Medicine Hat Public School Division

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MEDICINE HAT PUBLIC BOARD OF EDUCATION OPERATES AS MEDICINE HAT PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISION,
AND FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT WILL BE REFERRED TO AS "MHPSD" AND/OR "DIVISION"

SECTION 600 – Students

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE: STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

PROCEDURE CODE:	*612 AP 001*
Policy Reference: 612 – Safe and Caring Environment that Fosters and Maintains Respectful and Responsible Behaviours, Diversity and a Sense of Belonging	

BACKGROUND

In order to establish and maintain a safe and caring environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviour, this Student Code of Conduct establishes expectations and consequences for student behaviour while at school, at school sponsored activities, or while engaging in other non-school activities that have a direct influence on maintaining a safe and caring environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviour in the school.

The Student Code of Conduct is intended to establish and maintain an appropriate balance between individual and collective rights, freedoms, and responsibilities in the school community. The Student Code of Conduct is also intended to help students learn how to address issues of dispute, develop empathy, and become good citizens within and outside the school community.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying 1(1)(d) – The Education Act defines bullying as "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."

Discrimination – The denial of individual rights and freedoms in a manner which contravenes the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and/or the Alberta Human Rights Act (AHRA). Discrimination on the basis of race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status, creed, sexual orientation, and citizenship is prohibited.

Harassment – Any behaviour that in effect or intent disparages, humiliates, or harms another person or class of persons. It is behaviour that denies dignity and respect, and is demeaning and/or humiliating to another person or class of persons. Harassment may include, but is not limited to, references related to age, national or ethnic origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, race and/or sources of income or family status. Sexual harassment is any unwelcome behaviour that is sexual in nature. Such behaviour may directly or indirectly affect or threaten to affect in an adverse manner a student's well-being and/or learning environment. The behaviour does not need to be intended as harassing to be considered as personal harassment. It is sufficient that one knows, or ought reasonably to know, that his/her behaviour is offensive and unwelcome. Harassment is not a relationship of mutual consent. It is any action including, but not limited to, verbal, physical, written and cyber messaging that is unwelcome or intimidating and denies individual dignity and respect.

PROCEDURES

1. The Division and schools' Student Codes of Conduct, and their enforcement through consequences, shall apply to students:
   1.1. in school;
   1.2. on the school grounds;
   1.3. during any recess or lunch periods on or off school property;
   1.4. at school sponsored or authorized activities;
   1.5. on school busses or other forms of approved transportation; or
   1.6. when the student's conduct detrimentally affects the welfare of the members of the school community regardless of where that conduct occurs.
2. Any form of bullying, discrimination or harassment as defined above is unacceptable.
3. The Division expects compliance with the following behavioural examples, which includes but is not limited to the following:
   3.1. respect yourself and the rights of others in school;
   3.2. make sure your conduct contributes to a safe and caring learning environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours, diversity, and a sense of belonging for others in your school;
   3.3. refrain from, report, and refuse to tolerate bullying or bullying behaviour, even if it happens outside of the school or school hours, or digitally;
   3.4. inform a Division employee you trust in a timely manner of incidents of bullying, harassment, intimidation, or other safety concerns of the school community;
   3.5. act in ways that honour and appropriately represent you and your school;
   3.6. attend school regularly and punctually;
   3.7. be ready to learn and actively engage in, and diligently pursue, your education;
   3.8. know and comply with the rules of your school;

3.9. cooperate fully with everyone authorized by the Division to provide education programs and services;
3.10. be accountable for your behaviour to your teachers and other staff;
3.11. contribute positively to your school and community; and
3.12. be responsible digital citizens.

4. Examples of unacceptable behaviours include, but are not limited to:
   4.1. behaviours that interfere with the learning of others and/or the school environment, or that create unsafe conditions;
   4.2. acts of bullying, harassment, discrimination, coercion or intimidation;
   4.3. physical violence;
   4.4. retribution against any person in the school who has intervened to prevent or report bullying or any other incident of safety concern;
   4.5. illegal activity such as:
      4.5.1. possession, use or distribution of illegal or restricted substances;
      4.5.2. possession or use of weapons;
      4.5.3. theft or damage to property;
   4.6. contravention of Division policies and procedures;
   4.7. willful disobedience and/or open opposition to authority;
   4.8. use or display of improper or profane language;
   4.9. interfering with the orderly conduct of class(es) or the school;
   4.10. contravention of the Code of Conduct as set out in Section 31 of the Education Act;
   4.11. contravention of the provisions of Section 256 of the Education Act related to trespassing, loitering, and causing a disturbance;
   4.12. use of technology such as computers, cameras, cell phones, and other digital equipment for purposes that are illegal, unethical, immoral, or inappropriate.

5. Rules governing student conduct while being transported on school busses or other approved transport, has been developed by the Division in consultation with school administration and the transit provider. (See Administrative Procedure 632 AP 003 – Behavior of Students while Riding on Busses)

6. Parents and guardians play a vital role in developing student behaviour and conduct. It is the Division's expectation that a parent or guardian has the responsibility, as prescribed by the Education Act;
   6.1. act as a primary guide and decision-maker with respect to the child's education;
   6.2. to take an active role in the child's educational success, including assisting the child in complying with Section 31 and procedure 3 of this Administrative Procedure;
   6.3. ensure that the child attends school regularly;
   6.4. ensure that the parent's or guardian's conduct contributes to a safe and caring environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours;

6.5. co-operate and collaborate with school staff to support the delivery of supports and services to the child;

6.6. encourage, foster and advance collaborative, positive and respectful relationships with students, teachers, principals, other school staff and professionals providing supports and services in the school; and

6.7. engage in the child's school community.

7. The school shall provide support for students who are impacted by inappropriate behaviour. Schools may consult with the Division Student Services Team for determining support mechanisms.

8. Process for lodging a complaint or concern:

8.1. should the student be subject to or witness of bullying, harassment, discrimination, unwanted behaviours as described in Procedure 4, or conduct that interferes with maintaining a safe and caring environment in the school, that student should contact a classroom teacher, their advisor, school counselor, or any other staff member with whom they feel comfortable. A parent or guardian may make contact regarding a complaint or concern;

8.2. a complaint or concern may be communicated informally through oral communication or formally in writing with a professional staff member or principal. Where possible, the complaint should clearly outline the cause for complaint or issue, as well as a description of the specific incident or incidents, the dates, and names of any witnesses;

8.3. the professional staff member or principal will apply the appropriate consequences as delineated in the school's Student Code of Conduct;

8.4. the principal will determine whether the level of seriousness requires an investigation and/or police involvement.

9. Schools will develop a Student Code of Conduct that aligns with the Education Act and Division Student Code of Conduct, is made publicly available, reviewed every year, and provided to all staff, students, and parents. The Student Code of Conduct will include the following elements:

9.1. a statement of purpose that provides a rationale for the Student Code of Conduct, with a focus on a safe and caring environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours;

9.2. One or more statements that address the prohibited grounds of discrimination set out in the Alberta Human Rights Act;

9.3. one or more statements about what is acceptable behaviour and what is unacceptable behaviour, whether or not it occurs within the school building, during the school day, or by electronic means;

9.4. one or more statements about the consequences of unacceptable behaviour, which must take account of the student's age, maturity and individual circumstances, and which must ensure that support is provided for students who are impacted by inappropriate behaviour, as well as for students who engage in inappropriate behaviour.

10. The following consequences of unacceptable behaviour shall apply taking into account the severity and magnitude of the incident(s) and the student's age, maturity, and individual circumstances:
    10.1. consequences as outlined in the school's Student Code of Conduct;
    10.2. suspension;
    10.3. expulsion;
    10.4. involvement of police authorities.
11. The Principal or designate shall administer consequences in accordance with Division Policy 632 - School Discipline.

REFERENCES

Policy 632 – School Discipline
632 AP 003 – Behavior of Students while Riding on Busses
Alberta Education –Education Act
Alberta Human Rights Act
Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

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