



Purpose of this Document

It is important to recognize the multi-faceted nature of racism in our land. While Indigenous peoples and marginalized non-Indigenous groups in Canada both experience racism that is similar in many ways, in many other ways the racism experienced by Indigenous peoples in Canada is unique. Colonialism, the *Indian Act*, and the residential school system, for example, have created a “dual track” of racism that is distinct among First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) people. Therefore, this document is intended to

- inform and encourage educators to recognize the importance of critical/ courageous conversations about the impacts of racism on Canadian society as a whole
- describe the various levels of racist practice to inform educators of where and when racism can occur
- describe the effects of racism on school divisions, schools, staff, students, and communities
- be a call to action through dialogue and informed discussion
- acknowledge the historical and contemporary manifestations of institutional and “everyday” racism that have affected Indigenous people in Canada and resulted in the dispossession of their lands and the destruction of their languages, cultures, spiritualities, and communities
- stimulate dialogue and informed discussion in the educational system, schools, and communities with respect to the impact of racism on FNMI children and youth and families, which has resulted in diminished educational opportunities and inequitable educational outcomes
- promote courageous and critical conversations on race and racism in schools as a means of facilitating change, developing effective strategies for overcoming racism, providing appropriate and equitable programming, and ensuring equitable outcomes for FNMI (and all other) children
- contribute to the reconciliation of Aboriginal peoples and all Canadians by encouraging educators and schools to respond positively to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action

Preface: Towards a Racism-Free World

This document begins with the words of Nelson Mandela, a great role model of anti-racism, reminding us that anti-racism work is long, hard, and never-ending, but that ultimately we have the greatest tool for changing the hearts and minds of the world—*education*.

“A fundamental concern for others in our individual and community lives would go a long way in making the world the better place we so passionately dreamt of.”

– Nelson Mandela (2008a)

“I have walked that long road to freedom. I have tried not to falter; I have made missteps along the way. But I have discovered the secret that after climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb. I have taken a moment here to rest, to steal a view of the glorious vista that surrounds me, to look back on the distance I have come. But I can only rest for a moment, for with freedom comes responsibilities, and I dare not linger, for my long walk is not yet ended.”

– Nelson Mandela (2008b)

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

– Nelson Mandela (1990)