

Vancouver: A local group, called Alternatives to Racism, produced A Handbook For Enhancing The Multicultural Climate Of The School which contains a checklist for determining how responsive school personnel are to cultural differences. It assesses programs for efficiency and patterns of organization as well as for effectiveness. If the results are positive, the school personnel and students are encouraged. If they are negative, the mechanism exists for corrective action.

The Nova Scotia Teachers' Union has published Multiculturalism: A Handbook For Teachers. The Handbook explains what multiculturalism is all about and provides assistance to teachers in implementing multiculturalism as a classroom policy.

Equality: Keeping these efforts and difficulties of minorities in mind, educators should create a school environment which is conducive to learning and promoting equality of opportunity for all students.

The Canadian Council for Multicultural and Intercultural Education is an organization representing educators from across the country. The Council holds conferences, acts as a clearing house and supports research in areas of need.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Canadian Council for Multicultural and Intercultural Education should examine the hidden curriculum in order to ensure that no group is denied a sense of belonging and equality of opportunity.

RESPECT THE OBSERVANCE OF CULTURAL NATIONAL DAYS

Not the Same: It is often taken for granted that everyone observes the same days of celebration. This is a rather large oversight considering the multicultural nature of Canadian society. Members of minority cultures take their days of celebration just as seriously as the rest of the community.

Left Out: Within the schools, there is a feeling of embarrassment and alienation on the part of minority children when they are forced to observe days of celebration which are not their own, or when their own are ignored.

Mutual Knowledge: Recognition of important national days and religious holy days of the cultures represented in the schools was requested by many of those who appeared before the Committee. Mutual knowledge is a necessary, although not entirely sufficient, means of generating respect for cultural heritage. An Ontario government publication, Days to Remember, provides a list and description of significant observances of various ethno-cultural groups in Canadian society. A sense of belonging on the part of visible minority children can be increased by making aspects of their culture part of the culture of the school. The Canadian Council for Multicultural and Intercultural Education should be encouraged to prepare a school calendar of events that might be recognized.

Positive: The practice of recognizing the important holidays, national days and religious holy days of the cultures represented in the school or classroom is a positive way of conveying respect and acceptance of the individual's cultural heritage.

RECOMMENDATION

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