

TITLE: SCHOOL DISTRICT CODE OF CONDUCT

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1.0 OBJECTIVE

To set out the expected standards of behaviour for all people in the OCDSB community in support of positive and respectful learning and working environments that enable students reach their full potential.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

In this policy,

- 2.1 **Alcohol** means all substances defined as liquor in the *Liquor License Act* as well as low-alcohol products.
- 2.2 **Board** means the Board of Trustees.
- 2.3 **Bullying** means aggressive and typically repeated behaviour by an individual where the behaviour is intended to cause harm, fear or distress to another individual, including physical, psychological, social harm, harm to the individual's reputation or harm to the individual's property, or to creating a negative environment for another individual. This behaviour occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance between the bully and the victimized individual based on factors such as size, strength, age, intelligence, peer group power, economic, social or employment status, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race, disability or special needs. Bullying behaviour includes the use of any physical, verbal, electronic, written or other means.
- 2.4 **Cannabis** carries the definition used in the *Cannabis Act*, 2017.
- 2.5 **Credible Threat** means a threat that is real and immediate, not conjectural or hypothetical.
- 2.6 **Cyber Bullying** means Bullying specifically by electronic means and may include, but is not limited to, sending or posting harmful or malicious messages or images through email, instant messages, cell phones, websites, and other technology.
- 2.7 **Discrimination** means treating someone unfairly by either imposing a burden on them, or denying them a privilege, benefit or opportunity enjoyed by others, because of their

age, ancestry, race, colour, citizenship, ethnic origin, place of origin, creed (religion), disability, marital status, family status, gender identity, gender expression, sex, or sexual orientation and record of offences.

- 2.8 **Educator** means teachers regulated under the *Ontario College of Teachers Act*, 1996, and early childhood educators regulated under the *Early Childhood Educators Act*, 2007.
- 2.9 **Fighting** means mutual, intentional participation in a physical altercation occurring between two or more persons with no one main offender. Fighting does not include verbal confrontation, unintentional contact that does not cause serious bodily harm, or self-defense.
- 2.10 **Harassment** means engaging in offensive behaviour or conduct against another person that is known, or ought reasonably to be known, to be unwelcome, including, but not limited to, exercise of power, authority or control over others based on protected grounds under the Human Rights Code. Harassment could be verbal, written, physical or environmental and may include: (i) unwelcome remarks, jokes, slurs; (ii) overt or covert ridiculing; (iii) shunning or exclusion; (iv) degrading or derogatory pictures, materials or behaviour; (v) the expression of hatred, or the production and/or dissemination of hate literature; (vi) discrimination, bullying or intimidation; and (vii) offensive gestures or threatening physical behaviour.
- Harassment may be:
- a) sexual, including advances, requests for sexual favours, actual sexual contact, or other conduct of a sexual nature which might reasonably be expected to cause insecurity, discomfort, offence or humiliation to another person or group and interferes with a student's safe learning environment;
 - b) racial and ethnocultural based on race, ethnic origin, skin colour, language, dress, citizenship, or religion.
 - c) sexist, homophobic or transphobic on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression; and/or
 - d) personal, on the basis of an individual's intellectual or physical capacities or appearance or family status;
- 2.11 **Illegal Drugs** means drugs which have legal limitations on their ownership or use. They are often chemical products or other substances that when ingested, produce a mind altering effect. This includes prescription drugs that are used for purposes other than as prescribed by the medical professional issuing the prescription.
- 2.12 **Medical Cannabis User** means a person who is authorized to possess cannabis for the person's own medical purposes in accordance with the applicable federal law.
- 2.13 **Misconduct** means conduct by any member of the OCDSB community that contravenes this policy or other related Board policies and/or procedures.

- 2.14 **OCDSB Community** means students, parents/guardians and caregivers, trustees, staff, contractors and service providers, volunteers, visitors and community members.
- 2.15 **Personal Mobile Device** means any personal electronic device that can be used to communicate or to access the Internet, such as a cellphone or a tablet.
- 2.16 **Prohibited Grounds of Discrimination** means grounds identified by the Ontario *Human Rights Code* and include age, ancestry, colour, race, citizenship, ethnic origin, place of origin, creed (religion), disability, family status, marital status, gender identity, gender expression; sex, sexual orientation, record of offences and socio-economic status.
- 2.17 **Prohibited Weapons** mean weapons such as switch blades, stun guns, pepper spray etc., for which it is a criminal offence to have in one's possession.
- 2.18 **Restricted Weapons** means any weapon that requires a permit to own and/or operate, such as firearms.
- 2.19 **Serious Bodily Harm** means bodily injury that will occur without significant delay which creates a substantial risk of death or which causes serious, permanent disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily member or organ.
- 2.20 **Smoking** means smoking and/or the holding of lighted tobacco, cannabis, or the use of other tobacco-type products, for example, chewing tobacco. Smoking does not include the holding of lighted tobacco or the use of other tobacco-type products in Indigenous cultural practices.
- 2.21 **Use/Abuse of Drugs** means the non-medical use/abuse of controlled or restricted drugs, including the following:
- a) all substances that are listed in the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*,
 - b) all "controlled drugs" and "restricted drugs" as defined and listed in the *Food and Drugs Act*, Schedule G (Sections 33 to 38) and Schedule H (Section 40);
 - c) all non-prescribed use/abuse of prescription medication; and
 - d) any other substance, when used to induce a mind- or body-altering effect (such as solvents, correction fluids, gasoline and cleaning fluids).
- 2.22 **Vaping** means using a vaporizer or inhalant-type device, whether called an electronic cigarette or any other name, that contains a power source and heating element designed to heat a substance and inhaling the vapor of the device directly through the mouth, whether or not the vapor contains nicotine.
- 2.23 **Weapons** are defined in the Criminal Code as follows:
- a) as anything used or intended for use in causing death or injury to persons whether designed for such purpose or not; or
 - b) anything used or intended for use for the purpose of threatening or intimidating any person.

3.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 The Board believes a school should be a place that promotes wellbeing, responsibility, respect, civility, accountability and academic excellence ultimately developing responsible members of a diverse, democratic and inclusive society.
- 3.2 The Board believes that the ten attributes of the "[Community of Character](#)" are the foundation for excellence and equity in education against which all individuals in the OCDSB hold themselves accountable.
- 3.3 Character development is a responsibility shared between home, school and community. Students need to be exposed to good character and have the importance of it reinforced by everyone around them.
- 3.4 A positive school climate exists when all members of the OCDSB community feel safe, accepted and valued upholding social justice and the human rights and dignity of each person.
- 3.5 Responsible citizenship involves appropriate participation in the civic life of the OCDSB 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.
- 3.6 The Board believes that bullying, harassment, and discrimination are serious issues that have far reaching consequences for both the entire OCDSB community and the community at large as it:
 - a) adversely affects a person's ability to learn and function as a well-adjusted individual;
 - b) adversely affects healthy relationships and the school climate;
 - c) adversely affects a school's ability to educate its students; and
 - d) can have long-term effects on individuals.
- 3.7 The Board believes that children who suffer prolonged victimization through bullying, harassment or discrimination, as well as children who use power and aggression through bullying, harassing or discriminating behaviour, may experience a range of psycho-social problems that may extend into adolescence and adulthood.

4.0 SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES

- 4.1 At all times, this policy shall be interpreted to be consistent with other Board policies related to human rights and equity and with the Ontario *Human Rights Code*.
- 4.2 The School District Code of Conduct applies to all schools. Schools shall establish a process that clearly communicates the School District Code of Conduct to all parents/guardians, students, principals, teachers, other school staff, and members of the OCDSB community at the start of each school year in order to obtain their commitment and support.
- 4.3 The District shall provide opportunities for all of the staff to acquire the knowledge,

skills, and attitudes necessary to promote a safe, inclusive, and accepting working and learning environment.

Scope of Application

- 4.4 The School District Code of Conduct applies to all members of the OCDSB community.
- 4.5 The School District Code of Conduct applies on Board property, school buses, in a virtual learning environment, on electronic media (cyber-bullying), at school-authorized events or activities, in before- and after-school programs including co-curricular activities and field trips, and may be applied to any other circumstances that may have a negative impact on the school climate.

5.0 STANDARDS OF CONDUCT - OCDSB COMMUNITY

- 5.1 All members of the OCDSB community must:
- a) respect and comply with all applicable federal, provincial, and municipal laws;
 - b) demonstrate age and developmentally appropriate behaviour while upholding the principles enshrined in this policy;
 - c) act with honesty and integrity including copyright and academic acknowledgement;
 - d) respect differences in people, their ideas, and their opinions and treat one another with respect and dignity at all times, and especially where there is disagreement;
 - e) contribute to creating a positive school climate that is inclusive, accepting and respectful of all people and free from discrimination based on prohibited grounds by the Human Rights Code;
 - f) show proper care and regard for school property in compliance with Policy P.060.FIN Vandalism, Theft, Damage, or Loss Affecting Board Property, and for the property of others;
 - g) take appropriate measures to help those in need;
 - h) seek assistance from a member of the school staff, if necessary, to resolve conflict peacefully;
 - i) respect all members of the OCDSB community, especially persons in positions of authority;
 - j) not swear at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority;
 - k) refrain from any violent actions, including causing injury to any person with an object and/or inflicting or encouraging others to inflict bodily harm on another person;
 - l) not engage in physical, verbal, oral or written sexual or psychological abuse, threatening, intimidation, extortion, gang-related activities, or vandalism;

- m) uphold the appropriate and responsible use of technology in accordance with [Policy P.100.IT Appropriate Use of Technology](#); and
- n) take responsibility for their own actions.

Discrimination, Harassment and Hate-related Behaviour

- 5.2 Harassment or discrimination shall not be accepted. Schools must take action to prevent, stop and address harassment and discrimination.
- 5.3 Behaviour that is biased, prejudiced or hate-related on the basis of a prohibited ground of discrimination, shall not be accepted. This includes the wearing of hate or racist symbols, distributing hate information, producing hate-related vandalism including graffiti, and uttering derogatory remarks or slurs (e.g. the N-word and other racist phrases, homophobic insults, Islamophobic comments, ability-based slurs, etc.).
- 5.4 Harassment of students is addressed under [Board Policy P.103.HR](#) and [Procedure PR.542.HR](#) Alleged Employee Misconduct Towards a Student.
- 5.5 Harassment of employees is addressed under [Board Policy P.009.HR](#) and [Procedure PR.652.HR](#) Respectful Workplace (Harassment Prevention).

Bullying Prevention

- 5.6 Bullying shall not be tolerated and schools shall try to eliminate the incidences of bullying through prevention and early intervention.
- 5.7 Each school shall develop and implement a school-wide bullying prevention and intervention plan consistent with a restorative practice and progressive discipline approach that includes:
 - a) appropriate and timely responses to address incidents of bullying;
 - b) safe reporting processes that minimize the possibility of reprisal; and
 - c) strategies and support for students who have been bullied, students who bullied others, bystanders, and others who have been affected by observing bullying.
- 5.8 Each school shall establish a safe and accepting schools team responsible for school safety that is composed of at least one student, one parent, one teacher, one support staff member, one community partner, and the principal or a designate. The team must have a staff chair. The school will make efforts to ensure that membership of the safe schools team is representative of the school's diverse population and includes racialized and minoritized members.
- 5.9 When someone experiences or observes bullying behaviour, they are expected to report it to a teacher, teaching assistant or school administrator immediately and they will take action.
- 5.10 In developing and implementing bullying prevention and intervention in schools, principals shall consult [Procedure PR.659.SCO Bullying Prevention and Intervention](#).

Vaping and Smoking

- 5.11 Smoking and vaping are prohibited at all times in all buildings, including schools, offices, administrative buildings, warehouses, and other facilities, as well as contracted school buses. This also applies to Board-owned vehicles and private vehicles parked on Board property and during any school related activities off school premises.
- 5.12 Leases to organizations renting Board property shall include a provision banning smoking/vaping in alignment with this policy and [Procedure PR.522.SCO Smoking and Vaping on Board Premises](#).

Substance Use and Abuse

- 5.13 The use and possession of alcohol, cannabis, narcotics, and illegal drugs, other than those medically prescribed, are prohibited at all times in all buildings, including schools, offices, administrative buildings, warehouses, and other facilities, as well as contracted school buses, except as prescribed in [Policy P.135.CON: Community Use of School Facilities](#). This also applies to Board-owned vehicles and private vehicles parked on Board property and during any school related activities off school premises.
- 5.14 No one shall be under the influence of alcohol, cannabis (unless the individual has been authorized to use cannabis for medical purposes), or illegal drugs.
- 5.15 No one shall provide others with alcohol, illegal drugs or cannabis (unless the recipient is an individual who has been authorized to use cannabis for medical purposes).
- 5.16 The misuse of solvents, gasoline and cleaning fluids, and low-alcohol products is not permitted.
- 5.17 The District shall take all feasible measures to eliminate the use of alcohol, cannabis, and illegal drugs by students within its jurisdiction by applying both public health measures, and corrective and supportive progressive discipline.
- 5.18 Schools shall foster an anti-drug/alcohol/cannabis culture in schools by supporting programs that will help students develop the skills needed to make healthy lifestyle choices.
- 5.19 Schools shall endeavor to identify and understand the factors that influence substance use/abuse, and focus on prevention and early intervention for students with alcohol, cannabis, and/or drug problems.
- 5.20 The District shall support professional development opportunities to ensure educators and other staff are competent and confident in recognizing and handling substance abuse.

Weapons

- 5.21 The Board is seriously concerned about issues of assault, threat and intimidation and thus it strictly prohibits the use, possession, display and/or trafficking in restricted weapons, replicas of restricted weapons, ammunition, or attachments.
- 5.22 Except for restricted and prohibited weapons which are always considered weapons, the principal/designate will determine in the circumstances whether an object meets the definition of a weapon.

- 5.23 In situations where weapons are involved, staff shall act in accordance with [Procedure PR.525.SCO Weapons](#).

Response to Misconduct

- 5.24 The Board is committed to building, sustaining and continually improving relationships with members of the OCDSB community with the ultimate goal as the provision of student safety and well-being.
- 5.25 Infractions by students and staff of this policy are addressed under sections 6.0 and 8.0, respectively.
- 5.26 Infractions by Trustees are addressed under [Board Policy P.073.GOV Board Member Code of Conduct](#) and [Policy P.141.GOV Integrity Commissioner](#).
- 5.27 Where the presence of a member of the OCDSB community who is contravening this policy is deemed detrimental by an authorized person to the safety or well being of a person on the premises, they shall not be permitted to remain on school premises. Failure to leave the premises when asked will result in the visitor being considered a trespasser and will be dealt with in accordance with Procedure [PR 524 SCO - Access To School & Board Premises](#).

6.0 STANDARDS OF CONDUCT - STUDENTS

- 6.1 Students shall abide by the expectations in this section (6.0) in addition to the behavioural expectations of all OCDSB community members stated in section 5.0.
- 6.2 Students shall demonstrate respect for themselves, for others, and for the responsibilities of citizenship through acceptable behaviour. These standards are demonstrated when students:
- come to school with regular attendance, prepared, on time, and ready to learn;
 - practice honesty and integrity including but not limited to: not participating in or encouraging plagiarism, misrepresentation of original work, lying, cheating, theft of evaluation instruments, use of unauthorized aids or false representation of identity;
 - show respect for themselves, for others, for those in authority;
 - refrain from bringing anything to school that may compromise the safety of others; and
 - demonstrate appropriate online conduct/manners and refrain from improper/unethical use of technology, including computer hacking and cyber-bullying. Internet use for any purpose which is contrary to the intent of this policy is strictly prohibited. This includes all forms of violence, threats and harassment directed at staff members, students or any member of the OCDSB community. This applies to school, work and personal Internet use.

Use of Technology During Instructional Time

- 6.3 The use of personal mobile devices during instructional time is permitted under the following circumstances:
- for educational purposes, as directed by an educator;

- b) for health and medical purposes; and
 - c) to support special education needs.
- 6.4 If a student or other person employed by the Board requires the use of a personal mobile device as an accommodation under the Ontario *Human Rights Code*, the Board shall allow such an accommodation to the point of undue hardship.

Fighting

- 6.5 Fighting is an unacceptable response to conflict.
- 6.6 The District shall ensure that the school discipline response to fighting is administered in such a way as to keep students within their traditional learning environment, and avoid suspension, and expulsion to the greatest extent practicable.

Dress Code

- 6.7 The Board recognizes that all students have the right to express themselves fully in school through choosing clothing, hair styles, jewelry and accessories that appropriately represent and affirm their varied identities.
- 6.8 Clothing may not depict, advertise or advocate the use of alcohol, tobacco, cannabis or other controlled substances.
- 6.9 Clothing may not depict pornography, nudity or sexual acts, or feature profanity.
- 6.10 Clothing or personal possessions may not use or depict bias, prejudice or hate speech targeting individuals or groups based on prohibited grounds of discrimination.
- 6.11 Inappropriate dress includes any clothing or personal possession that has representations and/or language that depict violence, profanity, discriminatory, hateful, or sexually explicit images or sentiments is prohibited.
- 6.12 Schools shall not suspend for uniform or dress code violations without consultation with SOI and/or System Principal for Safe Schools.

Response to Student Misconduct

- 6.13 When students breach the code of conduct, schools shall consider implementing measures along the progressive discipline continuum in alignment with [OCDSB Policy P.032.SCO Safe Schools \(Managing Student Behaviour\)](#).
- 6.14 Schools will follow the Protocol to Accompany Safe Schools Policies in the City of Ottawa to guide their decisions to involve police as a response to student misconduct, which shall be considered as a last resort.

7.0 STANDARDS OF CONDUCT - PARENTS, GUARDIANS, AND CAREGIVERS

- 7.1 Parents, guardians, and caregivers play an important role in the education of their children, and should support the efforts of school staff in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. Parents, guardians, and caregivers fulfill their role with respect to the School District Code of Conduct when they:

- a) show an active interest in their child's school work and progress;
- b) communicate regularly and meaningfully with the school;
- c) help their child be neat, appropriately dressed, organized, and prepared for school;
- d) ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time;
- e) promptly report to the school their child's absence or late arrival;
- f) demonstrate conduct in keeping with the School District Code of Conduct and school rules;
- g) encourage and assist their child in following the School District Code of Conduct;
- h) assist school staff in identifying root causes of inappropriate behaviour and deal with disciplinary issues involving their child;
- i) alert the school to any accommodations required by their child on the basis of a prohibited ground of discrimination, to fully access education and work with the administration to collectively determine an appropriate accommodation to the point of undue hardship;
- j) demonstrate respect for all students, staff, other parents, volunteers, and all other members of the OCDSB community; and
- k) are engaged in the initiatives that foster a positive, safe school environment.

8.0 STANDARDS OF CONDUCT - EMPLOYEES

8.1 Principals take a leadership role in the daily operation of a school by:

- a) demonstrating care for the OCDSB community and a commitment to student achievement and well-being in a safe, inclusive, accepting and respectful learning environment;
- b) ensuring that the best interests and dignity of the child guide all decision-making about that child;
- c) holding everyone under their authority accountable for their own behaviour and actions;
- d) taking proactive steps to prevent, stop and sensitively address bullying; biased, prejudiced, hate-based behaviour; and discrimination and harassment on prohibited grounds. This includes communicating to their staff and students that this behaviour is not acceptable, will be taken seriously and providing information on how to report it;
- e) ensuring that appropriate accommodations are provided, to the point of undue hardship, to ensure individuals or groups are not subject to a prohibited ground

- of discrimination;
 - f) empowering students to be positive leaders in their school and community;
 - g) communicating regularly and meaningfully with all members of their school community;
 - h) maintaining proper order and discipline within the school; and
 - i) providing an example of respect and civility for all members of the OCDSB community.
- 8.2 Under the leadership of their principals, teachers and other school staff members are to maintain a positive learning environment and are expected to hold everyone to the highest standard of respectful and responsible behaviour. As role models, teachers and support staff will uphold these high standards when they:
- a) use respectful, inclusive terminology, including a person's chosen name and pronouns when engaging with a person, and not use slurs;
 - b) help students work to their full potential and develop their sense of self-worth to become positive leaders in their classroom, school, and community;
 - c) communicate regularly and meaningfully with parents;
 - d) maintain consistent standards of behaviour with all students;
 - e) demonstrate respect for one another, all students, staff, parents, volunteers, and other members of the OCDSB community;
 - f) prepare students for the full responsibilities of citizenship;
 - g) establish a range of clear, fair, consistent, and developmentally appropriate interventions, supports, direct skill instruction and learning consequences in response to student misconduct;
 - h) appropriately respond to and report behaviours which may have a negative impact on school climate;
 - i) intervene sensitively and immediately to stop and address behaviour that is bullying, biased, prejudiced or hate-related, harassing or discriminatory on prohibited grounds; and
 - j) demonstrate conduct in keeping with this policy, and Board policies and procedures.

District Response to Employee Misconduct

- 8.3 The District shall ensure that noncompliance with this policy by employees will lead to timely appropriate corrective and/or disciplinary action.

Implementation

- 8.4 When a school enters into an agreement with a third party with respect to rental of school space or for the provision of before- and after-school programs, the District must include in the agreement a requirement that the other party follow standards that are consistent with this Code of Conduct.
- 8.5 The Director of Education/Secretary of the Board is authorized to issue such procedures, guidelines and other materials as may be necessary to implement this policy.

9.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Education Act, 2000

[OCDSB Policy P.009.HR Respectful Workplace \(Harassment Prevention\)](#)

[OCDSB Policy P.026.SCO Student Suspension and Expulsion](#)

[OCDSB Policy P.032.SCO Caring and Safe Schools](#)

[OCDSB Policy P.060.FIN Vandalism, Theft, Damage, or Loss Affecting Board Property](#)

[OCDSB Policy P.073.GOV Board Member Code of Conduct](#)

[OCDSB Policy P.100.IT Appropriate Use of Technology](#)

[OCDSB Policy P.103.HR Alleged Employee Misconduct Towards a Student](#)

[OCDSB Policy P.129.GOV Complaints Resolution Policy](#)

[OCDSB Policy P.135.CON Community Use of School Facilities](#)

[OCDSB Policy P.141.GOV Integrity Commissioner](#)

[OCDSB Procedure PR.515.SCO Student Suspension and Expulsion](#)

[OCDSB Procedure PR.521.SCO Safe Schools](#)

[OCDSB Procedure PR.522.SCO Smoking and vaping on Board Premises](#)

[OCDSB Procedure PR.523.SCO Substance Abuse](#)

[OCDSB Procedure PR.524.SCO Access To School & Board Premises](#)

[OCDSB Procedure PR.525.SCO Weapons](#)

[OCDSB Procedure PR.528.SCO Critical Incident Review Process](#)

[OCDSB Procedure PR.533.SCO Police Involvement In Schools](#)

[OCDSB Procedure PR.534.SCO Investigation, Search, and/or Seizure \(Students\)](#)

[OCDSB Procedure PR.541 HS Alleged Harassment Of An Employee](#)

[OCDSB Procedure PR.542.HR Alleged Employee Misconduct Toward A Student](#)

[OCDSB Procedure PR.543.HR Alleged Harassment Of A Student](#)

[OCDSB Procedure PR.618.CUR Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity](#)

[OCDSB Procedure PR.628.SCO Student Dress Code](#)

[OCDSB Procedure PR.659.SCO Bullying Prevention and Intervention](#)