorative practice point.

- Provide ongoing training on trauma-informed student care for teachers, District staff and parents. Lack of trust comes often because of accumulated and repeated actions and it doesn't have to be directly related to a past experience in reporting (i.e. If a student has felt dismissed or ignored by a staff member they are not going to feel like they are safe to report to a "tellable adult").
- Since we noted a potential risk of lack of accessibility and trust, past incident reports should be examined. Points to look at include: How was the incident reported? What was the outcome? How was the student supported? Was the outcome communicated to the wider student body?
- Provide active bystander training for students, teachers and staff and ensure that reporting is also taught as part of this.
- Restorative practices of resolving a conflict should be encouraged where possible.
- The District should, in all day-to-day conversations and during difficult situations, aim to use non-violent communication to cultivate trust and promote collaboration.

Ongoing Discussion and training

- Provide ongoing training and discussion on anti-racism, anti-oppression, and unconscious bias. Giving folks the tools and resources to name and deconstruct as well as a space to have these conversations is important in empowering folks to be able to spot and report any incidents that may occur.
- Practice call-ins within the District. Teachers and District staff should model the behaviour they want to see in their students.
- Harassment and discrimination policies should be shared on an annual basis and ensure that everyone knows how to report. Teachers and other District staff should get additional training on how to receive sensitive information from students.

RESISTANCE TO THIS WORK

This work is uncomfortable and where there is discomfort, resistance can arise from that fear and anxiety to change. We feel that rather than avoid it, having awareness of what points of resistance exists within the District is the only way this work is going to be successful at making long-term changes.

Points of resistance that emerged in particular include:

Desire to homogenize

- Opting to make the distinction that they are Canadian instead of selecting their ancestry was noted. "Canadian - stop racializing everything"

Dismissing change

- When asked about sexuality and gender, some of the reflections included "A human being", "Again - irrelevant", "Doesn't matter", "Are you serious?" or typing in "Woman"/"Man" instead of selecting "Cisgender woman/man".

Not taking this work seriously

- Students often answered questions concerning gender and race with non-sensical responses.

While one of the ways resistance can be dealt with is through education, knowledge alone may not be enough. The District should be in constant consultation with staff, students and parents and deal with points of resistance as they arise and focus on finding out the reason behind the resistance.

Some reasons for resistance can include:

- Fear of change itself
- Lack of resources and support
- Not being personally affected by racism and discrimination
- Fear of losing power
- Not wanting to examine one's own behaviour that may have been harmful in the past

It is incredibly important that leaders are also transparent in their resistance to this work. By modelling how resistance can be explored and how beliefs and views can shift, staff, parents and students can trust that this important work is being taken seriously by the District.

PART SEVEN

Policy & Documents



Policy & Documents

The analysis of the District's policy and documents aims to provide guidance from which all other documents within the District can be examined.

Documents reviewed:

- [District Foundational Statements](#)
- [Policy 10 - Policy Making](#)
- [Policy 15 - Recruitment and Selection of Personnel](#)
- [AP 104 - District Code of Conduct](#)
- [AP 105 - Decentralized Decision Making](#)
- [AP 117 - SOGI](#)
- [AP 117-A - SOGI Glossary of Terms](#)
- [AP 121 - Development and Review of Administrative Procedures](#)
- [AP 152 - Complaint Process for a Resolution of Concerns](#)
- [AP 170 - Harassment Sexual Harassment](#)
- [AP 171 - Bullying and Harassment](#)
- [AP 172 - Propagandist and Prejudicial Conduct](#)
- [AP 173 - Diversity and Discrimination](#)
- [AP 202 - Multiculturalism](#)
- [AP 400 - Recruitment and Hiring of Staff](#)
- [AP 400 Appendix B - Employment Equity](#)

[District Website](#)

[Facebook](#)

KEY THEMES & FINDINGS

Policies and procedures are the foundation from where the District values can be cemented.

In our analysis, we examined the District documents by asking questions like:

What is the goal of this policy/procedure?

Does it promote equity and inclusion?

Does it align with District values?

What potential barriers can it pose to marginalized folks?

Are the policies clear and specific?

Are there clear avenues for accountability?

Who had the responsibility to ensure this policy is implemented and is effective?

Is the language used accessible? Is it gender-neutral?

Are there any key themes that emerge when looking at these policies and procedures as an extension of the gap analysis summary?

While these findings and recommendations are not exhaustive - we may be missing nuances that only come with the experience of working within the District- we hope this section will serve as a guideline from which a deeper examination can be conducted on all District policies, procedures, and documents.

Specificity & Clarity Needed

While we felt the decentralized approach to decision-making is powerful and important, this makes it even more imperative that documents are clear and specific.

Areas we found needed further review in this in particular are language and processes.

Policy document layouts not consistent

We found the layout of these documents to be inconsistent. Some documents also had definitions throughout the policy rather than being contained under the definitions section.

Updating of language

Language is ever-evolving. Ensuring that language is representative of the District's values of a safe and inclusive environment is a recommended priority action item.

Review of the language should ensure that gender-inclusive terms are used.

Accessibility

It was not stated whether these policy documents were available in any other language and whether a hard copy could be obtained. If there is also an opportunity to embed links to the online policies when referring to another policy, this should also be undertaken.

Community Consultation

"Nothing about us, without us", a phrase often heard in disability justice should be at the centre of policy creation and decision making.

There is mixed messaging in the District's policy around this. While some policies state that there will be community consultation in the creation of new policy, other policies state: "The board recognizes that in certain circumstances, stakeholders affected by a proposed policy may be involved in the development." While in practice, stakeholder consultation may take place, it should be an established and integral part of policy creation and reviews.

Decolonization and Indigenous Solidarity

We also found no specific policy around Indigenous solidarity, decolonization and how Indigenous students are to be empowered and included. While there are policies on anti-discrimination and multiculturalism, policy on how the District centers and includes Indigenous voices is one that should be made a priority. We also noted the use of the term "Aboriginal" throughout the policy documents when referring to Indigenous Peoples. Though this term is often used in the legal context as well within government and other institutions. We understand this process is already underway as part of the Indigenous Equity Scan but would recommend the District continue to consult with Indigenous community members, faculty, students, and parents on this matter.

Intersectional Approach

There is no mention of intersectionality within the policies and documents we reviewed including SOGI documents. If the District is to uphold the value of equity, intersectionality must be at the core of policies, procedures, documents and also to be understood by those who are in power to enforce these policies. This is also why ensuring that relevant stakeholders are included in the creation and review of these documents is crucial.

From the Lens of Anti-Oppression

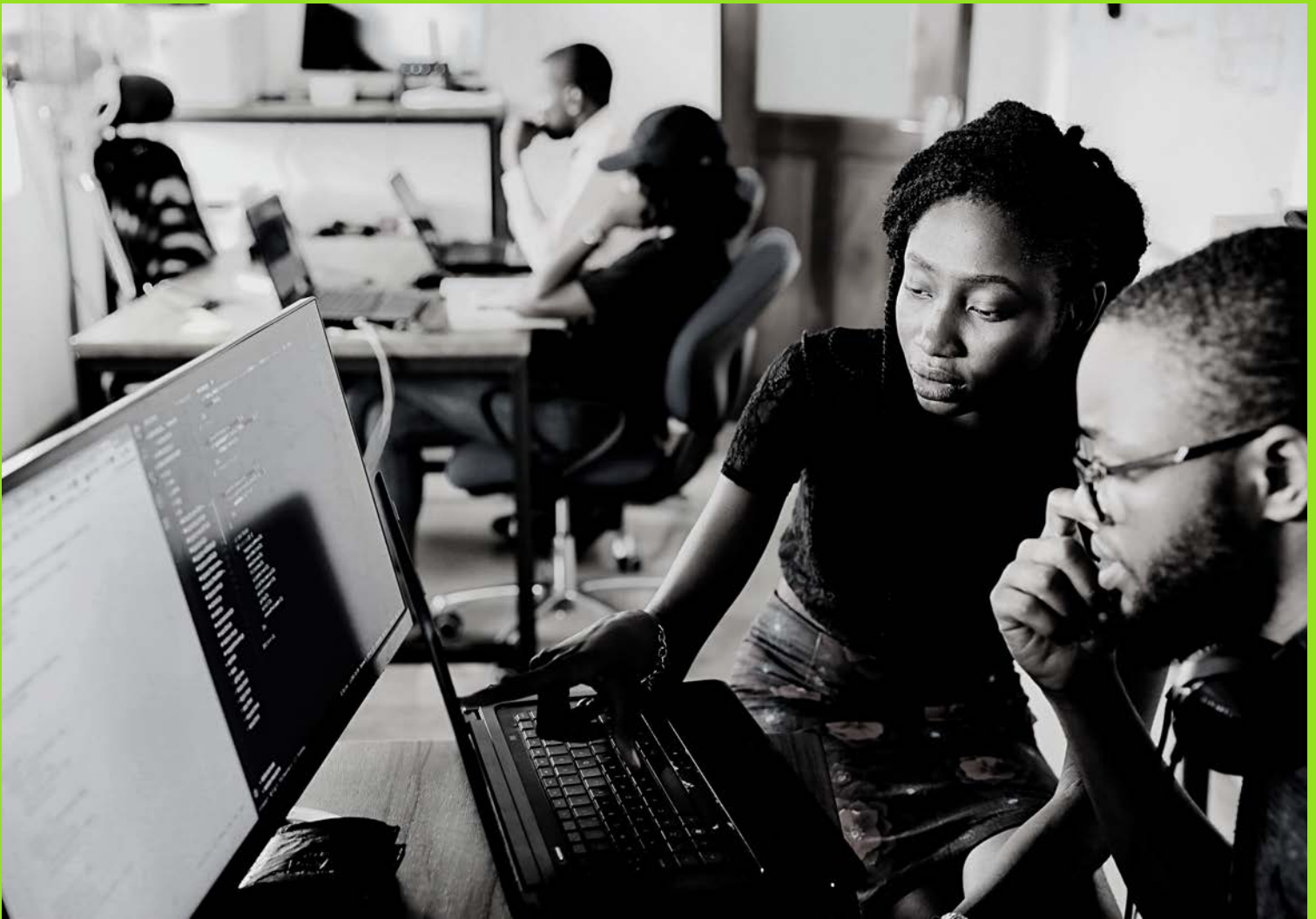
In addition to an intersectional approach, we did not see reference and acknowledgment of anti-oppression throughout these policies and procedures. As the District continues with this work, any updates to these documents should include how anti-oppression is being woven into this work. A recommendation on how this can be communicated would be to either create an anti-oppression policy that overarches all existing policies and procedures and allow for each school to create the specific or review all policies and make amendments to include a lens of anti-oppression. While our review has been conducted through this lens, not every single policy and procedure was examined.

Accountability and the Responsibility to Support

We found that a lot of the policies and procedures did not outline accountability measures of what happens if the policy is breached. The District has the responsibility to support those within the District's communities and that should be highlighted by adding in clear steps towards remedying any breaches of policies.

PART EIGHT

Helpful Information



What's next?

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A THOUGHTFUL PROCESS...

OFFER GRATITUDE

Your staff, students, parents and community members have shared vulnerable and personal information with us that we have compiled into this report. Many have likely dredged up painful experiences to share with us and help you improve. It's important to recognize this.

EMBRACE TRANSPARENCY

It is important to be transparent both among leaders and also with the rest of the organization about the next steps for this process. Keep people in the loop at every stage of the journey and open yourselves up to constant feedback and accountability, however vulnerable this may feel.

PLAN WELL

We have provided recommendations and ideas. We have offered what could potentially be years of hard work in changing the organization structure to help people feel safe and valued. The next steps for you are to highlight which recommendations feel feasible to move forward with and create a strategic plan that provides tangible goals, timelines and accountability points to make these ideas a reality. We recommend allowing time to sit with the report before going to make the anti-racism plan.

BE REALISTIC

Change is hard and takes time. When leaders over-promise but under-deliver, this further harms people. Be realistic, clear, transparent and kind in your journey.

Resources & Readings

GENERAL

[BC Human Right's Clinic: Harassment](#)

[WorkSafe BC: Bullying & Harassment](#)

[Courageous Conversations: Achieving Equity](#)

[Toolkit for Developing a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy](#)

[Does Teacher Diversity Matter in Student Learning?](#)

[All the Ways Hiring Algorithms Can Introduce Bias](#)

[Culture Fit vs Values Fit: A Look from Diversity](#)

[A Teacher Mispronouncing a Student's Name Can Have a Lasting Impact](#)

[StopBullying.gov/bullying/effects](#)

[Decolonization in an Educational Context](#)

[Creating an Equitable, Diverse and Inclusive Research Environment: A Best Practices Guide for Recruitment, Hiring and Retention](#)

[The Insidiousness of Unconscious Bias in Schools](#)

[NYC Kids Get Some Holidays Off but Not Others. Why Not Give Students Personal Days For Their Celebrations Instead?](#)

ANTI-RACISM

[Tips for Community Consultation](#)

[The White Saviour Industrial Complex](#)

[Reclaiming Abuelita Knowledge As A Brown Ecofeminista](#)

[Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds](#)

[Examples of Racial Microaggressions](#)

[The Long-Run Impacts of Same-Race Teachers](#)

[How Racism Harms Children](#)

[Physiological & Psychological Impact of Racism and Discrimination](#)

Resources & Readings

GENDER & SEXUALITY

[Gender Diversity Alone is Not Enough](#)

[3 Examples of Everyday Cissexism](#)

[Here Are 20 Examples of Cissexism That We've Probably All Committed at Some Point](#)

[Mayo Clinic - Children and Gender Identity: Supporting Your Child](#)

[Two Spirits, One Heart, Five Genders](#)

[5 ways that queerphobia affects the LGBTIQ community](#)

[Qmunity Resources](#)

[7 Myths About Coming Out at Work](#)

[Queer at Work](#)

[Forbes - Why You Should Not Say Preferred Gender Pronouns](#)

[Sexual orientation, gender identity and leadership](#)

[Teachers and the Gender Gaps in Student Achievement](#)

DISABILITY

[Main Barriers to Education for Students with Disabilities](#)

[16 Recommendations for Accessibility](#)

[This Is Disability Justice](#)

["Disabled": Just #SayTheWord](#)

Thank you...

... for trusting us with this important project and we look forward to helping you on your journey to equity, inclusion, and justice.

This executive summary does not fully encompass the extent of the work completed by Bakau Consulting. For more information, please contact the District.



www.bakauconsulting.com
[@bakauconsulting](https://twitter.com/bakauconsulting)