

POLICY 28

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Northern Lights Public Schools recognizes that the purpose of a Student Code of Conduct is to establish and maintain a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging for all students, staff and guests in efforts to achieve the Northern Lights Public Schools' mission of "Working together to help every student learn and excel."

1. Statement regarding the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*

WHEREAS it is recognized in Alberta as a fundamental principle and as a matter of public policy that all persons are equal in: dignity, rights and responsibilities without regard to 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;

WHEREAS multiculturalism describes the diverse racial and cultural composition of Alberta society and its importance is recognized in Alberta as a fundamental principle and a matter of public policy;

WHEREAS it is recognized in Alberta as a fundamental principle and as a matter of public policy that all Albertans should share in an awareness and appreciation of the diverse racial and cultural composition of society and that the richness of life in Alberta is enhanced by sharing that diversity; and

WHEREAS it is recognized in Canada that every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability:

THEREFORE discrimination against students or staff on any of the prohibited grounds in Section 4 of the *Alberta Human Rights Act* or Section 15 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* is unacceptable behaviour.

2. Acceptable Behaviour

Acceptable behaviours are those actions that contribute to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment in the school that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging of others in the school.

Examples are:

- Respecting yourself and the rights of others in the school.
- Refraining from, reporting and refusing to tolerate bullying or bullying behaviour, even if it happens outside of the school or school hours or electronically.
- Informing an adult you trust in a timely manner of incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation or other safety concerns in the school.
- Acting in ways that honour and appropriately represent you and your school.

- Attending school regularly and punctually.
- Being ready to learn and actively engaging in and diligently pursuing your education.
- Knowing and complying with the rules of your school.
- Cooperating with all school staff.
- Being accountable for your behaviour to your teachers and other school staff.
- Contributing positively to your school and your community.

3. Unacceptable Behaviour

Unacceptable behaviours are actions that interfere with the learning of others and/or the school environment, or that create unsafe and unwelcoming conditions.

Examples are:

- Non-compliance to school staff instruction and direction.
- Acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation.
- Physical violence.
- Inappropriate use of school-supplied or personal technology devices.
- Acts of cyberbullying including digital harassment or intimidation, the collection or distribution of inappropriate student or staff photographs, or activities such as sexting.
- Retribution against any person in the school who has intervened to prevent or report bullying or any other incident or safety concern.
- Illegal activity such as:
 - possession, use or distribution of illegal or restricted substances,
 - possession or use of weapons, or
 - theft or damage to property.

4. Location and time of unacceptable behavior

Any time or place, provided school administration deems the behaviour or incident to be detrimental to the school or its students and staff.

Examples are:

- Before, during or after school hours.
- When using school-supplied or personal technology devices.
- At any time and at any place during activities associated with the school (e.g. during field trips or extra-curricular activities).
- During transportation arranged by the school or school division.

5. Consequence of Unacceptable Behaviour

The intent of consequences is to positively impact student behavior in order to maintain a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment in the school.

- Consequences will range from in-class consequences administered by a school staff member to suspension administered by the school principal.
- Consequences might include expulsion recommended by the school principal and authorized by the Board of Trustees or designate.
- Consequences take into account the nature of the behavior, student's age, maturity, and individual circumstances, as well as the physical, emotional and social wellbeing of all students.

- Supports will be offered to students impacted by inappropriate behaviour and to those students who engage in inappropriate behaviour.
- The use of consequences for unacceptable behavior will be monitored by the school principal.
- All suspensions and expulsions will adhere to the School Act.

6. School-Based Student Conduct Expectations

Any additional school-based codes of conduct or student expectations/rules must align and not contravene any aspects of this Student Code of Conduct.

- All school-based and classroom-level expectations of behaviour and consequences will be age/grade appropriate.
- All schools will develop guidelines within their staff handbook that explain student behaviour management procedures within the school.
- All schools will incorporate strategies for teaching, supporting and reinforcing positive behaviour.

7. Support for Student Organizations

Northern Lights Public Schools recognizes that the Student Code of Conduct requires a distinct portion with specific text from Section 16.1 (1), (3), (3.1), (4) and (6) of the *School Act* that addresses the board's responsibility to support student organizations.

- (1) If one or more students attending a school operated by the 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
 - (a) immediately grant permission for the establishment of the student organization or the holding of the activity at the school, and
 - (b) subject to subsection (4), 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.
- (3) 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.
 - (3.1) For greater certainty, the principal shall not prohibit or discourage students from choosing a name that includes "gay-straight alliance" or "queer-straight alliance".
- (4) The principal shall immediately inform the board and the Minister if no staff member is available to serve as a staff liaison referred to in subsection (1), 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.
- (6) The principal is responsible for ensuring that notification, if any, respecting a voluntary student organization or an activity referred to in subsection (1)

is limited to the fact of the establishment of the organization or the holding of the activity.

8. Procedures of Communication

The ensuing expectations of communication will be followed to ensure a shared understanding of the Student Code of Conduct:

- The Northern Lights Public Schools Student Code of Conduct will be published on the Northern Lights Public Schools' website and school-based websites, and placed in student and staff handbooks as well as the Board Policy Handbook.
- Each school's general student behaviour expectations will be published in their school website and placed in student and staff handbooks.
- The Northern Lights Public Schools Student Code of Conduct policy will be reviewed and confirmed by resolution annually by the Board of Trustees by June 30 of each year.

Approved 180627