

# OKANAGAN SIMILKAMEEN SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 53

## POLICY

No. 1

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Adopted:

### FOUNDATIONAL STATEMENTS

#### **1. Governance Purpose**

The Board of Education governs Okanagan Similkameen School District No. 53 in accordance with the *School Act*, the *Statement of Education Policy Order*, and all other applicable Provincial legislation.

The Board is responsible for setting the strategic direction, values, and priorities of the school district to ensure that all learners develop their individual potential and acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy, sustainable, and changing world, consistent with the mandate of public education in British Columbia.

#### **2. Acknowledgement of Territory and Rightsholder Relationships**

The Board of Education acknowledges, with respect and gratitude, that Okanagan Similkameen School District No. 53 operates on the ancestral and unceded territories of the sukənaqin (Syilx/Okanagan) and sməlqmix (Similkameen) Peoples, the traditional caretakers of this land.

The Board is committed to honouring Indigenous Rights, advancing truth and reconciliation, and upholding Local Education Agreements with Indigenous partners, recognizing the shared responsibility to improve outcomes and experiences for Indigenous learners and to respect Indigenous ways of knowing, learning, and being.

#### **3. Vision**

We are an innovative learning community where all learners and adults are supported in their academic, social, and mental well-being, equipped with the skills and experiences necessary to thrive in a diverse and changing world. [\[sd53.bc.ca\]](https://sd53.bc.ca), [\[sd53.civicweb.net\]](https://sd53.civicweb.net)

#### **4. Mission**

The Board of Education provides leadership and governance that supports the development of all learners through real-world, relevant learning experiences that promote responsible, culturally aware citizenship and lifelong learning, in partnership with families, Rightsholders, and communities. [\[sd53.bc.ca\]](https://sd53.bc.ca), [\[sd53.civicweb.net\]](https://sd53.civicweb.net)

## **5. Core Values**

The Board conducts its work and makes decisions guided by the following values, which reflect both Okanagan Similkameen School District No. 53 priorities and recognized best practice across BC:

### **a. Inclusivity and Equity**

We honour diversity, promote fairness, and work to remove systemic barriers so that every learner belongs and succeeds, with particular attention to Indigenous learners and students requiring additional supports. [\[sd53.civicweb.net\]](https://sd53.civicweb.net), [\[sd53.bc.ca\]](https://sd53.bc.ca)

### **b. Well-Being**

We believe student and staff well-being is foundational to learning. Decisions are guided by a commitment to physical, social, emotional, and mental well-being across the school district. [\[sd53.civicweb.net\]](https://sd53.civicweb.net)

### **c. Curiosity and Learning**

We value curiosity, innovation, and inquiry based learning, supporting environments where learners and adults take thoughtful risks and pursue excellence through continuous improvement. [\[sd53.civicweb.net\]](https://sd53.civicweb.net)

### **d. Respect and Relationships**

We act with integrity, respect, and care, recognizing that strong relationships are essential in small, rural, and interconnected communities throughout the Okanagan and Similkameen valleys. [\[sd53.civicweb.net\]](https://sd53.civicweb.net), [\[sd53.bc.ca\]](https://sd53.bc.ca)

### **e. Responsibility and Accountability**

We are accountable to students, families, Rightsholders, communities, and the Province for ethical governance, transparent decision-making, and wise stewardship of public resources. [\[sd53.bc.ca\]](https://sd53.bc.ca)

## **6. Governing Commitments**

In fulfilling its role, the Board of Education commits to:

- Governing through policy and strategic direction, not day-to-day management
- Setting and monitoring long-term goals and student outcomes, aligned with the District Strategic Plan
- Using evidence and multiple perspectives to guide decisions
- Engaging meaningfully with students, families, Rightsholders, and community partners

- Advocating for equitable access to quality public education in rural and geographically diverse communities
- Reviewing foundational statements regularly to ensure continued relevance and alignment with provincial direction and community priorities  
[\[sd53.civicweb.net\]](http://sd53.civicweb.net), [\[sd53.bc.ca\]](http://sd53.bc.ca)