

# STUDENT CONDUCT

## Background

The Student Code of Conduct supports the establishment and maintenance of a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment for all students and school staff. Students are expected to learn, practice, and develop such personal and interpersonal character traits and to contribute to the development of these environments. Students are further expected to respect diversity and refrain from demonstrating any form of discrimination as set out in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Alberta Human Rights Act, and the School Act. As a fundamental principle and as a matter of public policy, the Division believes that all students have the right to learn in settings that promote equality of opportunity, dignity, and respect, without regard to race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status, or sexual orientation. As such, students are expected to foster a sense of belonging among all students.

## Definitions

1. “Bullying” means repeated and hostile or demeaning behaviour by an individual in the school community where the behaviour is intended to cause harm, fear or distress to one or more other individuals in the school community, including psychological harm or harm to an individual’s reputation.
2. “Harassment” is unwelcome verbal or physical conduct, including harassment that relates to discrimination. Usually, it must be repeated to constitute harassment but single acts can be harassing if they are severe, or involve obvious power imbalance. Harassment is insulting, demeaning or intimidating. Examples of harassment include but are not limited to the following: verbal or physical abuse; threats; derogatory remarks; jokes; innuendo or taunts about appearance or beliefs; display or electronic transfer of pornographic, racist or offensive images; and condescension that undermines self-confidence or is an unreasonable invasion of one’s person. Harassment can be bullying or outright physical assault. The behaviour giving rise to a complaint need not be intentional in order to be considered harassment; it is sufficient that the offender knows, or ought reasonably to know, that the behaviour is offensive and unwelcome.
3. “Sexual harassment” is any unwelcome behaviour that is sexual in nature. Unwanted sexual advances, unwanted requests for sexual acts, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:
  - a. the harasser knows or ought to know that it is unwelcome; or
  - b. such conduct undermines another individual’s personal dignity by causing embarrassment, discomfort, humiliation or offence; or
  - c. such conduct interferes with an individual’s work performance or learning opportunities by creating an intimidating or hostile work or learning environment; or
  - d. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or of educational services

4. "Intimidation" is intentional behaviour that would cause a person of ordinary sensibilities fear of injury or harm.

5. "Weapon" means any object which is either designed, intended, or used to intimidate, to threaten or to inflict bodily harm on a person and includes an object which imitates a weapon, but does not include a faith-based object, or an imitation weapon authorized for use by a teacher or principal such as in a dramatic production, or a starter's pistol authorized for use by a teacher at an athletic event, unless used to intimidate, to threaten or to inflict bodily harm on a person. OR A weapon is anything used, designed to be used, or intended for use in causing death or injury to any person, or for the purpose of threatening or intimidating a person, displaying or brandishing a weapon in a threatening or intimidating manner, assaulting another person.

6. "Violence" is the threatened, attempted, or actual conduct of a person that causes or is likely to cause physical injury. Examples include, but are not limited to the following: threatening behaviour such as shaking fists, destroying property, or throwing objects; verbal or written threats that express an intent to inflict harm; physical attacks; or any other act that would arouse fear in a reasonable person in the circumstances.

7. "Suspension" is the removal of a student from the classroom, school property, school activities, or bus for a period of up to five school days.

8. "Expulsion" is the Board approved removal of a student from the classroom or bus for a period of time longer than five school days. The length of an expulsion is normally limited to the school year in which an expulsion takes place.

## **Student Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Acceptable Behaviour**

Students have a responsibility to respect the rights and dignity of others and to become actively and productively involved in their own learning and social growth. Students are to meet the expectations for student behaviour while attending classes, travelling on school buses, on field trips, on any school or Board-sponsored activity or under the supervision of school staff, whether such activity occurs on or off school property.

In accordance with the School Act, students, as partners in education, have the responsibility:

- a. to ensure that their conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging,
- b. to attend school regularly and punctually,
- c. to be ready to learn and actively engage in and diligently pursue the student's education,
- d. to respect themselves and the rights and dignity of others in the school,
- e. to refrain from, report and not tolerate bullying or bullying behaviour directed toward others in the school, whether or not it occurs within the school building, during the school day or by electronic means,
- f. to know and comply with the rules of the school,
- g. to cooperate fully and respectfully with all adult authorities within the classroom, on the school grounds, on field trips, or in the halls.

- h. to be accountable and accept responsibility for their behaviour to their teachers and other school staff,
- i. to contribute positively to their school and their community.
- j. to use their abilities and talents to gain maximum learning benefits from their school experiences.
- k. to contribute to a climate of mutual trust and respect conducive to effective learning, personal development, and social living.

### **Unacceptable Student Behaviour**

Students are to refrain from engaging in unacceptable behaviour. While school staff members are not able to control what students do outside of school or by electronic means, where that behaviour spills into the school environment, there may be consequences for the behaviour. Unacceptable student behaviour may be grounds for intervention and disciplinary action. A misbehaviour may also provide an opportunity for critical learning in the areas of personal accountability and responsibility, the development of empathy, conflict resolution, communication, and social skills development.

Progressive discipline steps shall be considered when a student exhibits behaviour, or encourages behaviour that is contrary to the maintenance of a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe environment. More specifically, the following behaviours which is not an exhaustive list may initiate interventions or disciplinary actions:

1. Exhibits open opposition or willful disobedience to authority.
2. Interference with the orderly conduct of classes or the school.
3. Habitually neglects duty.
4. Use or display of improper, abusive or profane language.
5. Engages in, or encourages conduct that is potentially injurious, or threatens the physical or mental well being of others.
6. Distribution or display of offensive messages or pictures.
7. Exhibits behaviour that interferes with school or division approved activities.
8. Subjecting anyone to forms of punishment, harassment, sexual harassment, or indignities (hazing/froshing).
9. Bullying and cyberbullying whether at school or at home if there is an impact to the school.
10. Any illegal activity. Examples include but are not limited to:
  - a. Theft, including identity theft.
  - b. Wilful damage to property / vandalism.
  - c. Tampering with the fire alarm, extinguishers, safety equipment, or automated external defibrillators (AED).
  - d. Use, possession of, sale, distribution of or active contact with, a weapon on a student's person, in a student's locker or desk, on school board property, or in a vehicle on school board property used by a student or occupied by a student as a passenger.
  - e. Possession, being under the influence of, use of, or trafficking in tobacco, electronic smoking products, illegal drugs, alcohol, cannabis, illicit drugs, and other controlled substances in school and on school/Board property or at school/Board related events or activities.
  - f. Assault.
11. Abuse of the Division computer network, the internet, email or any electronic privileges.

12. Use of technology such as computers, cameras, cell phones, and other digital equipment for purposes that are illegal, unethical, immoral, or inappropriate.
13. Contravention of Board policies or student codes of conduct.
14. Exhibits behavior prohibited by other Board policies, administrative procedures, the School Act or the Criminal Code of Canada.
15. Exhibits behavior inconsistent with Section 12 of the School Act responsibilities of students' activities.

### **Consequences of Unacceptable Student Behaviour**

Responses to inappropriate behaviour will take into account a student's age, maturity and individual circumstances.

Support will be provided to students who are impacted by inappropriate behaviour as well as for students who engage in inappropriate behaviour.

Consequences for inappropriate behaviour may include, but are not limited to:

1. Instruction in problem solving
2. Counseling or regular check-ins with staff
3. Temporary removal of privileges
4. Restorative practices
5. Behaviour plan
6. Suspension
7. Expulsion

### **School Student Codes of Conduct**

1. Each school's expectations for student behaviour and conduct shall be developed in consultation with staff, students, parents and the community.
2. The principal shall ensure that the school's code of conduct is congruent in language and intent with the Division's Student Code of Conduct and relevant legislation and regulations.
3. Communication of the expectations for student behaviour and conduct shall be done on an annual basis with students and parents.
4. The code of conduct shall include the consequences for failure to meet the expectations related to student behaviour, conduct, dress, discipline, deportment, and attendance.
5. When disciplinary action is required, staff shall, whenever possible, work with the student's parents and may involve Division resource staff and, where appropriate, staff from community agencies.
6. The principal shall maintain records of disciplinary action taken by school staff as a result of unacceptable student behaviour, and shall ensure that appropriate documentation procedures are developed for all disciplinary measures.

7. Staff members shall inform the principal forthwith of instances of, or suspected instances of students breaching the student code of conduct.
8. When disciplinary action is required, staff shall, where possible, work with the student's parents, may involve Division resource staff and, where appropriate, staff from community agencies.
9. Under relevant legislation/regulations the Board may seek restitution for damage to Board property.
10. Each principal shall forward copies of all suspension letters to the superintendent.
11. The principal shall maintain records of disciplinary action taken by school staff as a result of unacceptable student behaviour.

Reference: Section 12, 45, 60, School Act

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