
SAFE AND CARING SCHOOLS

Background

Division administrative and educational activities must be directed to the attainment of its statutory responsibilities to provide each student enrolled in Grande Yellowhead Public School Division and every employed staff member with a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that includes the establishment of a Code of Conduct for students that addresses bullying behaviour. The Division, therefore, ensures that measures are in place to provide for the physical, emotional and psychological safety of all participants in the educational process.

The Division affirms the rights of each staff member employed by the Division and each student enrolled in a school operated by the Division as provided for in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. 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 endorses a set of desirable personal and interpersonal character traits that incorporate universal values including respect, integrity, empathy, compassion, independence, cooperation, responsibility, self-control all of which contribute to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment.

Students are expected to learn, practice and develop such personal and interpersonal character traits and to contribute to the development of welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments. 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.

Procedures

1. Principals shall foster and maintain a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment.
 - 1.1 The objective of schools shall be the provision of welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment where student behaviour and conduct is characteristic of a socially responsible citizen. Basic standards of student behaviour and conduct are to be expected and achieved while students are involved in any school or school-sponsored activity.
 - 1.2 Students and parents shall be made aware of the provisions through school handbooks, newsletters or other methods of communication of Administrative Procedure 350 – Student Conduct, and in particular:
 - 1.2.1 Section 1, which identifies the student’s accountability, his/her behaviour and conduct;
 - 1.2.2 Section 6 which lists possible consequences for inappropriate behaviour; and

- 1.2.3 Section 7 which identifies behaviours for which a student may be suspended or expelled.
- 1.3 The Principal shall respond to behaviour that threatens or breeches school safety and security.
- 1.4 The Principal shall apply the provisions of Administrative Procedure 350 – Student Conduct as one means of responding to threats of violence, violence, harassment, and possession of weapons by any student in the school and shall pursue with the police the pressing of charges against non-students who may be involved in such incidents.
- 1.5 A welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment is one that is physically, emotionally and psychologically safe. Such an environment may be characterized by:
 - 1.5.1 Caring;
 - 1.5.2 Respect for law and order;
 - 1.5.3 Respect for rights and responsibilities;
 - 1.5.4 Respect for democratic values;
 - 1.5.5 Respect for diversity (e.g. gender, religion, race, etc.);
 - 1.5.6 Community, family, student and staff involvement;
 - 1.5.7 Appropriate modeling by staff, students and other adults in the school;
 - 1.5.8 Clear and consistent expectations for behaviour;
 - 1.5.9 The provision of appropriate consequences for misconduct; and
 - 1.5.10 The clear communication of behaviour expectations and the consequences for misbehaviour to students, staff and parents.
- 1.6 Principals shall foster and maintain a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment through measures that include:
 - 1.6.1 The establishment of a school environment where appropriate behaviour is valued, taught and modeled by all staff and students;
 - 1.6.2 The development of positive student attitudes toward the school and its environment;
 - 1.6.3 When requested by one or more students, the principal will support the formation of student organizations and activities in accordance with section 16.1 of the *School Act*.

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.

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.

For greater certainty, the principal shall not prohibit or discourage students from choosing a name that includes “gay-straight alliance” or “queer-straight alliance”.

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.

The principal is responsible for ensuring that notification, if any, respecting a voluntary student organization or an activity 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,

Grande Yellowhead Public School Division is a public body under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. Disclosure of any personal information must be in accordance with this Act.

- 1.6.4 The provision of appropriate student supervision at school-sponsored or approved activities;
 - 1.6.5 Making all participants in school-sponsored or approved activities (students, staff and parents) aware of the school’s expectations with regard to their conduct and language;
 - 1.6.6 Making students, parents, and staff aware of the school's expectations for conduct and the consequences established for serious or repeated misconduct; and
 - 1.6.7 Developing plans for action to be taken in response to perceived threats or to breaches of the security and good order of the school.
- 1.7 Principals shall strive to develop positive student attitudes that are conducive to welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment:
- 1.7.1 By providing students with an environment that:
 - 1.7.1.1 Is caring;
 - 1.7.1.2 Provides opportunities for success;
 - 1.7.1.3 Provides opportunities for the recognition of success; and
 - 1.7.1.4 Fosters self-esteem, self-discipline and a sense of responsibility.
 - 1.7.2 By taking advantage of opportunities afforded by the provincial curriculum and curricular activities to develop Division held values, such as:
 - 1.7.2.1 A passion for learning (awakening the joy and excitement of learning);
 - 1.7.2.2 Caring for others (genuine concern for and healthy relationships with others);
 - 1.7.2.3 Respect (holding self, others and the environment in high esteem);
 - 1.7.2.4 Excellence (pursuing personal excellence through continuous life-long improvement);
 - 1.7.2.5 Integrity (striving for fairness, sincerity and honor in all interactions);

- 1.7.2.6 Honesty (striving for truthfulness, sincerity);
- 1.7.2.7 Work ethic (values based on the moral virtues of hard work and diligence);
- 1.7.2.8 Adaptability (dynamically and progressively responding to change);
- 1.7.2.9 Creativity (nurturing originality and innovation); and
- 1.7.2.10 Collaboration (working or acting jointly).
- 1.7.3 By assisting students in developing appropriate approaches to solving problems and resolving conflict.
- 1.8 All visitors to the school shall be required to report to the school office for authorization to enter the school proper.
 - 1.8.1 Such authorization shall at least take the form of issuing a visitor's identification tag as set out in this Administrative Procedure.
 - 1.8.2 Signs requiring visitors to report to the office must be posted in the school.
- 1.9 The Principal shall have in place Critical Response Plans that include safety procedures that can be implemented when individuals or groups who pose a threat to students and staff are identified or when conditions arise that pose a danger to students and staff. These safeguards may include:
 - 1.9.1 Requiring visitors to the school to report to the office;
 - 1.9.2 Having in place procedures to be used by staff in the event that an unauthorized person is in the school;
 - 1.9.3 Having in place procedures to be used by staff in the event that a person or group that pose a threat to school safety is in the school;
 - 1.9.4 Lockdown procedures to be used if there is an intruder (inside or outside of the school building) who is armed or there is reason to believe the intruder is armed or dangerous; and
 - 1.9.5 Emergency procedures to be used when conditions arise that pose a danger to students and staff.
- 1.10 The Principal shall ensure that the protocols adopted for Threat and High Risk Incidents are used in school for any incident identified in the protocol.
 - 1.10.1 The protocol for Threat and High Risk Incidents is to be found in Administrative Procedure 165 Appendix – Threat Assessment.
 - 1.10.2 Principals may, with the approval of the Superintendent, adopt a similar protocol or program that may better fill the needs of the school.
- 1.11 All staff and students shall report all threats and incidents of violent behaviour to the appropriate staff member as identified in the school's internal procedures. Parents are urged to follow the same procedure in the event that they witness or are informed about a threat or incident of violent behaviour.
- 1.12 Each Principal shall identify an Emergency Response Team or a Threat Assessment Team to lead the school in its response to a critical incident, a threat or a high risk incident.
- 1.13 A Threat/Incident Report form (Form 165-1) shall be transmitted to the Threat/Incident Response Team Leader by the Principal or according to the school's internal procedures. The Threat/incident Response Team Leader shall work with the Principal in deciding on a plan of action.

- 1.14 The Superintendent has the responsibility to provide periodic in-service training sessions for appropriate school personnel in the application of the protocol for Threat and High Risk Incidents.
 - 1.15 The Principal shall ensure that during school hours, or while engaging in school related activities, students are released into the custody of the parents or other adults identified by the parents.
 - 1.16 The Principal shall ensure that during school hours, or while engaging in school related activities, persons wishing to contact a student have a legitimate reason and the right to do so before permitting such contact.
 - 1.17 While schools will remain open during inclement weather, as stated in Administrative Procedure 132 – Emergency Closure of Schools and/or School Bus Transportation, even when conditions prevent buses from operating, the Principal shall ensure that inclement weather procedures are in place. Such inclement weather procedures shall:
 - 1.17.1 Permit access to the school building during operating hours;
 - 1.17.2 Identify the weather conditions that prohibit students from exiting the school during operating hours. In towns with more than one (1) school, the principals shall collaborate to ensure that similar procedures are in place for all the schools.
 - 1.18 Administrative Procedure 132 – Emergency Closure of Schools and/or School Bus Transportation identifies the conditions under which school buses will not operate or under which a school or schools will be closed.
2. All administrative departments are expected to support schools in their efforts to foster and maintain a safe and secure school environment.
 3. All staff members, contract custodians and their employees, contract bus drivers and their employees, and visitors must wear a Division photo identification tag to verify their authority to be in a school or Division building.
 - 3.1 All staff members, contract custodians and their employees, and contract bus drivers and their employees shall wear their photo identification tags, suspended from their neck on a lanyard or clipped to the front of their clothing, in a clearly visible and respectful manner while they are on duty in a facility, while operating a Division or contract bus, or while conducting co-curricular or extra-curricular activities.
 - 3.2 The department head concerned or the Principal shall ensure retrieval of all photo identification tags issued to staff members, contract custodians and their employees, and contract bus drivers and their employees when such individuals have been transferred to another facility or are no longer employed.
 - 3.3 The department head concerned or the Principal shall ensure immediate retrieval of all keys issued to staff members and contract custodians and their employees when such individuals have been transferred to another facility or are no longer employed.
 - 3.4 The Secretary Treasurer shall ensure that all persons who are no longer employed are reported to the Education Services Centre office receptionist in order to remove those persons from the data bank.
 - 3.5 All substitute teachers and substitute support staff shall be issued photo identification tags identifying the zone or the school in which they act as substitutes and they shall wear their photo identification tags suspended from their neck on a lanyard or clipped to the front of their clothing in a clearly visible and respectful manner.
 - 3.6 All visitors and volunteers working in schools or who are to be involved in student activities in Division schools shall wear school volunteer identification tags, suspended

- from their neck on a lanyard or clipped to the front of their clothing, in a clearly visible and respectful manner.
- 3.7 The Principal shall ensure that procedures are in place that maintain control of the issuance and retrieval of all visitor and volunteer identification tags are in place.
4. All agencies leasing space in Division buildings will, while Division staff and students are in the building, direct their employees to wear photo identification acceptable to the Superintendent.
- 4.1 The agency leasing space in a Division building shall ensure that all their employees, contracted personnel, substitutes, volunteers and visitors shall wear identification tags acceptable to the Superintendent while Division staff and students are in the building.
- 4.2 The agency leasing space in a Division building shall ensure that all adults are issued with an identification tag acceptable to the Superintendent that is worn while Division staff and students are in the building.
- 4.3 The agency leasing space in a Division building shall ensure that all persons who are no longer employees of the agency are reported to the Director – Facility Services in order to remove those persons from the data bank.
- 4.4 The agency leasing space in a Division building shall ensure that procedures are in place to maintain control of the issuance and retrieval of all identification tags.

Reference: Section 8, 12, 16.2, 18, 20, 22, 24, 25, 27, 45, 45.1, 60, 61, 113 School Act
Supporting Safe, Secure and Caring Schools in Alberta (1999)
A Safe Place: Creating Peaceful Schools (1994)

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