



Board Policy 19

WELCOMING, CARING, RESPECTFUL, SAFE AND HEALTHY LEARNING AND WORKING ENVIRONMENTS

Inclusion and a sense of belonging for all students stems from creating an environment in which we focus on all the ways in which we have the same right to learn, not on the things that make us different.

The Board is committed to providing its students and staff with a welcoming, caring, respectful, safe and healthy learning and working environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging. Each student and staff member within the Division has the right to learn and work in schools that promote equity of opportunity, dignity, and respect.

The Board is further obligated to protect all students from harassment, discrimination, and violence during the Division's school-related activities. All those involved with the school, including trustees, employees, students, parents, volunteers, contractors, and visitors must share in the responsibility for eliminating bullying, discrimination, harassment, and violence. The Board prohibits bullying, harassment, discriminatory, and violent behaviours and expects allegations of such behaviours to be investigated in a timely and respectful manner. The Board affirms the rights and will not discriminate against students or staff as provided for in the Alberta Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

One key outcome of our vision for the Division is that all students will possess a strong connection to their schools as welcoming, caring, respectful, safe and healthy places focused on their individualized success.

The Comprehensive School Health approach in the Division focuses on three specific tenets: active living, healthy eating, and positive social environments and acknowledges the causal relationship between the three.

1. Active Living

Students who are physically active are more likely to exhibit on-task behaviour, academic success, and social inclusion. Engagement in physical activities encourages students to make health-enhancing choices and reduces the risk of obesity.

2. Healthy Eating

Nutrition plays a significant role in student growth, developing disease resistance, and physical and mental health. Students who make healthy nutritional choices reduce their risk of obesity and health issues.

3. Positive Social Environment

Students who have a strong sense of self and belonging, and who feel cared for at school, are more likely to achieve greater academic success, have successful and rewarding relationships, and exhibit positive social behaviours and character traits.

Specifically

1. The Board acknowledges its responsibility to ensure welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments for all students. It recognizes the importance of students' emotional, social, intellectual and physical wellness to their success in school and expects students to adhere to the Division Student Code of Conduct and schools' code of conduct.
2. The Board expects all trustees, employees, students, parents, volunteers, contractors, and visitors to embrace and support this policy. This policy covers behaviour not only at all campuses, but also at any school-related functions. This applies whether contact is face-to-face, by phone, fax, e-mail, Internet or Intranet, or by any other means of communication. Threatening, harassing, intimidating, assaulting or bullying, in any way, any person within the school community including aggressive behaviours such as "cyber" hate messaging and websites created in the student's home, in cyber cafes or other settings by any person within the school community is prohibited.
3. The Board encourages reporting to a responsible adult all incidents of threats, bullying, harassment, violence or intimidation, regardless of the identity of the alleged harasser or offender.
4. The Board supports the establishment of student organizations and student-led activities that promote equality and non-discrimination, including but not limited to gay-straight alliances, queer-straight alliances, diversity clubs, anti-racism clubs and anti-bullying clubs, in accordance with the Education Act.
5. All Division schools and workplaces will:
 - 5.1 Recognize the importance of all students' emotional, social, intellectual and physical wellness to their success at school.
 - 5.2 Establish environments that support, ensure and integrate active living, healthy eating and positive social environments.
 - 5.3 Acknowledge that active living, healthy eating, and emotional well-being play significant roles in every student's overall health.
 - 5.4 Promote lifestyles that support healthy attitudes toward active living, healthy eating, emotional/mental well-being and positive social environments.
6. Active Living – Division schools will:
 - 6.1 Implement Alberta Education's Daily Physical Activity (DPA) initiative.
 - 6.2 Meet the minimum time allocations for quality Physical Education.
 - 6.3 Demonstrate the philosophical and curricular shift to outcome-based learning experiences that ensure successful, meaningful engagement in physical activity and encourage lifelong fitness.
 - 6.4 Encourage students to engage in physical activity inside and outside of regular curriculum (e.g. community events, clubs, special events, teams, intramurals, etc.) to support their development as healthy, active learners.
7. Healthy Eating – Division schools will:

- 7.1 Foster knowledge, skills and attitudes that promote healthy eating by:
 - 7.1.1 Promoting nutrition education and create an environment of positive food messages.
 - 7.1.2 Establishing a strong connection between nutrition education and foods available at the school.
 - 7.2 Examine their nutrition practices and provide opportunities, support and encouragement for staff and students to eat healthy foods by:
 - 7.2.1 Creating an environment where healthy foods are available, affordable and promoted as the best choice.
 - 7.2.2 Reviewing options with food suppliers to maximize the nutritional value of the items.
 - 7.2.3 Choosing healthy fundraising options.
 - 7.2.4 Modeling healthy nutritional practices.
 - 7.3 The primary reference for the provision, promotion, sale and distribution of food in school shall be the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth from which schools shall include foods from the “Choose Most Often” and “Choose Sometimes” categories, and limit foods from the “Choose Least Often” category in accordance with the Canada Food Guide.
8. Positive Social Environments – Division schools and workplaces will:
- 8.1 Actively build relationships within the school, Division and community.
 - 8.2 Support and embed character education programs to support emotional well-being.
 - 8.3 Create learning environments where emotional well-being is role modeled and developed in students.
 - 8.4 Access resources and link with community agencies, partners and support networks to help students develop the skills to be aware of and monitor their emotional well-being.
 - 8.5 Recognize the importance of students’ emotional, social, intellectual and physical wellness to their success in school and expect students to adhere to the Division Code of Conduct and schools’ code of conduct.
 - 8.6 Encourage reporting to a responsible adult all incidents of threats, bullying, harassment, violence, intimidation or discrimination.

The Board endorses a set of desirable personal and interpersonal character traits that incorporate universal values of respect, integrity, empathy, compassion, independence, cooperation, responsibility and self-control.

Students are expected to learn, practice and develop such personal and interpersonal character traits and to contribute to the development of welcoming, caring, respectful, safe and healthy learning environments. Students are further expected to respect diversity and refrain from demonstrating any form of discrimination as set out in the Alberta Human Rights Act, including

gender identity and gender expression. Students are to foster a sense of belonging amongst all students.

Within the aforementioned context, students are expected to pursue academic and cultural studies to maximize their individual potential in becoming self-reliant, responsive and contributing members of society. Specific examples are provided in Administrative Procedure 350 – Student Conduct

Legal Reference: Section 8, 31, 33, 35, 35.1, 36, 37, 41, 51, 52, 53, 222 Education Act
Alberta Human Rights Act
Teaching Profession Act
Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
Criminal Code