

Hamilton Music Collective (HMC) and the An Instrument for Every Child Program (AIFEC)

Policy: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Introduction: The principles of equity, diversity and inclusion are at the core of the HMC and AIFEC Program. These underlying principles are evident as the HMC and AIFEC strive to reduce barriers so that all children are able to benefit from - and enjoy - music. This policy will focus on key definitions and the practices of the HMC and AIFEC that are designed to promote equal musical opportunities for children in the City of Hamilton.

Definitions:

1.) Equity: Equity is about creating equal playing fields and giving people what they need, as opposed to giving everyone the same thing, which is the definition of equality. It is recognizing what people lack and providing for their needs. The goal is to ensure everyone has the ability to reach the same outcomes. The City of Hamilton's Equity and Inclusion Policy and supporting documents state that "the principle of equity underpins an inherent belief in the human rights of all persons. In addition, it states a belief that in Canada's highly differentiated socioeconomic society, all stakeholder communities, with the groups and individuals that they include, have the right to barrier free access to resources, decision-making, expertise, experience, connections, information and opportunities through solutions that match their needs."¹

2.) Diversity: Diversity can be defined as the variations that exist amongst peoples. Some examples include: Age; ethnicity and cultural backgrounds; aboriginal ancestry; gender; physical abilities; sexual orientation; educational background; income; and more.

3.) Inclusion: Inclusion is the approach of considering diversity and equity in planning, consulting, programming, and more. Inclusion means listening to the views of those who don't often have a voice. An inclusive environment ensures that everyone feels welcomed, valued and respected, and is able to participate.

4.) Barriers: Barriers are numerous and can affect different people in different ways. Some examples of barriers include: Income; language; transportation; lack of access to internet technology, health care or education; length of time in Canada; race; age; and more.

1. <https://www.hamilton.ca/sites/default/files/media/browser/2019-02-28/equity-diversity-inclusion-handbook-draft.pdf>, p.3.



HMC and AIFEC Beliefs and Values:

The HMC and AIFEC believe that all children should have opportunities to be exposed to music and to learn to play an instrument.

The HMC stands together with the entire community against all forms of racism, violence, racial injustice and inequality.

As an organization formed to provide free music education to children and to present quality music performances to the Hamilton community, it is of the utmost importance that we state our renewed commitment to upholding the values of social justice and racial equity, both in principle and in action.

We recognize that committing to these values involves ongoing work, and every individual within the HMC organization will continue to strive towards building a more equitable future for the entire community.

In developing its vision and realizing its mission, HMC operates within the following statement of values which is embedded in its operational by-law. The corporation expects its members to adhere to the following values with regard to their activities within and on behalf of the corporation:

- Commitment to the public good
- Accountability to the public
- Respect for the worth and dignity of individuals
- Inclusiveness and social justice
- Respect for pluralism and diversity
- Transparency, integrity and honesty
- Responsible stewardship of resources
- Commitment to excellence and to maintaining the public trust.

HMC and AIFEC Equity, Diversity and Inclusive Practices:

AIFEC's goals are empowerment and accessibility and to enable all children to experience the joy and benefits of playing music, regardless of their socio-economic position. AIFEC strives to remove barriers for students by:

- encouraging children to participate
- awarding grants to cover program expenses
- providing each participant with his/her own instrument free of charge for the duration of the program
- translating written and website materials into other languages as needed
- providing music education in school and community settings
- working together with school and community partners to overcome barriers
- offering advanced programming in community settings as students progress through the program
- offering on-line music instruction



- reaching out to parents and caregivers in numerous ways, including by email and phone calls
- ensuring employees will take preventative measures at all times and intervene appropriately as required to support a positive environment for everyone
- ensuring employees receive necessary training regarding AODA and other legislation
- providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect, and prohibiting discriminatory practices.

Additional HMC Policies available upon request:

[Accessibility Policy](#)

[Accessible Customer Service Policy, Notice & Feedback Form](#)

[Accessible Recruitment & Employment Policy](#)

References:

[City of Hamilton Equity, Diversity, Inclusion Handbook DRAFT](#), December 2017.

Boys and Girls Clubs of Hamilton: Program Policies and Procedures, 2019.