

Windsor Public Library Board

Anti-Racism Action Plan

Tuesday, July 14, 2020

(Amended July 27, 2020)

1. OBJECTIVES:

To provide the WPLB with a framework and action plan to address racism and social inequity.

2. DEFINITIONS:

Racism is defined as prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against someone of a different race based on the belief that one's own race is superior. It is a persistent imbalance in wealth, health care or opportunities.

Structural racism refers to inequalities in society, usually in the form of legislation that excludes particular racial groups from participation i.e. [1885 Chinese Immigration Act](#).

Systemic racism refers to policies and practices entrenched in organizations, which result in the exclusion or promotion of designated groups i.e. clubs or organizations excluding a particular race from membership or [U.S. School segregation](#).

Racial inequality is a persistent imbalance in wealth, health or opportunity particularly between races.

Social inequality occurs when resources i.e. government services, are distributed unevenly due to religion, family, race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation or class. It results in a lack of equality in the labour market or health care and is identified by a lack of freedom of speech, educational opportunities or political representation.

Equitable is defined as fair, impartial or unbiased.

Inclusion is the state of being valued, respected and supported while focusing on the needs of individuals to reach their full potential.

3. BACKGROUND:

A) Windsor's Ethnic Diversity

The 2016 Census [Windsor - Ethnic Origin](#) and [Windsor Visible Minorities](#) provide the most recent statistical data on the ethnic origins and visible minorities in Windsor.

Populations	Windsor	% of the Windsor Population
Arab	16,115	7.21%
Black	10,675	4.78%
South Asian	9,640	4.31%
North American Aboriginal	9,570	4.28%
Chinese	7,340	3.28%
Southeast Asian	3,365	1.51%
Filipino	2,960	1.32%
Latin America	2,670	1.19%
West Asian	1,290	0.58%
Korean	315	0.14%
Japanese	110	0.05%
Multiple Visible Minorities	1,830	0.82%
Not a visible minority	156,380	69.95%

B) Diversity and the Public Library

Since December 4 1894, the Windsor Public Library has been a trusted civic institution, providing equitable access to information, services and facilities to support life long learning. **The WPL is actively working to promote knowledge over ignorance, understanding over intolerance and access over inequity** (*as amended by the WPL Board on July 21, 2020*).

Since 1936, the American Library Association (ALA) has promoted equal access to information for all persons and recognizes the ongoing need to increase awareness of and responsiveness to, the diversity of the communities libraries serve, especially those experiencing racism and discrimination. ALA Policy Manual states,

...Libraries can and should play a crucial role in empowering diverse populations for full participation in a democratic society...and include diversity in programs, activities, services, professional literature, products and continuing education....

In 2008, the Canadian Federation of Library Association's (CFLA) [Statement on Diversity and Inclusion](#) and in 2017, the Canadian Urban Libraries Council's (CULC) [Statement on Race and Social Equity](#) encourage public libraries to promote racial and social equity by eliminating racial and social barriers in library resources, programs, services, policies and practices. CULC and CFLA encourage Canadian public libraries to embrace sustained equity through an intentional, systemic action plan to address and promote equitable access.

Since 2006, the City of Windsor has been working to create a welcoming, inclusive community and workforce. In 2018, the City adopted the [Diversity-and-Inclusion-Initiative](#), Phase 1, a corporate wide effort to understand and address social inequity.

Drafted in 2016, the Windsor Public Library policies are based on the CULC and CFLA statements and provide guidelines to address and promote equitable access to all people: Aboriginal, Asian, Black, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Latin American, Middle Eastern, White, and other visible minorities (*amended July 27, 2020*).

For example:

➤ **F-2** [Vision Statement](#)

3.2 The Windsor Public Library Board supports the core vision of the Windsor Public Library including:

- **Equitable access**, *opportunity and connection to information and technology*

➤ **F-5** [Intellectual Freedom Policy](#)

3.2 It is the responsibility of the Windsor Public Library Board and staff to:

- a) *Ensure that **all customers have the fundamental right to access all expressions of knowledge, creativity and intellectual activity;***
- c) *Make available **all of the library's public facilities and services to all individuals and groups***

➤ **F-6** [Material Selection Policy](#)

3.8 **No material will be excluded** *solely because of the race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, marital status, political affiliation, disability, language and/or socio-economic status of the creator of the work.*

➤ **O-7** [Human Resources Policy](#)

The Windsor Public Library Board is committed to:

3.4.2... *a **fair and equitable** recruitment, selection, and hiring process.*

3.6.2.... *fair and equitable performance evaluations.*

3.7.2.... *establishing **fair and equitable** job descriptions.*

Since 2019, the Thunder Bay Public Library has lead the country, pioneering staff and community initiatives to address racism and build cultural competencies.

The May 25, 2020 death of [George Floyd](#) and others has resulted in protests around the world which have rekindled discussions about racial and social inequity and what society needs to do to address racism and prejudice individually and systemically.

4. ACTION PLAN :

The WPL Administrative Team have reviewed WPL's response to racial and social inequity and make the following recommendations:

A. WPL Statements and Policies

- 1) The following statement on Racism and Social Inequity is proposed:

Together Against Racism and Social Inequity

The Windsor Public Library Board is committed to providing inclusive public library services, resources and facilities where everyone feels safe, welcome and valued. The public library belongs to everyone. The WPL respects the rights of all individuals to access information, participate in programming, and engage with the community regardless of race, citizenship, gender, income level, education, sexual orientation, including those living with a disability, addiction, mental illness, or experiencing homelessness. **The WPL is actively working to promote knowledge over ignorance, understanding over intolerance and access over inequity** (as amended by the WPL Board on July 21, 2020).

To achieve this the Windsor Public Library will:

- Eliminate racial and social barriers to library programs, services, policies and practices.
- Acquire library resources that reflect the rich diversity of the Windsor community.
- Create and maintain a welcoming environment for all races, which respects both customers and employees.

The Windsor Public Library Board stands with our community against racism and reinforces the library's mission and values to promote equity.

Windsor Public Library Board
July 21, 2020

This statement once accepted by the WPLB will be shared with the community, staff and posted on the WPL website.

- 2) The Administration Team recommends the WPLB consider
 - Request a review of the City of Windsor's Appointed Boards and Commissions (ABC) policies and procedures to help diversify citizen appointments to city boards and commissions.
 - Prior to the October 2022 Municipal election the WPLB develop a plan to encourage citizens to apply to be of the WPLB.
- 3) The Administration Team recommended adding to the **F-3 [Values](#)** Policy
 - 3.1.5 Integrity
 - *We are committed to eliminating racism and social inequity.*

B. Library Resources

WPL currently holds over 300 books, eBooks, Large Print and audio books that deal with racial injustice. To assist the community learn about racism and social inequity, staff have created fiction and nonfiction reading lists for children and adults.

For Children:

- ✓ [Picture Books about Race and Discrimination](#)
- ✓ [Books for an Indigenous-themed Story time](#)

- ✓ [Goodminds First Nation Communities Read 2020 Children's Collection](#)
- ✓ [Books about the Black experience](#)

For Adults:

- ✓ [Being black in Canada](#)
- ✓ [June is National Indigenous History Month](#)
- ✓ [You came to Canada. Now what?](#)
- ✓ [And from the New York Times book lists](#)

C. Library Programs

As a result of COVID-19, WPL is developing more online programs. In the planning stages are the following programs:

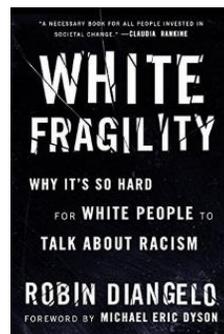
- Book Club focusing on culturally diverse authors who will give a voice to visible minorities (*amended July 27, 2020*).
- Include anti-racist and culturally diverse picture books into story times.
- In 2020, develop a “one book one community” project that focuses on the subject of anti-racism and diversity issues.
- Partner with community agencies, such as the [Amherstburg Freedom Museum](#) and the [Multicultural Council of Windsor and Essex County](#) to train employees and develop programs about racism and contributions of visible minorities to the Windsor community.
- Board Chair to work with CEO to organize round table discussions with community groups in order for WPL to better serve the community (*added by the WPL Board on July 21, 2020*).

D. Staff Training

The Windsor Public Library has a responsibility to help eradicate racism, social inequity and promote universal acceptance through library resources, services, and programs.

This starts by educating staff about racial injustice. Some of this work began in 2017 with the WPL's Truth and Reconciliation Reports and the training initiated for all employees. WPL is committed to providing ongoing staff education with the goal of eliminating systemic racism and promoting equity and inclusion. In 2020 staff training will include:

- On line learning modules and podcasts beginning with a basic understanding of racism, social inequity and diversity.



- WPL has purchased copies of [White Fragility, why it's so hard for white people to talk about racism](#) by Robin Diangelo for staff to read or listen to. This initiative is based on the positive experience of the Thunder Bay Public Library.
- WPL Administration will test the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PyrQUerjRiA>

In 2021, staff development programs (hopefully in person again) will focus on racial and social inequity.

5. RESOURCES:

Resources used in the preparation of this report include:

- ✓ [American Library Association: Diversity](#)
- ✓ [Anti-Racist Resource Guide](#)
- ✓ [Webliography: Anti-Racism Resources](#)
- ✓ Toronto Public Library [Black Lives Matter reading list](#).
- ✓ CBC [Hear More Black Voices](#)
- ✓ [Anti-Racism Resources for White People and Parents](#), May 2020.
- ✓ Association of College and Research Libraries [Microaggressions and Implicit Bias](#)
- ✓ [City of Windsor](#) Diversity and Inclusion Initiative.
- ✓ With particular thanks to the [Thunder-Bay Public-Library](#) for their leadership re racism.

6. SUMMARY:

Since December 4 1894, the Windsor Public Library has been a trusted civic institution, providing equitable access to information, services and facilities to support life long learning. **The WPL is actively working to promote knowledge over ignorance, understanding over intolerance and access over inequity** (as amended by the WPL Board on July 21, 2020). However, public libraries around the world are being challenged like never before to take a critical look at racism and social inequity.

In 2020, the Windsor Public Library has a responsibility to help Windsor eradicate systemic racism, social inequity and promote universal acceptance through equitable access to resources, services, and facilities. This starts by educating employees about racial injustice and social inequity plus developing policies, procedures and services designed to promote equity and inclusion. The Windsor Public Library Board stands with our community to promote equality, and stand firm against racial intolerance and social inequity, because “we believe in the freedom to read, learn and discover.”

7. RECOMMENDATION:

Moved by _____ Seconded by _____

THAT the Windsor Public Library Board

- Endorses the amended WPL statement on Racism and Social Inequity
- Accept the WPL Anti-Racist Action Plan as amended.

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and the WPL staff