

SAFE AND CARING ENVIRONMENTS, STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

Background

A welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment for students and staff is of primary importance in all our schools, and exists with the full support and assistance of all members of the school community. We seek to develop a just, peaceful and democratic society in our schools. The Division affirms the rights of each staff member employed by the Division and each student enrolled in a school operated by the Division in accordance with the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the *Alberta Human Rights Act* (AHRA) and the *Alberta School Act*. Staff members and students will not be discriminated against as provided for in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* or the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The Division commits to ensure that all are treated with respect and dignity. The Division expects employees, students, volunteers, parents, and community members who visit Division facilities to conduct themselves in a manner which promotes and protects the best interests of students, staff and colleagues.

Procedures

1. Students, as a partner in education, have the responsibility to:
 - 1.1 Attend school regularly and punctually
 - 1.2 Be ready to learn, actively engage in and diligently pursue their education
 - 1.3 Respect the rights of others in the school
 - 1.4 Positively contribute to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity of all school and community members regardless of their 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
 - 1.5 Refrain from, report and discourage 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
 - 1.6 Comply with the rules of the school and the policies of the Board
 - 1.7 Co-operate and be accountable to the teachers, school staff and those authorized by the Board to provide education programs and other services in regards to conduct

2. Staff members, as a partner in education, have the responsibility to:
 - 2.1 Establish, maintain and contribute to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity of all school and community members
 - 2.2 Subscribe to the policies of Golden Hills School Division 75 Public Schools and the tenets of the Alberta Teachers' Association Code of Professional Conduct
 - 2.3 Treat parents, students and fellow staff with respect at all times
 - 2.4 Support parents and other school staff in the development and implementation of plans to address the needs of students
 - 2.5 Communicate information about student behaviour to parents and administration as appropriate
 - 2.6 Support establishment of student leadership or support groups intended to promote welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments that respect diversity and foster a sense of belonging when one or more students express an interest in such groups
 - 2.7 Provide an environment that promotes self-esteem and self-regulation

3. Principals, as a partner in education, have the responsibility in accordance with the School Act S.20 to:

- 3.1 Establish, maintain and contribute to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity of all school and community members
 - 3.2 Maintain order and discipline in the school and on the school grounds and during activities sponsored or approved by the school/Board
 - 3.3 Treat parents, students and fellow staff with respect at all times
 - 3.4 Support staff and parents in the development and implementation of plans to address the learning needs of students
 - 3.5 Assign supervision as required to ensure a safe, orderly environment
 - 3.6 Maintain order and discipline in the school and on the school grounds and during activities sponsored or approved by the Board
4. Parents/Guardians, as a partner in education, have the responsibility to:
 - 4.1 Positively contribute to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity of all school and community members
 - 4.2 Treat all adults and students with respect at all times
 - 4.3 Advocate for their children and work co-operatively with the school in the best interests of their children
 - 4.4 Participate and co-operate with school staff in the development and implementation of plans to address the learning needs of students
 - 4.5 Ensure their children come to school prepared to learn
5. All students shall have access to a washroom that allows for appropriate privacy. Staff shall consistently demonstrate sensitivity to the needs and safety of all students with respect to washroom access. The Principal shall ensure that individual solutions are implemented with respect and discretion.
 - 5.1 All students will be afforded the necessary consideration and accommodations to meet individual needs and rights to privacy during athletics, overnight trips, change rooms and locker rooms, etc.
6. If one or more students attending a school operated by a board request a staff member employed by the board for support to establish a voluntary student organization, or to lead an activity intended to promote a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging, the principal of the school shall immediately grant permission for the establishment of the student organization or the holding of the activity at the school, and within a reasonable time from the date that the principal receives the request designate a staff member to serve as the staff liaison to facilitate the establishment, and the ongoing operation, of the student organization or to assist in organizing the activity.
 - 6.1 The students may select a respectful and inclusive name for the organization or activity, including the name “gay-straight alliance” or “queer-straight alliance”, after consulting with the principal.
 - 6.2 For greater certainty, the principal shall not prohibit or discourage students from choosing a name that includes “gay-straight alliance” or “queer-straight alliance”.
7. The principal shall immediately inform the Board and the Minister if no staff member is available to serve as a staff liaison, and if so informed, the Minister shall appoint a responsible adult to work with the requesting students in organizing the activity or to facilitate the establishment, and the ongoing operation, of the student organization at the school.
8. The principal is responsible for ensuring that notification, if any, respecting a voluntary student organization or an activity referred to is limited to the fact of the establishment of the organization or the holding of the activity, and is otherwise consistent with the usual practices relating to notifications of other

student organizations or activities. The Division is a public body under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act; any disclosure of personal information must be in accordance with this Act.

9. Schools shall publish the expectations for student conduct and discipline procedures. These expectations and procedures must also include information about the protocol and procedures used when incidents involving violence or threats of violence occur.
10. Unacceptable behaviours include, but are not limited to, disrespectful, abusive, and/or violent behaviour toward school personnel or other students, damage to property, lack of proper attendance, improper conduct on school buses, any behaviour which is disruptive to the learning process, involvement with drugs or alcohol during school hours and at all school sponsored functions, or possession of a weapon or instrument that can be termed dangerous to students or staff, on school property, and/or at a school sponsored event.
11. In the interest of supporting a safe and caring learning community, schools will respond to behaviours that threaten or violate the physical and emotional safety of those in its care. Students are entitled to procedural fairness, due process, and respectful, dignified treatment. Improving student conduct relies on effective communication and co-operation between home and school. The school will respond with intervention that is logical, restorative (where appropriate and possible) and take into account a student's age, maturity and individual circumstances when determining responses. Support will be provided for students who are impacted by inappropriate behaviour as well as for students who engage in inappropriate behaviour. A risk/threat assessment may be undertaken to collect additional information to make decisions on next steps. The following are examples of responses that may be considered in addressing inappropriate behaviour:
 - 9.1 Discussion with those involved
 - 9.2 Conference that may involve students, staff, parents and/or divisional personnel
 - 9.3 A plan that may include counselling, mentoring, mediation, or outside agency involvement (Child and Family Services, Mental Health, RCMP, etc.)
 - 9.4 Time out: a "cooling off" period
 - 9.5 Student orientation
 - 9.6 Withdrawal of privileges (school areas, transportation services, and/or school-related activities)
 - 9.7 Development and implementation of a behavioural or performance contract
 - 9.8 Suspension from class or from school (GHSD AP 351)
 - 9.9 Expulsion: involvement of school administration, Superintendent and Board is required (GHSD AP 351)
12. A teacher or a principal may suspend a student, if in the opinion of the teacher or principal, (a) the student has failed to comply with School Act S. 12, or (b) the student's conduct is injurious to the physical or mental well-being of others in the school. A teacher may suspend for one class period. A principal may suspend a student from school, from one or more class periods, courses or education programs, or from riding a school bus. A principal may suspend a student for up to five school days.
13. The principal may discipline a student for conduct or behaviour that occurs at or outside the school, during or outside of school hours and days, online or in person, if that behaviour impacts the safe and orderly environment of the school.
14. Corporal punishment is not permitted.

References:

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

The Province of Alberta Human Rights Act

The Province of Alberta Education Act

The Province of Alberta School Act S. 12 *Students*

The Province of Alberta School Act S. 13 *Compulsory Education*

The Province of Alberta School Act S. 16.1 *Support for student organizations*

The Province of Alberta School Act S. 20 *Principals*

The Province of Alberta School Act S. 24 *Suspension*

The Province of Alberta School Act S. 25 *Expulsion*

Golden Hills School Division No. 75 *Administrative Procedure 351: Suspension and Expulsion*