

# Inclusive Classroom Self-Assessment for Educators

**Name:**

A diverse school community requires much more from educators. It requires that they acknowledge and accept students with different learning needs and learning styles, reflect diversity in the curriculum and classroom materials, be more aware of classroom and school dynamics, and pay more attention to the learning experiences of students from diverse communities, backgrounds, and identities. The goal is to create learning environments that sustain and support equitable educational outcomes and success for all students.

This self-assessment allows educators to reflect on their behaviours within the classroom and school community to help them identify what more they could do to create inclusive classrooms. It uses the work of [www.edchange.org](http://www.edchange.org) and the Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning at Harvard University, which uses principles from various approaches for thinking about diversity in schools including resiliency theory, diversity pedagogy theory, funds of knowledge theory, and cultural proficiency. The self-assessment also uses some of ideas and concepts of Jack Nigro, Superintendent with the Halton Catholic District School Board.

The Inclusive Classroom Self-Assessment for Educators is designed to give educators an opportunity to reflect on their day-to-day practices against important actions and competencies needed to support equitable and inclusive learning environments for students from diverse communities, backgrounds, and identities. The actions and behaviours included on the self-assessment should be viewed as suggestions rather than a complete list of all possible actions need to create inclusion. Nor should they be seen as a check-list that guarantees the creation of an inclusive classroom. Educators should engage in formal and informal professional development to develop a range of pedagogical skills that best serve the needs of all their students and increase their awareness of how their biases affect outcomes for their students.

## **Completing the self-assessment:**

Consider each of the statements and reflect on your day-to-day actions and behaviours. Indicate how frequently you engage in or consider each. Circle the number that most accurately reflects your day-to-day classroom and school behaviours. Total your score for each section and calculate your total score on the final page.

Before you respond, take the time to think about examples of situations where you have (or could have) demonstrated the behaviour. Taking the time to reflect on each statement and responding honestly is key to this self-assessment - otherwise the tool will have little value in your development as an inclusive educator.



## **Inclusion Competency 1: Self-Reflection to Increase Self-Awareness**

Inclusive educators know that their teaching philosophies and practices are driven at least in part by their belief systems. As such, they are willing to engage in self-reflection in order to increase their self-awareness and challenge their belief systems.

Harvard's Implicit Association Test offers an online tool to help you explore your biases. Access it at: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/education.html>

## **Inclusion Competency 2: Create an Inclusive Curriculum**

Inclusive educators study beyond what they were taught in teacher's college to understand the histories and contributions of various groups to world and Canadian history and society. They ensure that they supplement what is found in textbooks and other curriculum materials so that they provide classroom materials and activities that reflect the diversity, values, backgrounds and experiences of all students.

## **Inclusion Competency 3: Create an Inclusive Learning Environment**

An inclusive educator believes in the right to equitable educational opportunity for all students, which includes the right to high expectations and a classroom environment that is engaging and which supports the learning of all students. Inclusive educators also ensure that they have the knowledge and practical skills necessary to engage the diverse learning styles of all students.

## **Inclusion Competency 4: Increase Understanding of and Improve Interactions with Students**

Inclusive educators establish a culture of high expectations which reflect their belief that all students can learn. They reject the myth of colour-blindness and are open and honest about the various identities of each student and the different ways that students from diverse backgrounds are treated in schools and society. They are committed to meeting the diverse needs of all students and removing or reducing the barriers that they face.

## **Inclusion Competency 5: Increase Understanding of and Improve Interactions with the School Community**

Inclusive educators are committed to understanding the situations faced by students and families that they serve, both in and out of school, and how these situations affect the performance and engagement of students. They use inclusive and respectful language and approaches in all interactions with students, parents and other stakeholders in the diverse school community.

## **Inclusion Competency 6: Actively Promote Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the School Community**

Inclusive educators understand that disparities in educational outcomes for various groups result from inequities in society, not deficits in particular cultures. As such, they work within their school community to eliminate inequalities and close opportunity gaps, rather than focusing on changing students' cultures.

Inclusive educators also support the creating of an inclusive school environment by demonstrating a commitment to school and board equity, diversity and inclusion efforts. This motivates others to do the same and inspires positive change within the school and school community.

# Inclusion Competency 1: Self-Reflection to Increase Self-Awareness

Have I...	Not at all	Not very well	Some-what	Very well	Extremely well
1 Reflected on my own background, experiences, values and beliefs to understand how they influence my thoughts, actions and how I view and interact with my students and others in my diverse school community	1	2	3	4	5
2 Consciously tried to control my assumptions when making decisions about the competence or ability of students from diverse communities, backgrounds and identities	1	2	3	4	5
3 Reflected on my biases and prejudices and how they influence the expectations I have of my students	1	2	3	4	5
4 Reflected on whether I rationalize or tolerate lack of participation from certain groups of students more than I would for other students and what assumptions I make about their silence	1	2	3	4	5
5 Ensured that I do not respond to the voice of certain groups of students as if they have more intellectual weight than the voices of other students	1	2	3	4	5
6 Recognized that I am more comfortable with students and others who are most similar to me and gone out of my way to ensure that I also interact comfortably with students, parents and colleagues from diverse communities, backgrounds and identities	1	2	3	4	5
7 Changed, as necessary, my teaching style, communication style, or behaviour from ways that are comfortable to me to ways that may be more helpful and better serve students, parents and others from diverse communities, backgrounds and identities	1	2	3	4	5
8 Reflected on my own cultural identity in order to understand how that identity affects my communication style, and how that may affect communication with students and parents from different cultural communities, backgrounds and identities	1	2	3	4	5
9 Reflected on my understanding of racism, homophobia, sexism and cultural biases and how they may create obstacles to learning for many students	1	2	3	4	5
10 Examined my beliefs about student deficits and taken more responsibility for the success of my students	1	2	3	4	5

Scoring...

Total your score

## Inclusion Competency 2: Create an Inclusive Curriculum

How well do I...	Not at all	Not very well	Some-what	Very well	Extremely well
1 Ensure that the pictures on the walls of my classroom reflect the diversity of Canada's population in ways that do not promote stereotypes	1	2	3	4	5
2 Review textbooks and other curriculum materials to ensure that they are free of implicit and explicit bias	1	2	3	4	5
3 Incorporate curriculum content, materials, visual aids and examples that are relevant to the lives of all students and reflect the diversity of Canadian society	1	2	3	4	5
4 Offer an integrated curriculum so that students see themselves and their histories reflected in the curriculum—all year, every day—not just during special months or celebrations	1	2	3	4	5
5 Educate myself so that I can identify and correct for biases that may be present in textbooks and other curriculum materials	1	2	3	4	5
6 Cultivate in students the ability to analyze bias in curriculum materials, classroom interactions and school policies	1	2	3	4	5
7 Provide relevant opportunities for authentic learning experiences and experiential learning for students from diverse communities, backgrounds and identities	1	2	3	4	5
8 Regularly develop my knowledge and skills to support my ability to effectively teach in a diverse school community	1	2	3	4	5
9 Teach about critical diversity issues such as sexism, racism, poverty and heterosexism. And despite false perceptions that younger students are not "ready" for these conversations, begin doing so at the youngest ages because students from marginalized communities already are experiencing these problems	1	2	3	4	5
10 Create assignments that encourage students to explore different gender, racial and cultural perspectives	1	2	3	4	5

Scoring...

Total your score

# Inclusion Competency 3: Create an Inclusive Learning Environment

How well do I...		Not at all	Not very well	Some-what	Very well	Extremely well
1	Develop ground rules or norms that will guide how students are expected to interact with each other in the classroom and set expectations for an inclusive learning environment for all	1	2	3	4	5
2	Recognize biases and inequities in interactions between students and appropriately and immediately respond because I understand that my silence may be seen as endorsement of these behaviours	1	2	3	4	5
3	Elicit anonymous feedback from my students and, when I do, model a willingness to be changed by their feedback as I expect them to be changed by mine	1	2	3	4	5
4	Encourage my students to think critically and ask critical questions about all of the information they receive, including that which they receive from me	1	2	3	4	5
5	Challenge myself to take personal responsibility before looking for fault elsewhere. For example, if I have one student who is falling behind or being disruptive, I will consider what I am doing or not doing that might be contributing to their disengagement before problematizing their behaviour or level of effort	1	2	3	4	5
6	Use multiple modes of instruction to account for the range of learning styles that may be present in a diverse group of students	1	2	3	4	5
7	Structure project groups so that membership and leadership roles are balanced across ethno-racial groups, learning abilities and gender	1	2	3	4	5
8	Anticipate sensitive areas in the subject matter being taught and plan in advance how I will handle sensitive topics or explosive moments	1	2	3	4	5
9	Ensure I do not create situations where students are placed in the position of being representatives of their gender, race, culture or other social groups	1	2	3	4	5
10	Let students know from the very beginning that their thoughts have a place in the classroom, that we all have unique perspectives, and that these perspectives are an important component of the learning process	1	2	3	4	5

Scoring...

Total your score

# Inclusion Competency 4: Increase Understanding of and Improve Interactions with Students

How well do I...		Not at all	Not very well	Some-what	Very well	Extremely well
1	Ensure that I treat each student first and foremost as an individual and don't make assumptions based on their gender, race, culture or other groups to which they appear to belong	1	2	3	4	5
2	Interact with all students in respectful, challenging and collaborative ways, both inside and outside of the classroom	1	2	3	4	5
3	Express high expectations of all students, regardless of their race, gender, socio-economic background, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion and other characteristics, and provide the support required to help them meet these expectations	1	2	3	4	5
4	Ensure that I focus my efforts not only on the students that demonstrate that they are interested in learning but also those who appear to be disengaged	1	2	3	4	5
5	Understand that some students may require accommodation (based on religion or disability), understand the process and ensure students are appropriately accommodated	1	2	3	4	5
6	Consider how I assign homework and communicate with families, understanding that students have different levels of access to resources like computers and the internet	1	2	3	4	5
7	Reject the myth of colour-blindness and am honest about the various identities of each student and the different ways that students from diverse backgrounds are treated in schools and society, which create disparities in educational outcomes	1	2	3	4	5
8	Educate myself about how inequities related to race, gender, language, immigrant status, disability and other identities operate and affect my students and their performance and engagement in school	1	2	3	4	5
9	Ensure that I am not disciplining some students more often and more harshly than other students, for the same behaviour	1	2	3	4	5
10	Engage in restorative justice and try to ensure that no students are suspended	1	2	3	4	5

Scoring...

Total your score

# Inclusion Competency 5: Increase Understanding of and Improve Interactions with the School Community

How often have I...		Never	Rarely	Some-times	Usually	Always
1	Visited the communities from which my students come, including where they live, shop, eat, pray and play, to enhance my ability to support their learning	1	2	3	4	5
2	Sought out and listened to the voices of parents and the diverse communities from which my students come	1	2	3	4	5
3	Made family involvement accessible to low-income parents who often work multiple jobs, don't have paid leave, and may not be able to afford public transportation or childcare	1	2	3	4	5
4	Gotten out of the safety of my comfort zone by building relationships with those in my school community	1	2	3	4	5
5	Rejected deficit ideology (i.e., identifying the problem of inequality of outcomes as existing within individuals or cultures, rather than as symptoms of systemic educational and social conditions), and worked to find solutions to these problems	1	2	3	4	5
6	Kept reaching out to all families, even if I experience them as unresponsive, in the understanding that I may need to establish trust among parents from some communities that historically have experienced the educational system as an institution that maintains societal inequality or which is hostile them	1	2	3	4	5
7	Ensured that ongoing communication about learning is in place to allow students and parents to monitor and support student learning	1	2	3	4	5
8	Ensured that parents and community members are engaged and welcomed as respected and valued partners in student learning	1	2	3	4	5
9	Ensured that I build partnerships between the school and community to enhance learning opportunities and well-being for students	1	2	3	4	5
10	Increased my understanding of the diverse communities from which my students are from, to ensure that I engage respectfully with them, their parents and their communities	1	2	3	4	5

Scoring...

Total your score

# Inclusion Competency 6: Actively Promote Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the School Community

How well do I...		Not at all	Not very well	Some-what	Very well	Extremely well
1	Talk positively about and deliver a consistent message of the value of a diverse and inclusive school environment	1	2	3	4	5
2	Help students and colleagues understand their role in creating an inclusive school environment	1	2	3	4	5
3	Recognize and respectfully address the concerns of students, parents or colleagues who don't see the value of efforts to create an inclusive school environment for students from all communities, backgrounds and identities	1	2	3	4	5
4	Assume responsibility for learning about the school board's equity, diversity and inclusion efforts, and my roles and responsibilities to implement these efforts	1	2	3	4	5
5	Champion the school board's equity, diversity and inclusion efforts and view it as an opportunity to improve both the workplace and student success	1	2	3	4	5
6	Recognize the need for change and challenge the status quo	1	2	3	4	5
7	Foster conversations with colleagues about equity, diversity and inclusion concerns and issues	1	2	3	4	5
8	Work with my school community to ensure that we don't confuse celebrating diversity with creating equity, such as by responding to racial conflict with cultural celebrations	1	2	3	4	5
9	Understand systemic inequality, based on gender, race and other characteristics, how it plays out in the educational system, and how it affects the educational outcomes for various groups of students in my school	1	2	3	4	5
10	Work to ensure that students from marginalized communities are not placed unfairly into lower academic tracks	1	2	3	4	5

Scoring...

Total your score



## Scoring ... Transfer your scores for each Inclusive Competency below

Competency	Score
Inclusion Competency 1: Self-Reflection to Increase Self-Awareness	
Inclusion Competency 2: Create an Inclusive Curriculum	
Inclusion Competency 3: Create an Inclusive Learning Environment	
Inclusion Competency 4: Increase Understanding of and Improve Interactions with Students	
Inclusion Competency 5: Increase Understanding of and Improve Interactions with the School Community	
Inclusion Competency 6: Actively Promote Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the School Community	
<b>Total Score:</b>	

### Change Agent (Score 240 to 300)

Change agents are inclusive educators who are aware of biases in themselves and recognize the negative impact that comes from acting on these biases.

If your score falls in this range, you can make great contributions to the school community by finding ways to educate others and help them realize the value of equity, diversity and inclusion. You could benefit from watching for blind spots to ensure that you are fully aware of your biases and your impact on others. You may also benefit from feedback from others because you "don't know what you don't know."

Examine the Inclusion Competencies or questions on which you scored lowest to identify areas in which you can improve.

### Neutral (Score 180 to 240)

Educators in this category are somewhat aware of biases in themselves and others. They can increase and apply their knowledge to support the learning of all students according to their needs.

If your score falls in this range, you can examine the Inclusion Competencies or questions on which you scored lowest to identify areas in which you need to improve.

### Unaware (Under 180)

While they may have good intentions, unaware educators don't realize that they may exhibit biased behaviours that marginalize students or create barriers to their success. While the scores of some unaware educators may put them in this category, their scores could also place them in the other two categories because they might frequently answer "Usually / Always" and "Very well / Extremely well" because they don't reflect on and are not aware of their own behaviours.

If your score falls in this range, you could benefit from feedback from others and ongoing learning through professional development and ongoing reading. You may also benefit from being more observant of the interactions in your classroom and learning more about the experiences of students who are marginalized in the classroom, the school and who come from marginalized communities.