

DATE: June 24, 2025

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Trustee Sherri O’Keefe Policy Review Committee
Trustee Marsha Nelson, Policy Review Committee
Trustee Saadiq Sumar, Chair, Policy Review Committee

SUBJECT: Board Policy HG.BP Student Behaviour and Conduct Annual Review

ORIGINATOR: Karen Mills, Director, Board and Superintendent Relations

RESOURCE STAFF: Kelsey Duebel, Bryan Evans, Gail Haydey, Nancy Petersen, Wanas Radwan

REFERENCE: [Board Policy CH.BP – Framework for Policy Development and Review](#)
[Education Act Section 33](#)

ISSUE

The Policy Review Committee (PRC) has conducted its annual review of Board Policy HG.BP Student Behaviour and Conduct and is presenting the updated policy to the Board of Trustees at public Board for second, third and final reading and approval.

BACKGROUND

Section 33 of the *Education Act* requires boards to establish, implement and maintain a policy and code of conduct respecting the Board’s obligation to provide a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that includes the establishment of a code of conduct for students that addresses bullying behavior. An annual review of the code of conduct is required.

RELATED FACTS

- The 2024-25 annual review of Board Policy HG.BP Student Behaviour and Conduct was conducted in compliance with Section 33 of the *Education Act*. This review resulted in the identification of some potential policy revisions.
- At the May 6, 2025, public Board meeting, the Board completed the first reading of draft Board Policy HG.BP Student Behaviour and Conduct and approved that the draft policy go out for engagement.
- An online public survey was open from May 7, 2025, to June 4, 2025, to collect feedback relevant to the proposed policy revisions.
 - The survey included a series of questions to gather quantitative data and the opportunity to gather qualitative data through open-ended questions.
 - A total of 284 respondents completed the survey: 45 per cent of the survey respondents were parents/guardians, 34 per cent were staff members, 20 per cent were students and 1 per cent were community members.
 - Respondents’ quantitative feedback around the clarity of the new policy content ranged from 77-84 per cent confirmation of clarity, depending on the policy section.
 - A summary of the quantitative and all qualitative feedback was shared with Trustees for their review and awareness in preparation for the policy coming to public Board June 24, 2025, for second, third and final reading and approval.
 - Based on the feedback from policy engagement relative to policy clarity, the following draft revisions to the policy have been made:

- Clarified the interplay between collaborative practices and authority for final decisions in paragraph 2 in the Policy Section.
- Revised sentence structure to support clarity in:
 1. The preamble in Section B.
 2. Clause B.2.c.
 3. The preamble in Section D.
- Included additional information in Clause D.1 on the role of the family in addressing unacceptable behaviour.
- Not all feedback resulted in revisions to the policy, as some feedback was outside of the intended scope of the engagement or related to topics addressed through administrative processes:
 - Some respondents asked for greater clarity around how this policy addresses students with specialized learning needs.
 - The policy encompasses all Division students and directs that each student's specific circumstances must be taken into consideration when determining responses to behaviour.
 - Some respondents asked for greater clarity around processes to support staff safety in schools.
 - This policy is centred around students. The well-being and safety of staff is addressed in Administrative Regulation FBCA.AR Respectful Working Environments.
 - Some respondents expressed concern that students are not being held accountable when they engage in unacceptable behaviours.
 - Through direction set out in the *Education Act*, this Board policy and its associated administrative regulations and procedures, expectations and accountability for students are clearly outlined. This direction serves as the foundation to how school staff work collaboratively with students and families in fulfilling these responsibilities and holding students accountable.
 - Some respondents asked for greater clarity around how safety would be supported for students who report misconduct.
 - The Board policy sets aspiration and expectation around student safety and well-being. Schools put protocols and processes in place to support safe environments. These processes would include supporting students who report concerns.

RECOMMENDATION

That Board Policy HG.BP Student Behaviour and Conduct be read for the second, third and final time and be approved.

CONSIDERATIONS and ANALYSIS

To reflect compliance with the *Education Act*, Board Policy HG.BP Student Behaviour and Conduct is required to undergo an annual review. The PRC's work plan includes this review. Approval to move forward with this draft of the policy will support achievement of this requirement.

The proposed policy revisions do not change any current approaches or practices in the Division and do not require any revision to administrative regulations or processes related to student behaviour and conduct.

NEXT STEPS

If the recommendation is approved, the revised policy will be updated on the Division's website.

ATTACHMENTS and APPENDICES

ATTACHMENT I Draft Board Policy HG.BP Student Behaviour and Conduct

SS:wr

CODE: HG.BP**EFFECTIVE DATE:** (12-09-2006)**TOPIC:** Student Behaviour and Conduct**ISSUE DATE:** (28-05-2024)**REVIEW YEAR:** (2026)

PURPOSE

To reflect the Board of Trustees' (the Board) mandated responsibility and expectation for providing a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and working environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging throughout the Division.

To reflect the Board's commitment to providing learning and working environments that promote anti-racism, reconciliation and equity.

To establish and maintain an appropriate balance between individual and collective rights, freedoms and responsibilities in the school community.

To establish expectations for student behaviour and conduct and responses to unacceptable behaviour in accordance with the *Alberta Education Act*.

To affirm the Board's commitment to proactive, supportive and responsive discipline that considers the context around students and incidents and includes, where appropriate, restorative practices and consequences.

DEFINITIONS

Academic integrity is honest and responsible academic behaviour. Students are expected to submit original work, acknowledge sources and conduct themselves ethically in the completion of assessments and examinations.

Anti-racism is the proactive and consistent process of identifying, challenging, preventing and eliminating racism. It uses direct action to acknowledge where privilege exists, raise awareness, advocate for change and challenge beliefs (such as prejudice, bias and stereotypes) at the personal and institutional level to create and implement action to fight racism for individuals and within an organization, workforce or group.

Bullying is defined in the *Education Act* 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."

Conflict occurs when there is a breakdown in relationships between individuals that results from a disagreement or misunderstanding. While conflicts may require adult intervention, they are considered to be a natural part of how students learn to navigate relationships.

Discrimination is negative differential treatment of a person or group on the basis of race, religious beliefs, ethnicity, language, colour, gender, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status, gender identity and/or gender expression or sexual orientation.

Racism includes conscious and unconscious discriminatory or derogatory attitudes, microaggressions, comments or actions directed at marginalized groups relative to race or culture. It is based on assumptions, perceptions, social constructs, lack of knowledge or personal beliefs of superiority. Racism occurs in the context of a power and privilege imbalance and can be experienced at the individual, institutional or systemic level.

Restorative practice is an approach that brings together those who have caused harm and those who have been harmed to openly resolve the issue. Restorative practice can range in formality; however, it always involves an agreed upon action to repair harm and mend relationships.

POLICY

The Board is committed to ensuring that each student is provided with a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that supports high quality learning, respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging and a positive sense of self. Students are expected to learn, practice and demonstrate positive personal and interpersonal character traits that contribute to the development of positive learning environments, including both in-person and online.

The Board acknowledges the importance of responsive discipline which involves a continuum of interventions that aim to build a sense of community in schools, facilitate healthy relationships, support behavioural changes, repair harm and hold students accountable. The Board believes that this is a collaborative process where students, Division staff, families and community members all play a pivotal role in supporting student success and safety, while acknowledging the final decision rests with the Division leader responsible.

This policy affirms the rights, as provided for in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Alberta Education Act*, of each student enrolled in a school operated by the Board. Students enrolled in a school operated by the Board will not be discriminated against as provided for in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* or the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

EXPECTATIONS

A. STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Students have the right to be treated with dignity, respect and fairness by other students and staff.
2. Students are expected to respect diversity and refrain from demonstrating any form of bullying, harassment, threats, intimidation or discrimination on the basis of race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status or sexual orientation.
3. Students and parents/guardians will be informed of the Board's and school's expectations for student behaviour and conduct.

B. STUDENT BEHAVIOUR AND CONDUCT

Creating welcoming, inclusive, safe, and respectful learning and working environments that respect diversity and foster a sense of belonging and a positive sense of self is a shared responsibility. The Board is committed to working with students, staff, families, community and partners to nurture safe and respectful learning and working environments that support students in fulfilling their responsibilities.

1. A student, as a partner in education, has the responsibility to behave in accordance with Section 31 of the *Education Act*. Section 31 states that a student has the responsibility to:
 - a. Attend school regularly and punctually.
 - b. Be ready to learn, actively engage in and diligently pursue the student's education.
 - c. Ensure the student's conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging.
 - d. Respect the rights of others in the school.
 - e. Refrain from, report and not tolerate bullying or bullying behaviour directed toward others in the school, whether or not it occurs within the school building, during the school day, or by electronic means.
 - f. Comply with the rules of the school and the policies of the Board.
 - g. Co-operate with everyone authorized by the Board to provide education programs and other services.
 - h. Be accountable to the student's teachers and other school staff for the student's conduct.
 - i. Positively contribute to the student's school and community.
2. Furthermore, students are expected to:
 - a. Resolve conflict or seek assistance to resolve conflict in a respectful, peaceful, safe and non-threatening manner that is conducive to learning and growth. Strategies for addressing conflict between students may include counselling, mediation or forms of restorative practice.
 - b. Refrain from encouraging a conflict or escalation of a conflict when they are aware of or when they witness an incident that may be harmful to the safety or well-being of another individual.
 - c. Report knowledge of an incident that may be harmful to the safety or well-being of another individual.
 - d. Use school and personal technology, including but not limited to personal mobile devices and applications (which may include artificial intelligence), appropriately and ethically, in accordance with Division Board policies, administrative regulations and federal or provincial statute or regulation or municipal bylaw.
 - e. Ensure that they conduct themselves with academic integrity and refrain from and report all incidents of academic misconduct including, but not limited to, cheating and plagiarizing.

C. UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

1. Students are accountable for their behaviour whether or not it occurs within the school building, on school property, during the school day or by electronic means. When behaviour that occurs off school

property or outside of regular school hours threatens the safety or well-being of individuals within the school community or disrupts the learning environment, school administrators may apply consequences for the behaviour.

2. Examples of unacceptable behaviour include but are not limited to:
 - a. Behaviours that interfere with the learning of others and/or the school environment.
 - b. Behaviours that create unsafe conditions.
 - c. Acts of bullying, discrimination, racism, harassment, threats or intimidation whether it be in-person, indirectly or by electronic means.
 - d. Physical violence.
 - e. Retribution against any person who has intervened to prevent or report bullying or any other incident or safety concern.
 - f. Possession, use or distribution of substances restricted by federal, provincial, municipal, Division or school authorities.
 - g. Any illegal activity such as:
 - i. Possession, use or distribution of illegal substances.
 - ii. Possession of a weapon or use of a weapon (or replica) to threaten, intimidate or harm others.
 - iii. Possession, use, display or distribution of offensive messages, videos or images.
 - iv. Theft or possession of stolen property.
 - h. Any breach of rules and expectations established by Division administrative regulations, a school-based code of conduct or Section B1 of this policy.

D. RESPONSES AND CONSEQUENCES FOR UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

In order to reach their full potential, each student has the right to learn in an environment where they feel safe and respected. As such, when addressing unacceptable behaviour, the Board expects the Division to use responsive and, when appropriate, restorative practices to reflect each student's unique needs and lived experiences. Responding to unacceptable behaviour is a collaborative process that must include support for students impacted by, and students who engage in, unacceptable behaviour. Through this lens, the Board expects the following when staff respond to unacceptable behaviour from students:

1. Responsive and, when appropriate, restorative practices may include opportunities for critical learning and reflection in the areas of personal accountability and responsibility, the development of empathy, as well as communication, conflict resolution and social skills development. Unacceptable behaviour may be grounds for disciplinary action. Families have a role to play in supporting their child through this process.
2. Responses to unacceptable behaviour must take into account the student's age, maturity, individual circumstances and frequency of misconduct. The specific circumstances of the situation and of the student must be taken into account when determining appropriate responses to unacceptable behaviour.

3. When a student engages in unacceptable behaviour, responses, interventions and consequences may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Temporary assignment of a student to an alternate supervised area within the school.
 - b. Temporary assignment of a student to an alternate learning location.
 - c. Short term removal of privileges.
 - d. Interventions such as positive behaviour supports, contracts and counselling.
 - e. Restorative practices, where appropriate and agreed upon by impacted students.
 - f. Replacement or restitution for loss of or damage to property.
 - g. In-school or out-of-school suspension.
 - h. Referral to the Attendance Board.
 - i. Recommendation for expulsion.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Superintendent of Schools will be responsible for implementing this policy through appropriate regulations and communication with Division stakeholders, including staff, students and parents/guardians. Furthermore, the Superintendent will provide the Board with information on implementation of the policy through the annual results review process and in the Alberta Education Results Report.

This policy will be made publicly available, provided to all staff, students and parents/guardians, and will be reviewed annually.

In alignment with Section 33(3) of the *Education Act*, the Board will ensure the policy:

- Be made publicly available.
- Be reviewed every year.
- Be provided to all staff of the Board, students of the Board and parents/guardians of students of the Board.
- Be in accordance with any further requirements established by the Minister by order.

REFERENCES

AD.BP – Vision, Mission, Values, and Priorities
 AE.BP – Welcoming, Inclusive, Safe and Healthy Learning and Working Environments
 AEBB.BP – Wellness of Students and Staff
 DK.BP - Division Technology
 DKB.AR – Appropriate Use of Division Technology
 FA.BP – Human Resources Framework
 FB.CA.AR – Respectful Working Environments
 FBEB.AR – Workplace Violence
 HAA.BP - First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education
 HAAB.BP - Anti-racism and Equity
 HED.BP – Student Attendance
 HF.BP – Safe, Caring and Respectful Learning Environments
 HF.AR – Safe, Caring and Respectful Learning Environments
 HFA.BP – Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression
 HFA.AR - Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression
 HG.AR – Student Behaviour and Conduct

HGD.BP – Student Suspension and Expulsion

HGD.AR - Student Suspension and Expulsion

Access to Information Act

Alberta Human Rights Act

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Education Act 1(1)(d), 31, 33(1)(d), 33(2), 33(3), 35.1, 36, 37, 45-50

Ministerial Order 014/2024 Standards for the Use of Personal Mobile Devices and Social Media in Schools

Protection of Privacy Act

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