



ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINE

Safe Schools: Code of Conduct

Effective Date: February 1, 2008

Revised Date: June 20, 2017

Re-Revised Date: April 23, 2019

Responsibility: Superintendent of Safe Schools

Rationale

The purpose of the Near North District School Board's Code of Conduct is:

1. To ensure that all members of the school community, especially people in positions of authority, are treated with respect and dignity.
2. To promote responsible citizenship by encouraging appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community.
3. To maintain an environment where conflict and difference can be addressed in a manner characterized by respect and civility.
4. To encourage the use of non-violent means to resolve conflict.
5. To promote the safety of people in the schools.
6. To discourage the use of alcohol, illegal drugs and, except by a medical cannabis user, *cannabis.
7. To prevent bullying in schools.

*As defined in the Education Act, a medical cannabis user is a person who is authorized to possess cannabis for the person's own medical purposes in accordance with applicable federal law.

A school should be a place that promotes responsibility, respect, civility, and academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment. A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, included, and accepted, and actively promote positive behaviours and interactions. Building and sustaining a positive school climate is a complex challenge requiring evidence-informed solutions.

Our mission is to educate learners to their fullest potential in preparation for life-long learning.

A whole-school approach, which involves all members of the school community, is also important in supporting efforts to ensure that schools are safe, inclusive, and accepting. It is an effective approach to making systemic changes that will benefit all students and the broader community.

The Near North District School Board's Code of Conduct and individual School Codes of Conduct will reflect the requirements outlined in Policy/Program Memorandum No. 128 (October 17, 2018). Subsection 301(2) of Part XIII of the Education Act outlines the purposes of the provincial Code of Conduct. If a school board enters into agreement with a third party to rent school space, the board must include in the agreement a requirement that the other party follow standards that are consistent with the provincial Code of Conduct, in accordance with subsection 301 (3.1).

The Ontario standards of behaviour apply to all individuals - principals, teachers, early childhood educators, other school staff, parents/guardians, volunteers, school bus drivers, community groups and partners involved in the publicly funded school system and activities of the Near North District School Board.

These standards of behaviour apply to students whether they are on school property, on school buses, travelling to and from school, at school-authorized events or activities, or in other circumstances that could have an impact on the school climate.

Responsible citizenship involves appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community. Active and engaged citizens are aware of their rights, but more importantly, they accept responsibility for protecting their rights and the rights of others.

School Boards are required to:

- Ensure that their board code of conduct is up to date and consistent with the provincial Code of Conduct;
- Make board and school codes of conduct available to the public either on the board and school's websites or in another appropriate manner.

Principals responsibility for their Schools Code of Conduct:

- Seek input from students, teachers and other school staff, parents and other members of the school community;
- Establish a school Code of Conduct that reflects the provincial and board Code of Conduct
- Involve the school council and other members of the school community in an annual review of the contents of the school Code of Conduct and develop a clear communication plan;
- Post and share the school Code of Conduct with staff, parents, students and the school community at the beginning of each school year;
- Develop a communication plan to bring the Code of Conduct to the attention of students, parents/guardians (including those whose first language is a language other than French or English) as well as for others who may be present in their school.

STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

Respect, Civility, and Responsible Citizenship

All members of the school community must:

- respect and comply with all applicable federal, provincial, and municipal laws;
- demonstrate honesty and integrity;
- respect differences in people, their ideas, and their opinions;
- treat one another with dignity and respect at all times and especially when there is disagreement;
- respect and treat others fairly, regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status or disability;
- respect the rights of others
- show proper care and regard for school property and the property of others;
- take appropriate measures to help those in need;
- seek assistance from a member of the school staff, if necessary, to resolve conflict peacefully;
- respect all members of the school community, especially persons in positions of authority;
- respect the need of others to learn and work in an environment that is conducive to learning and teaching;
- not swear at a teacher or another person in a position of authority.

Safety

All members of the school community must not:

- engage in bullying behaviours;
- commit assault, including sexual assault;
- traffic in weapons or illegal drugs;
- give alcohol or cannabis to a minor;
- commit robbery;
- be in possession of any weapon, including firearms;
- use any object to threaten or intimidate another person;
- cause injury to any person with an object;
- be in possession of, or be under the influence of alcohol, cannabis (unless the individual has been authorized to use cannabis for medical purposes), and illegal drugs;
- provide others with alcohol, illegal drugs, or cannabis (unless the recipient is an individual who has been authorized to use cannabis for medical purposes);
- inflict or encourage others to inflict bodily harm on another person;
- engage in hate propaganda and other forms of behaviour motivated by hate or bias;
- commit an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to school property or to property located on the premise of the school.

1. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL PERSONS IN SCHOOLS

Roles and Responsibilities

Near North District School Board

The Near North District School Board will provide direction to schools to ensure opportunity, academic excellence, and accountability in the education system. The Near North District School Board will:

- develop policies that set out how their schools will implement and enforce the provincial Code of Conduct and all other rules that they develop that are related to the provincial standards that promote and support respect, civility, responsible citizenship, and safety;
- establish a process that clearly communicates the provincial Code of Conduct and school board codes of conduct to all parents, students, principals, teachers, other school staff, and members of the school community in order to obtain their commitment and support;
- update this Administrative Guideline as required by pertinent legislation;
- seek input from school councils, their Parent Involvement Committees, and their Special Education Advisory Committee, and their Indigenous Education Advisory Council;
- develop effective intervention strategies and respond to all infractions related to the standards for respect, civility, responsible citizenship, and safety;
- provide opportunities for all of the staff to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to promote student achievement and well-being in a safe, inclusive, and accepting teaching and learning environment.

Wherever possible, boards should collaborate to provide coordinated prevention and intervention programs and services and should endeavour to share effective practices.

Principals

Under the direction of the Near North District School Board, principals take a leadership role in the daily operation of a school. They provide this leadership by:

- demonstrating care for the school community and a commitment to student achievement in a safe, inclusive and accepting teaching and learning environment;

- holding everyone under their authority accountable for his or her behaviour and actions;
- empowering students and staff to be positive leaders in their school and community;
- communicating regularly and meaningfully with all members of their school community;
- reviewing the Code of Conduct on an annual basis with School Council, Safe Schools Committee and staff and students where appropriate;
- at the beginning of each school year the Code of Conduct must be communicated to all members of the elementary and secondary school communities (e.g., paper copy, school website, parent council, synvoice, staff meetings, assemblies, review sections during daily announcements, teacher/student review, posted in the school, etc.);
- ensuring that progressive discipline procedures are maintained.

Teachers and Other School Staff

Under the leadership of their principals, teachers and other school staff members maintain order in the school and are expected to hold everyone to the highest standard of respectful and responsible behaviour. As role models, teachers and school staff uphold these high standards when they:

- help students work to their full potential and develop their sense of self-worth;
- empower students to be positive leaders in their classroom, school, and community;
- communicate regularly and meaningfully with parents;
- maintain consistent standards of behaviour for all students;
- demonstrate respect for all students, staff, parents, volunteers, and other members of the school community;
- Prepare students for the full responsibilities of citizenship by expecting them to adhere to the standards of behaviour of respect, civility, and responsible citizenship.

Students

Students are to be treated with respect and dignity. In return, they must demonstrate respect for themselves, for others, and for the responsibilities of citizenship through acceptable behaviour. Respect and responsibility are demonstrated when students:

- comes to school prepared, on time, and ready to learn;
- shows respect for themselves and for others, and for those in a position of authority;
- refrains from bringing anything to school that might compromise the safety and well-being of others;
- follows the established rules and takes responsibility for his or her own actions;
- the principal and other school staff communicate the Code of Conduct to the students with the expectation of the students following the Code of Conduct.

Parents/ Guardians

Parents play an important role in the education of their children, and can support the efforts of school staff in maintaining a safe, inclusive, accepting and respectful learning environment for all students. Parents fulfill their role when they:

- show an active interest in their child's school work and progress;
- communicate regularly with the school;
- help their child be appropriately dressed and prepared for school;
- ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time;
- promptly report to the school their child's absence or late arrival;
- show that they are familiar with the provincial Code of Conduct, the board's code of conduct, and the School Code of Conduct as well as the school rules;
- encourage and assist their child in following the rules of behaviour;
- assist school staff in dealing with disciplinary issues involving their child.

Community Partners and the Police

Through outreach, partnerships already in place may be enhanced and new partnerships with community agencies and members of the community may also be created. Community agencies are resources that boards can use to deliver prevention or intervention programs. Protocols are effective ways of establishing linkages between boards and community agencies and of formalizing the relationships between them. These partnerships must respect all applicable collective agreements.

The police play an essential role in making our schools and communities safer. The police investigate incidents in accordance with the protocol developed with the local school board. These protocols are based on a provincial model that was revised in 2015 by the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services and the Ministry of Education.