

Article E.1: Non-Sexist Environment

❖ Article E.1: Non-Sexist Environment

1. *A non-sexist environment is defined as that in which there is no discrimination against females or males by portraying them in gender stereotyped roles or by omitting their contributions.*
2. *The employer does not condone and will not tolerate any written or verbal expression of sexism. In September of each school year the employer and the local shall jointly notify administrative officers and staff, in writing, of their commitment to a non-sexist environment.*
3. *The employer and the local shall promote a non-sexist environment through the development, integration, and implementation of non-sexist educational programs, activities, and learning resources for both staff and students.*

❖ Explanation

- E.1.1** 1. *A non-sexist environment is defined as that in which there is no discrimination against females or males by portraying them in gender stereotyped roles or by omitting their contributions.*

Clause E.1.1 defines a non-sexist environment. Work environments are non-sexist when gender stereotypes are avoided. In non-sexist work environments, people also avoid focusing on, for example, one gender to the exclusion of the other when discussing or analyzing individual or group contributions in a specific field of endeavour.

- E.1.2** 2. *The employer does not condone and will not tolerate any written or verbal expression of sexism. In September of each school year the employer and the local shall jointly notify administrative officers and staff, in writing, of their commitment to a non-sexist environment.*

The first sentence of clause E.1.2 establishes that the employer will neither condone nor tolerate sexism. It is not enough for a district to say it does not condone a sexist environment. The word “tolerate” commits the district to take corrective steps when instances of sexism arise.

The second sentence reflects a preventive approach to sexism by requiring a joint written annual reminder. The district and the local association will determine the content of the reminder each year.

- E.1.3** 3. *The employer and the local shall promote a non-sexist environment through the development, integration, and implementation of non-sexist educational programs, activities, and learning resources for both staff and students.*

Clause E.1.3 establishes the obligation of the district to promote the issue with both students and staff. The focus on students reflects the reality that a non-sexist environment cannot be created and maintained if it only involves district employees. Students are a significant part of a teacher's working environment. The inclusion of the issue in educational programs helps to more readily attain and maintain the goal of this article.

❖ Implementation

A number of Previous Local Agreements included an article specifically on the matter of a non-sexist environment. In other districts, the local article combined the issue of a non-sexist environment with other matters such as prevention of racism, promotion of multiculturalism, and commitment to affirmative action.

Transitional Collective Agreement clause A.2.2.b required that any article in a Previous Local Agreement which dealt "with the same matters in substance" as specified new articles in the Transitional Collective Agreement, would be replaced by the relevant Transitional Collective Agreement article. Accordingly, Article E.1 replaced the non-sexist environment article in the local agreement. However, since some local articles included these other matters, Article E.1 may not have replaced the entire article. Districts that have not yet made the necessary changes should use the following approach in modifying their Previous Local Agreements:

- Where the local agreement article concerns only the issue of a non-sexist environment, Article E.1 has replaced it in its entirety. In some cases, this replacement will mean the deletion of local language relating to an aspect of non-sexist environment that is not specifically referenced in Article E.1.

The district should be prepared to discuss the impact of this deletion. For example, if the deleted language involves a "process," the district may consider including the process as one of the activities referenced in clause E.1.3.

- Where the local agreement article relates to other matters such as racism, the article should be revised to delete the references to non-sexist environments and – in this example – renamed racism.