

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Background

The purpose of a student code of conduct is to establish and maintain a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment for all students and school staff.

The *School Act* stipulates expectations for students with regard to their general conduct and deportment. The Division fully subscribes to this code of conduct and believes that it has a responsibility to maintain an acceptable standard of student behaviour and decorum in the school in order to foster an environment where effective teaching and learning can occur. The Division believes that such standards of student conduct will assist to develop in each student the capacity for self-control.

The Division Code of Conduct will focus on providing a welcome, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that includes the establishment of a code of conduct for students.

Procedures

1. Students shall conduct themselves in accordance with the code of conduct established by the *School Act*. This requires reasonable compliance with the following:
 - 1.1 Diligence in pursuing studies;
 - 1.2 Regular and punctual school attendance;
 - 1.3 Full cooperation with those authorized by the Board to provide educational programs and other services;
 - 1.4 Compliance with the rules of the school;
 - 1.5 Accountability to teachers for conduct; and
 - 1.6 Respect for the rights of others.
2. Moreover, students in Division schools are expected to:
 - 2.1 Contribute to the best of their ability to the realization of a Catholic Christian school community;
 - 2.2 Participate to the best of their ability in the education program assigned to them;
 - 2.3 Be responsible for their own learning;
 - 2.4 Be responsible and accountable for their own behaviour and conduct:
 - 2.4.1 While involved in school-sponsored or related activities;
 - 2.4.2 While on school property;
 - 2.4.3 While engaged in electronic communications and activity;
 - 2.4.4 During recess or lunch periods on or off school property;
 - 2.4.5 While travelling to and from school, and

- 2.4.6 Beyond the hours of school operation, and school building, if the behaviour or conduct detrimentally affects the welfare of individual students or the governance, climate, or efficiency of the schools. Students shall be concerned about the safety of themselves and others;
 - 2.5 Conform to the rules of the school; and to the regulations of the Division, and Alberta Education; and
 - 2.6 Treat school property with proper respect. Students who cause wilful damage shall be expected to make restitution.
3. The principal has the responsibility for and the authority to establish and maintain appropriate procedures to ensure an acceptable standard of student discipline.
4. The principal shall involve students, staff and the School Council in the development of discipline policy and procedures for the school.
5. The Division believes that acceptable standards of student discipline can be achieved by:
 - 5.1 Developing in every student, as far as possible, the capacity for intelligent self-control;
 - 5.2 Establishing clearly understood and reasonable limits to student behaviour which can be consistently respected and upheld;
 - 5.3 Recognizing that the maintenance of effective student behaviour is the responsibility of students, parents and staff;
 - 5.4 Establishing regulations and procedures in each school through cooperative involvement of students, parents and staff; and
 - 5.5 Acknowledging that, as relates to student conduct, discrimination on the basis of any of the prohibited grounds of the *Alberta Human Rights Act* or the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is unacceptable behaviour.
6. Principals are responsible for developing a student code of conduct in consultation with students, staff and School Council. The student code of conduct will outline the school's general rules, regulations and expectations of students and shall be communicated throughout the school and parent community through means of publication.
7. All schools, through the leadership of the principal, must enact procedures that support the following expectations with respect to bullying.
 - 7.1 No action toward another student shall have the intent of causing harm, fear, or distress to that student.
 - 7.2 No action toward another student within the school community will diminish the student's reputation within the school community.
 - 7.3 Any action that contributes to a perception of bullying, whether it occurs during school time, or after school hours, on or off school property, or whether by electronic or other means, will be addressed by the school if it is determined that the actions impact the well-being of the alleged victim within the school community.

- 7.4 Any action that humiliates or contributes to diminishing the reputation of a student because of anything related to the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is deemed to be an act of bullying.
 - 7.5 No report by a student that he/she is being “bullied” will be ignored by school staff. The official will respond as if an incident has happened and report the incident to a teacher or principal for response.
 - 7.6 Students who are bystanders to an act of bullying have a responsibility to report observed incidences to school staff. Students are expected to either exercise communication dedicated to prevent bullying behaviour, or failing this, immediately report such incidences to school staff.
 - 7.7 Students do not have a role in disciplining other students who have allegedly participated in bullying behaviour. They are encouraged to discourage these actions by labeling the behaviour through communication to others as bullying, requesting that the behaviour cease, and report the incident to school staff.
 - 7.8 In establishing consequences for bullying, teachers and principals will use corrective interventions that consider the context of the circumstance, the behavioural history of the students involved, and the age/stage of development of the student.
 - 7.9 If in the opinion of the teacher or principal an act of bullying has occurred, supports will be provided for the student(s) who is impacted by inappropriate behaviour, as well as for the student(s) who engaged in inappropriate behaviour.
 - 7.10 Parents play a primary role in assisting with the resolution of matters pertaining to bullying. Apprising them of issues in this area as they have impacted their children should occur at the earliest opportunity.
 - 7.11 Incidences of bullying that adversely impact the well-being of individuals or are an affront to the common good of the school community may be addressed through application of Sections 24 or 25 of the *School Act*.
8. Formalized procedures used by schools to address bullying will be placed within school handbooks, reviewed with school councils, and evaluated for effectiveness regularly.
 9. Schools should invite Division office support if existing resources or strategies are insufficient in addressing bullying within the school community.
 10. Each school shall develop consequences for non-compliance with established rules and regulations that are consistent with sound educational practice and congruent with the procedures that follow.
 11. When dealing with situations requiring disciplinary procedures, teachers shall consider the following:
 - 11.1 The use of sufficient force to restrain a student who is about to carry out some destructive act or to prevent a student from attacking another person or injuring himself/herself is justified.
 - 11.2 Teachers may temporarily remove from their classroom any student whose conduct continues to be detrimental to the work of the class after he/she has been given reasonable warning. The student’s temporary removal is to be used

to settle the class and provide a “cooling off” period, if necessary, and is also to be followed up with an individual conference with the offender in order to secure the desired behaviour.

- 11.3 Consequences for student misbehaviour is to be appropriate to the circumstances and take into account the student’s age, maturity, and individual circumstances, and ensures that support is provided for the students who are impacted by inappropriate behaviour, as well as for students who engage in the inappropriate behaviour. Discipline systems involving the automatic imposition of pre-determined penalties for certain acts are generally to be avoided. Consequences selected are to be chosen to encourage the desired changes in student behaviour or attitude while ensuring a favourable learning environment.
 - 11.4 Teachers are to avoid getting into power struggles with students. While upholding the dignity and authority of the teacher’s position is important, students will generally respond more effectively to a quietly worded request that respects their dignity than to a strongly voiced public reprimand.
 - 11.5 A “cooling off” period between the commission of the offence and the imposition of a consequence is usually advisable. When either the teacher or student is angry or upset, judgement is often impaired and focusing on issues is more difficult.
 - 11.6 Teachers must recognize that good discipline often depends on their ability to spot and check unacceptable behaviour in its early stages before it escalates into a disruptive confrontation. This requires constant monitoring of the class throughout the class period. Teachers are not to leave their classrooms unattended, even for short periods of time.
 - 11.7 As an educational institution, the school must provide an environment that allows children’s creative talents and abilities to emerge. This implies that students will test the boundaries and make mistakes. Use of positive reinforcement for desired behaviour is a powerful tool that teachers can use to consistently encourage desired growth.
 - 11.8 Unacceptable methods of discipline will not be supported. These include:
 - 11.8.1 Physical attacks by the teacher upon a student;
 - 11.8.2 Use of corporal punishment;
 - 11.8.3 Mass detentions and mass consequences imposed to discipline a small number of students;
 - 11.8.4 Detaining students for disciplinary purposes in an arbitrary or inflexible fashion that prevents students from meeting other legitimate, important commitments; and
 - 11.8.5 Verbal attack by a teacher upon a student including such things as name calling, unfavourable personal references and attempts to belittle the student.
12. Detention of students: The imposition of detention requires discretion to ensure that the penalty achieves the desired results. When using detention the following regulations apply:

- 12.1 The imposition of mass detentions on an entire group in response to the inappropriate behaviour of a small number of students in the group is unacceptable;
 - 12.2 The wishes of parents, expressed in writing or in person, for a student to leave school promptly at the close of the school day must be respected;
 - 12.3 Elementary (Grades 1-6) students shall normally not be detained for a period longer than 30 minutes; junior and senior high (Grades 7-12) shall normally not be detained longer than 60 minutes after school;
 - 12.4 All students detained must be under the direct supervision of a teacher for the period of the detention;
 - 12.5 Activities carried on by students during detention periods must be constructive and educational; and
 - 12.6 Prior approval of the parent/guardian must be obtained before a student can be detained at the end of the school day with alternate transportation arrangements being made where required.
13. In matters of student conduct, it is important to communicate with the parents of the student(s) on a frequent and ongoing basis. It is to be noted that not all communications with parents need be in matters related to student concerns. Student commendations are excellent vehicles for establishing positive working relationships with parents and students.
 14. As in all disciplinary matters, when student conduct falls beyond the nature of what is normal in the educational context, the teacher is to consult with his/her school administration.
 15. This administrative procedure shall be made available on the Division's public website and therefore be accessible for viewing by all staff, students, parents and members of the public.
 - 15.1 The principal will post, in a prominent place clearly visible to students, the URL of Administrative Procedure 350 – Student Code of Conduct.
 16. This administrative procedure shall be reviewed annually.

Reference:

School Act, Province of Alberta
Alberta Human Rights Act
Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms