



<b>SCHOOL POLICY:</b>	<b>COUNTERING RACISM IN ACT PUBLIC SCHOOLS</b>
<b>PUBLISHED:</b>	2007
<b>IDENTIFIER:</b>	CRS200704
<b>LEGISLATION:</b>	<i>Education Act 2004</i> <i>Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT)</i> <i>Human Rights &amp; Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Cwlth)</i> <i>Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cwlth)</i> <i>Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT)</i>

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## 1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 Consistent with the *Providing Safe Schools P-12* policy, every school must develop procedures to counter racism.
- 1.2 All schools will have in place practices and programs that are designed to ensure that all students are protected from racism.
- 1.3 Schools must report instances of racism that pose an immediate threat to the safety of students and staff as critical incidents. This report must be made to the Director Schools immediately by telephone and in writing within 24 hours.
- 1.4 Principals will identify at least one staff member to be the Anti Racism Contact Officer for Students.
- 1.5 A statistical record of incidents of racism should be kept by the school.

## 2. Rationale

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out the responsibilities of all ACT public schools to counter racism.

## 3. Definition

- 3.1 **Racism** refers to any belief, attitude, behaviour or practice that reflects an assumption, stated or implied, of superiority of one cultural group over another. It is expressed through prejudice or discrimination and may take various forms, including verbal, physical, social, psychological and electronic. It can be overt or covert and directed against individuals or groups. Racism can also be institutionalised into policies, practices and structures.
- 3.2 Racism is directed towards individuals or groups on the basis of their race, colour, descent, nationality, and/or ethnicity. It can be based on actual or supposed features of body, culture, language, religion, history or other attributes. In this policy, the terms *racial*, *racist* and *racism* encompass this range.

3.3 Racism may occur in the following contexts:

- between students
- between students and teachers
- between students and other employees or volunteers
- in the context of work experience.

3.4 **Critical Incident:**

An incident, or series of incidents, which result in:

- significant disruption to the school's normal procedures
- a school being locked down, evacuated or requiring closure
- police notification and involvement in the school
- significant threat to the safety of students and/or staff.

## 4. Procedures

4.1 This policy must be read in conjunction with the *Providing Safe Schools P-12*.

4.2 Schools should put in place strategies and programs that meet the educational, social and personal needs of students within an inclusive school culture, including:

- strategies to teach and promote positive behaviours
- practices to enhance self-discipline and respect for the rights of others
- practices to recognise and celebrate student achievement
- strategies for dealing with inappropriate behaviour
- recognition of individual student needs and differences
- recognition of the rights and responsibilities of students, parents and school staff.

4.3 A range of options including school based mechanisms to formal lodgement of complaints should be available to students experiencing racist behaviour.

4.4 Schools are encouraged to resolve issues and concerns informally if possible.

4.5 Complaints of a general concern or of a specific incident should be made initially to the immediate class teacher.

4.6 If a complaint cannot be resolved informally, students should approach the Anti Racism Contact Officer for Students in their school. Staff need to be aware that racial discrimination and racial vilification are unlawful under the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*. Students experiencing racial discrimination or racial vilification should be informed of their rights to refer the incident to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commissioner who is responsible for investigating complaints under the Act.

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**Policy Owner:** Director, Student Services

**Related Documents:** *Providing Safe Schools P - 12*

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