

CODE OF CONDUCT REVIEW TO ADDRESS HARASSMENT, INCLUDING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Background

Administrative Procedure 359 (AP359) Guideline 2 describes the expectations that the Division will maintain in addressing harassment, including bullying behavior, and sexual harassment throughout Division Schools. All Division schools and their classrooms shall implement and maintain local procedures to support this specific guideline. To that end, all Division schools and their classrooms have a positive duty to review procedures dedicated to ensuring safe and caring school environments. As a component of this process, all Division schools shall have their school and classroom procedures in addressing harassing and bullying behavior reviewed annually and made publicly available to all staff, students, and parents within the school community. Through addressing AP 359, Guideline 2 at the local level and the procedures that follow, all schools will be compliant with Section 33 (1) (k) of the *Education Act*, which has determined the elements of a Code of Conduct that must be in place for all provincial schools.

Definitions:

Bullying refers to repeated and hostile or demeaning behaviour by an individual where the behaviour is intended to cause harm, fear, or distress to another individual in the school community, including psychological harm or harm to the individual's reputation. Bullying often occurs in circumstances where one party endeavors to maintain power and control over another based upon systemic inequalities within a social setting.

Harassment refers to derogatory (e.g., excessively critical, insulting, belittling) or vexatious (e.g., aggressive, angry, antagonistic) conduct or comments that are known or ought reasonably to be known to be offensive or unwelcome. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a) any objectionable comment, act, or display that demeans, belittles, or causes personal humiliation or embarrassment, and any act of intimidation or threat;
- b) conduct or comments involving any of the prohibited grounds of harassment and discrimination as defined in the *Alberta Human Rights Act*.

Sexual Harassment includes comments, gestures or physical conduct of a sexual nature where an individual knows or ought reasonably to know that the behaviour is unwelcome and personally offensive. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- a) inappropriate or derogatory comments, humour, insults or behaviour based on gender and/or gender expression, gender identity;
- b) inappropriate, lewd, or sexually offensive written, graphic or behavioural displays on school board property;
- c) inappropriate, lewd, or sexually offensive slogans or graphics displayed on clothing worn on school board property or during school-related activities;
- d) inappropriate conversation, physical touching, or leering that could be construed to be a sexual advance;
- e) inappropriate conversation regarding an individual's sexual behaviour;
- f) unsolicited and/or unwanted requests to engage in sexual activity;
- g) reprisal or threat of reprisal against an individual for rejecting a sexual solicitation or advance.

Procedures:

1. The Superintendent shall annually convey to principals the scope of communications and expectations that will be provided for all Division schools, staff, students, and parents in addressing harassment and bullying within Division schools.
2. Communications and expectations provided by the Superintendent shall provide for a school's inclusion of local procedures and / or rules in the form of a school-based code of conduct that addresses AP359, Guidelines 1 and 2.
3. Subsequent to schools receiving provincially derived accountability pillar satisfaction survey reports, their annual Gallup Student Poll report, and locally determined data as determined within the annual community engagement protocol of the Division, all schools will complete and post, in a publicly accessible digital location, their annual review of the school-based code of conduct.
4. The principal of each school shall provide for consultation with students, staff, and parents in conducting a review, and if necessary, revising the school-based code of conduct. In the digital location where the school code of conduct is posted, such a post will indicate the date of the last review of school code of conduct with school council.
5. Every school handbook will be revised annually with the current school code of conduct, and the handbook will provide information about how the school code of conduct is reviewed with students and how it is used as a reference throughout the year by staff and students.
6. For students and parents who may not have digital access to documents containing the school code of conduct, a paper copy will be kept in the school office and library.
7. Further to Sections 197 (c) and (d) of the *Education Act*, it shall be the authority of

school-based principals to provide for the evaluation of their school's code of conduct and authorize any changes that are made to the code.

8. The principal shall apply the definitions stated in Administrative Procedure 359, aspects of restorative discipline and supporting positive behaviours (as outlined in AP359), the expectations of Administrative Procedure 350 – Student Discipline Framework (AP350), and evidence-based decision making in making a final determination of the code of conduct for the school.
9. Classroom procedures dedicated to addressing bullying shall align in scope and implementation with school procedures and Division expectations.
10. The principal shall annually make publicly available to staff, students, and parents the Division's and School's Code of Conduct expectations and procedures.
11. The principal will keep a copy of the school's code of conduct on file with the Superintendent by communicating the Code in a publicly accessible, digital location.
12. The Superintendent shall annually report to the Board, an evaluation of the Division's overall "Safe and Caring Learning Environment" strategy and provide for amending protocols, communications, and expectations at the school-based level on the basis of this evaluation.

References:

Alberta Human Rights Act
Ministerial Order on Student Learning (#001/2013)
Policy 1 Division Mission Statement, Values and Beliefs, Goals and Objectives
Administrative Procedure 359: Safe and Caring Learning Environments

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