

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Advisory Committee

The Provincial Council of the Ontario Principals' Council (OPC) determined in the fall of 2019 that it wished to create an Advisory Committee to support the organization's meaningful and focused engagement on issues of equity, diversity and inclusion.

Mandate

The EDI Advisory Committee has been created to provide advice and make recommendations to the OPC Executive and Provincial Council on matters of policy and governance and to the OPC Executive Director on operational matters. In addition, the EDI may implement and/or oversee projects and activities within its scope as approved by the Provincial Council.

The OPC Provincial Council intends that the EDI Advisory Committee will model, in a transparent and concrete fashion, the OPC's commitment to equity and diversity by

- creating a culture and opportunities to candidly discuss and move the agenda forward on equity, inclusion, anti-racism and anti-oppression, with a focus on addressing systemic oppression, specifically anti-Black racism, anti-Indigenous racism, racism against people of colour, Islamophobia, homophobia and transphobia
- guiding the OPC on how we can better serve our Members who self-identify as belonging to historically disadvantaged communities
- supporting principals/vice-principals in the development and enhancement of their skills so they are able to identify and work to dismantle all forms of oppression, as well as eliminate barriers to inclusion as Human Rights and Equity leaders within their schools and boards
- encouraging greater diversity in the principal/vice-principal profession, including identifying and addressing barriers to inclusion and
- addressing issues of discrimination.

Scope

The OPC's EDI Advisory Committee is responsible for advising on and undertaking or directing the undertaking of Provincial Council approved projects related to three main areas of focus:

- the OPC's organizational policies, practices and advocacy that impact representation of Members and as an employer
- recruitment, retention and advancement into and within the vice-principal and principal profession
- the provision of professional learning as leaders to support equity, inclusion and diversity in school communities.

Membership

The EDI Advisory Committee shall be composed of up to 18 members, 12 of whom shall be OPC Members in good standing including the President-Elect, President and Past President. The President-Elect, President and Past President shall appoint nine members of the Advisory Committee to represent OPC Members in addition to themselves. These appointments shall include OPC Members who are committed to matters of equity, diversity and inclusion, willing to look at diverse perspectives and challenge mindsets, with lived experience from diverse communities, from both panels and from different geographic, urban and rural areas. Committee membership shall be reviewed annually and may be revised based on the evolving needs of the Advisory Committee as implemented by the three Presidents. Up to six OPC staff shall serve on and in support of the EDI Advisory Committee at the discretion of the Executive Director in consultation with the OPC President.

All original Advisory Committee members shall be appointed for a minimum term of two years. In the first year of the Advisory Committee, a process will be developed to move the membership to revolving terms to ensure corporate memory while also encouraging new members and ideas. In no instance will any Committee member representing OPC Members serve a term of more than five years, except in the event an Advisory Committee member reaches their maximum term while serving as any one of President-Elect, President or Past President, in which case they may continue through to the natural completion of their term as Past President.

No Independent Legal Status

The EDI Advisory Committee is not a legal entity and will not have legal or contractual responsibility for its undertakings. It cannot bind the OPC to contracts, nor does it speak on behalf of the OPC. These functions remain reserved to the Executive Director, on the one hand, and the OPC President, on the other, in accordance with the OPC's Constitution, Policies and Procedures.

Chair

The EDI Advisory Committee shall be chaired by whoever is serving in the role of the OPC Provincial President, or their delegate.

Responsibilities

Specific responsibilities of the EDI Advisory Committee include but are not limited to

- providing advice and making recommendations to the OPC Executive and Provincial Council, as well as the Executive Director, in relation to the EDI Advisory Committee's mandate including further delineation of the Committee itself in the form of sub-groups

or committees, governance and policy changes, project work and professional learning activities

- implementing and/or overseeing, where appropriate, approved projects, activities and undertakings taking into account the fact that the members of the EDI Advisory Committee are full-time administrators
- gathering and analyzing data and relying on academic research to support its advice, activities and project work.

Recommendations and Decision-Making

Recommendations to the OPC Executive, Provincial Council and/or Executive Director shall be made by consensus.

- It is desirable that recommendations are acceptable to all EDI Advisory Committee members; therefore, the process should be continued to the extent possible until a consensus is achieved.
- If a consensus in the EDI Advisory Committee cannot be reached on an issue that requires action by the OPC, the Executive and Executive Director shall be advised and facilitation services may be engaged if deemed necessary.

Once the Committee has achieved consensus, Committee members will support the decision publicly and “speak as one voice.”

Meetings

Meetings will be held as required, but not less than once per quarter recognizing that meetings may be more frequent during the EDI Advisory Committee’s first year and where specific project implementation may require it. Meetings may take place in person or virtually. The OPC will reimburse reasonable travel costs associated with the meetings in accordance with the OPC travel policy.

Minutes shall be maintained of all EDI Advisory Committee meetings, circulated among the Committee to ensure accuracy and approved by the Committee. EDI Advisory Committee minutes, once approved by the Committee, shall be provided to the Executive and Provincial Council for information purposes and made available to Members on the OPC website.

The EDI Advisory Committee shall have the ability, through a duly approved motion, to go in camera to discuss confidential matters. The Committee shall then rise and report as necessary following these confidential discussions.

Quorum

Quorum for meetings will be attendance by a simple majority of EDI Advisory Committee members. The Committee can meet without quorum but will not make formal decisions without it.

Reporting

The EDI Advisory Committee will report to the OPC Executive and Provincial Council and shall communicate with the OPC Executive on a regular basis through the provision of its Minutes and upon invitation, to speak at Provincial Council. The EDI Advisory Committee will submit an annual report to the OPC Executive and Provincial Council by July 31st on its accomplishments related to the previous July 1 – June 30th period and a summary account shall be included in the OPC Annual Report.

Sub-Committees and Working Groups

The EDI Advisory Committee may recommend to Executive and Provincial Council the creation of either sub-committees or working groups, as is necessary and in a timely manner to address specific issues that arise. The Chair of the sub-committee or working group shall be a member of the EDI Advisory Committee. The Chair of the sub-committee may involve Members of the OPC who are not members of the EDI Advisory Committee to provide assistance on specific issues and topics. Membership on sub-committees shall be determined through an application and selection process, using criteria consistent with that upon which the EDI Advisory Committee members were chosen. The application and selection process shall be managed by the President-Elect, President and Past President or their delegates with input from the EDI Advisory Committee.

Duration

The EDI Advisory Committee will remain in place so long as the OPC Provincial Council continues to support its operations. A budgetary commitment has been made through to June 30, 2022 and Provincial Council shall consider extending the funding of the EDI Advisory Committee at its February Council meeting in 2022 in the course of its usual budget cycle.

Amending the Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference may be revised by the OPC Executive or OPC Provincial Council upon the recommendation of the Advisory Committee.