Public Schools Branch

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE

Code of Conduct - Students	
Policy Section	*Policy Number*
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Public Schools Branch (PSB) has a responsibility to establish expectations of student conduct in schools and has developed this Code of Conduct to provide distinct guidance to students.

1.2 The responsibility for student behaviour and conduct in schools is shared among students, school staff, and parents, guardians, and caregivers in order to create a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment. To support this, students are expected to abide by the Code of Conduct in all schools.

1.3 This Code of Conduct for Students must be read along with the *PSB School Code of Conduct* that establishes definitions, standards, principles, and response frameworks applicable to all members of the school community.

2.0 PURPOSE

2.1 The Code of Conduct aims to establish expectations for student behaviour, conduct, and responses to unacceptable behaviour in accordance with the *Education Act*.

2.2 It is the responsibility of the PSB to provide students with a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment.

2.3 To explain the consequences when a student's behaviour does not align with the Code of Conduct and negatively affects the learning environment.

2.4 Affirm the PSB's commitment to progressive discipline that considers the context around students and incidents and includes, where appropriate, restorative practices and consequences.

2.5 This Code applies to all conduct occurring on school premises, school sponsored activities, and in other contexts, including online, where the behavior has an impact on school climate or operations.

3.0 PRINCIPLES

3.1 Students have the right to be treated with dignity, respect and fairness by other students and staff. Students have a responsibility to ensure that they are exhibiting behaviours that support this right and a positive school climate.

3.2 Members of the school community have a right to learn and work in an environment that does not tolerate discrimination, harassment, bullying, and harm.

3.3 Acceptable student conduct, based on respect for oneself, respect for others, and respect for property is essential to the development of responsible citizens.

3.4 Acceptable behaviours and conduct are fostered in a positive climate in which:

- **i.** Students feel safe, valued and trusted, and have the opportunity to develop, assume, and maintain responsibility and self-motivation;
- **ii.** All students feel supported without fear of retaliation in reporting unsafe conditions, actions or potential incidents;
- **iii.** There is a joint effort to learn and a feeling of mutual respect among staff, students, and parents;
- **iv.** Appropriate behaviour is taught, encouraged, modeled, practiced, and acknowledged, increasing student self-respect and positive social behaviours;
- **v.** Disciplinary action, where possible, is preventative and restorative, rather than solely punitive;
- **vi.** Expectations for student behaviour increase as they grow developmentally; and
- **vii.** Disciplinary action is considerate of students with a diagnosed disability of an intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional, or behavioural nature.

4.0 ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOURS

4.1 Students are to behave in a manner that complies with the Code of Conduct and contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment.

4.2 Examples of acceptable behaviour include, but are not limited to:

- **i.** Demonstrating respect for self, others, and the school environment through:
  - a. Respecting diversity in people, their ideas, culture, and their opinions, including when there is disagreement;
  - b. Respecting the needs of others to work in an environment that is conducive to learning and teaching; and
  - c. Being courteous and treating others with dignity and respect.
- **ii.** Modeling positive social behaviours in all interpersonal interactions;
- **iii.** Demonstrating sensible digital citizenship by maintaining a respectful online presence, using social media responsibly, and avoiding the spread of content that may negatively affect the school community;
- **iv.** Taking responsibility for personal belongings and respecting the belongings and property of others;
- **v.** Demonstrating caring and compassion for others including:
  - a. Showing empathy, being considerate of others and their situation;
  - b. Using positive and inclusive language; and
  - c. Creating an environment of kindness.

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5.0 UNACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOURS

5.1 Students are accountable for their behaviour whether or not it occurs within a school building, on school premises, during a school-sponsored event or activity, or by electronic means. When behaviour threatens the safety or well-being of members of the school community or disrupts the learning environment, administrators may apply consequences that are aligned with the principles of progressive discipline.

5.2 Examples of unacceptable behaviour include, but are not limited to:

- **i.** Disruptive or dangerous behaviour and defiance of authority;
- **ii.** Encouraging unacceptable behaviour and/or engaging in conduct which endangers others;
- **iii.** Any conduct which is injurious to the physical, social, or mental well-being of others;
- **iv.** Use, display or distribution of improper, obscene or abusive language, messages, gestures or pictures;
- **v.** Discriminatory behaviour;
- **vi.** Use of technology such as computers, cameras, cell phones, and other digital equipment for purposes that are illegal or inappropriate;
- **vii.** Theft, including theft of identity and intellectual property;
- **viii.** Use, possession, distribution, or collection of money for illicit drugs, cannabis, alcohol, tobacco, or vaping products on school premises or during school-sponsored activities or events;
- **ix.** Willful damage to school property or the property of others;
- **x.** Involvement in the formation of or affiliation with gangs or other groups which negatively impact the school environment;
- **xi.** Hazing and initiation activities;
- **xii.** Use, possession, sale, or distribution of a weapon on or in the vicinity of school premises or school-sponsored activities or events;
- **xiii.** Interfering with the orderly conduct of classes or the school;
- **xiv.** Criminal activity; or
- **xv.** Failure to comply with any other part of the Code of Conduct or responsibilities set out in the *Education Act*.

6.0 BULLYING

6.1 Bullying is a serious matter and is not acceptable in the school environment, in a school-sponsored event or activity, or in any other circumstances that may have an impact on the school climate.

6.2 Students are expected to not participate in or tolerate bullying while on school premises, during school-sponsored activities or events, traveling to and from school, or in any other circumstances that may have an impact on the school environment (e.g. cyberbullying).

6.3 Students who witness bullying and/or cyberbullying behaviour of any kind should report that conduct as soon as possible. Reports of bullying, harassment, and/or unacceptable behaviours should be made in a timely manner to a trusted adult or via other avenues for reporting (e.g. Report It!).

6.4 Students should understand that conflict and “drama” are not always bullying. People may disagree and still treat each other respectfully. Conflict is usually an isolated incident, bullying occurs over time with a pattern emerging or worsening.

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7.0 RESPONSIBILITIES & REPORTING

7.1 Students are expected to take responsibility for their own actions and contribute positively to the school climate. This includes speaking up for and assisting other members of the school community if they witness harmful behaviour occurring. However, students should not place themselves at risk by attempting an intervention directly where safety is a concern.

7.2 Students are expected to not be a bystander and to not engage in encouragement or support of a person demonstrating harmful behaviour. Students are expected to seek support from school staff when they experience or witness acts of conflict, harm, or unsafe behaviours.

7.3 If a student is a bystander to an act of unacceptable behaviour and fails to report it to a trusted adult, they could be considered complicit and may be subject to consequences aligned with the principles of progressive discipline.

8.0 FAILURE TO ADHERE

8.1 Students engaging in conduct that does not align with the Code of Conduct and does not contribute to a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe environment may be subject to discipline.

8.2 Consequences of unacceptable behaviour must reflect a progressive approach which includes both intervention and discipline at the classroom, school, and system levels. Interventions, supports, and consequences should include opportunities for students to learn, make amends, and focus on improving behaviour.

8.3 The principles of progressive discipline will be followed as outlined in Section 8.0 of the *Public Schools Branch Code of Conduct*. In cases of severe or continuous breaches of the Code of Conduct, consequences may include suspension or expulsion.

8.4 When a student engages in unacceptable behaviour, responses, interventions, and consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- **i.** Temporary assignment of the student to an alternate supervised area within the school.
- **ii.** Review of placement within the educational context/setting.
- **iii.** Short term removal of privileges.
- **iv.** Interventions such as positive behaviour supports, contracts, and counselling.
- **v.** Restorative practices, where appropriate and agreed upon by impacted students.
- **vi.** Replacement or restitution for loss of or damage to property.
- **vii.** In-school or out-of-school suspension.
- **viii.** Expulsion.

9.0 SUSPENSION & EXPULSION

9.1 In cases of serious and/or continuous breaches of the Code of Conduct, where behaviour compromises the safety, security, and well-being of others or disrupts the school community, an administrator may consider suspension or expulsion.

9.2 If an administrator is considering suspension or expulsion as a response to unacceptable behaviours it must be enacted as outlined in the *Education Act* as well as *PSB Policy 407 Student Suspension.*

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