

Toronto District School Board

Operational Procedure PR585

Title: **BOARD CODE OF CONDUCT**

Adopted: June 25, 2008

Revised: May 6, 2011, **February 20, 2013**

Reviewed:

Authorization: Administrative Council

1.0 OBJECTIVE

To establish a Code of Conduct for students,¹ employees, parents, permit holders² and community members in accordance with the Education Act.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITY

Associate Director

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Definitions for inappropriate student behaviour can be found in Operational Procedure PR697: Promoting a Positive School Climate.

4.0 PROCEDURES

The Education Act permits the Minister of Education to establish a Code of Conduct governing the behaviour of all persons in schools. A School Board must ensure that its Code of Conduct is consistent with the Provincial Code of Conduct³. The Toronto District School Board adopts the Provincial Code of Conduct in this procedure.

To affirm the Board's commitment to creating caring and safe learning environments that are kind, supportive, nurturing, positive and respectful to enable students to reach their full potential.

Awareness, understanding and implementation of this Code of Conduct will provide a foundation for respect, civility, responsible citizenship and safety at the Toronto District School Board.

¹ The term *student*, as used in this policy, refers to *pupil*, as used in the *Education Act*.

² In this policy, *parent(s)* refers to parent(s) and guardian(s). Parental involvement applies, except in cases where the student is eighteen years of age or over or is sixteen or seventeen years of age and has "withdrawn from parental control"

³ Policy/Program Memorandum No. 128: The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct

Board Procedures are applicable to all employees, students, parents and guardians, permit holders, volunteers and persons visiting a school or other board locations for personal or business purposes.

4.1. Principles

- (a) Direction shall be provided to schools to promote Caring and Safe learning environments. According to the Provincial Code of Conduct 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. Equity, inclusion and respect are critical components embedded in the learning environment. Actions that jeopardize the emotional well-being or physical safety of any person in a school or other Board facility shall not be condoned.
- (b) The standards of behaviour outlined in this procedure shall apply to all members of the school community, including students, parents and guardians, teachers or other school staff members, Board members, volunteers, permit holders and visitors:
 - on school property;
 - while travelling on a school bus that is owned by the Board or that is under contract to the Board;
 - in-school sports activities;
 - in off-site school-sponsored activities; or
 - in circumstances where engaging in an activity will have an impact on the school climate.
- (c) Procedures shall be developed to respond to inappropriate student behaviour. The procedures shall be based on a progressive discipline approach and consideration of mitigating and other factors, as required by the Education Act. Refer to Operational Procedure PR697: Promoting a Positive School Climate.
- (d) This procedure and related procedures shall be reviewed regularly involving school councils, Board advisory committees, parents, students, staff members, and community members.
- (e) A process shall be established to communicate this procedure, the Provincial Code of Conduct and local codes of conduct to all parents, students, staff members, permit holders and members of the school community in order to obtain their commitment and support. The plan will include those members of the school community whose first language is not English.
- (f) Effective strategies shall be developed for response to all infractions related to the standards for respect, civility, responsible citizenship, and safety.

- (g) Opportunities shall be provided for all staff to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to develop and maintain academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment.

4.2. Practices

According to the *Education Act*, the purpose of the Provincial Code of Conduct are:

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

Standards of Behaviour:

(a) Respect, Civility, and Responsible Citizenship

Under the Provincial Code of Conduct, 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 and promote a positive school climate that is inclusive and accepting of all pupils, including of any 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 work in an environment that is conducive to learning and teaching; and
- not swear at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority.

(b) Safety

Under the Provincial Code of Conduct, all members of the school community must not:

- engage in bullying behaviours;
- commit sexual assault;
- traffic in weapons or illegal drugs;
- give alcohol 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, or provide others with alcohol or illegal drugs;
- 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 premises of the school.

4.3. Roles and Responsibilities

(a) Principals

Principals have a duty to maintain proper order and discipline within the school. As part of their responsibility, principals, in consultation with their Caring and Safe Schools Team, shall develop school codes of conduct for their schools. School codes of conduct must be consistent with the Board Code of Conduct.

Under the provisions of the Education Act, principals have the authority to suspend students and to refer expulsions to a Discipline Committee of the Board (PR 697).

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

- demonstrating care for the school community and a commitment to academic excellence in a safe teaching and learning environment;
- holding each person under their authority accountable for his or her behaviour and actions;
- empowering students to be positive leaders in their school and community;
- communicating regularly and meaningfully with all members of their school community; and
- providing an example of respect and civility for all members of the school community.

(b) Teachers and Support Staff Members

Under the leadership of principals, teachers and support 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 support staff shall uphold these high standards by:

- helping students work to their full potential and develop their sense of self-worth;
- empowering students to be positive leaders in their classroom, school, and community;
- communicating regularly and meaningfully with parents;
- maintaining consistent standards of behaviour for all students;
- demonstrating respect for all students, staff, parents, volunteers, and the members of the school community;
- preparing students for the responsibilities of citizenship.

Teachers and support staff shall also assist principals in maintaining close cooperation with the school community and in establishing and maintaining consistent disciplinary practices in the school. In addition, teachers and support staff shall assist the principals by reporting incidents that may lead to a suspension, by responding to all incidents and when necessary assisting the principal in conducting investigations.

(c) Students

Students are to be treated with respect and dignity. In return, they shall demonstrate respect for themselves, for others, and for the responsibilities of citizenship by:

- coming to school prepared, on time, and ready to learn;
- showing respect for themselves, for others, and for those in authority;
- refraining from bringing anything to school that may compromise the safety of others;
- following the established rules and taking responsibility for their own actions.

Students shall also:

- exercise self-discipline;
- accept such discipline as would be exercised by a kind, firm and judicious parent;
- be courteous to fellow pupils and obedient and courteous of teachers;
- show respect for school property;
- understand and comply with their school's code of conduct.

(d) Parents and Guardians

Parents play an important role in the education of their children and have a responsibility to support the efforts of school staff in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. Parents fulfill their role by:

- showing an active interest in their child's school work and progress;
- showing respect for the Principal and school staff;
- communicating regularly with the school;
- helping their child to be neat, appropriately dressed and prepared for school;
- ensuring that their child attends school regularly and on time;
- promptly reporting to the school their child's absence or late arrival;
- showing that they are familiar with the Code of Conduct, the Board's Code of Conduct and school rules;
- encouraging and assisting their child in following the rules of behaviour";
- assisting school staff in dealing with disciplinary issues involving their child.

(e) Community Partners, Including Police Services

Police Services and community members are essential partners in making schools and communities safe. Community agencies provide additional pre-

vention and intervention strategies at the request of Board staff. Many partnerships will have protocols that define the linkages between the Board and the community partner. As one example, the Toronto Police Service investigate and response to incidents in accordance with the Police-School Board Protocol.

4.4. School Codes of Conduct

- (a) Schools shall develop codes of conduct that promote and support respect, civility, responsible citizenship, and safety in accordance with the Board Code of Conduct, operational procedures and provincial legislation and guidelines;
- (b) School codes of conduct shall set out clearly what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour for all members of the school community;
- (c) School codes of conduct shall outline the appropriate use of electronic communications or media devices;
- (d) Schools shall seek input from school councils, parents, students, staff members, and the members of the school community;
- (e) School codes of conduct shall be communicated to all members of the school including those members whose first language is not English; and
- (f) Schools shall review their codes of conduct regularly and involve students, staff, parents, school councils and community members.

5.0 APPENDICIES

Appendix A: Template for School Code of Conduct

6.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Policies

P011: Community Use of Board Facilities (Permits)

P031: Human Rights

P037: Equity Foundation

P051: Caring and Safe Schools

P071: Gender-Based Violence

Operational Procedures

PR540: Non-Discretionary and Discretionary Student Transfers

PR586: Programs for Students on Long-Term Suspensions and Expulsions

PR608: Sexual Misconduct by Students

PR697: Promoting a Positive School Climate

PR698: Police-School Board Protocol

PR702: Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour

PR703: Bully Prevention and Intervention

Other Documents

Education Act, R.S.O 1990, Chapter E.2 as amended (particularly Part XIII)

O.Reg 472/07, Suspension and Expulsion of Pupils

O.Reg 612/00, School Councils

Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memoranda

PPM 120: Reporting Violent Incidents to the Ministry of Education

PPM 128: The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Code of Conduct

PPM 141: School Board Programs for Students on Long-Term Suspension

PPM 142: School Board Programs for Expelled Students

PPM 144: Bullying Prevention and Intervention

PPM 145: Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour

Appendix A

Template for School Code of Conduct

[Insert Name of School]

CODE OF CONDUCT

TEMPLATE

Our Commitment

[Name of school] is committed to providing a healthy learning and working environment by promoting respect, civility, safety, responsible citizenship and academic excellence. A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, included and accepted and actively promote positive behaviours and interactions. Equity, inclusion and respect are critical components embedded in the learning environment.

The **[name of school]** Code of Conduct is developed in accordance with the *Education Act*, the Provincial Code of Conduct¹, the Toronto District School Board's (TDSB) Code of Conduct and all other TDSB operational procedures. The **[name of school]** Code of Conduct also reflects the values and expectations of the **[name of school]** community.

The standards of behaviour outlined in the **[name of school]** Code of Conduct shall apply to all members of the school community, including students, parents and guardians, Board staff, permit holders volunteers and visitors:

- on school property;
- while traveling on a school bus that is owed by the Board or that is under contract to the Board;
- in-school sports activities;
- in off-site school-sponsored activities; or
- in circumstances where engaging in an activity will have an impact on the school climate

Standards of Behaviour

All members of the school community are expected to:

- respect and comply with all applicable federal, provincial and municipal laws;
- demonstrate honesty and integrity;
- respect differences in people, their ideas and opinions;
- treat one and other with dignity and respect at all times, and especially when there is a disagreement;

¹ Policy/Program Memorandum No. 128: The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct

- respect and treat others fairly and promote a positive school climate that is inclusive and accepting of all pupils, including of any 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;
- respect persons who are in a position of authority;
- respect the need of others to work in an environment of learning and teaching.

Progressive Discipline

When students breach the code of conduct, consequences will be consistent with progressive discipline strategies. Progressive discipline is a whole-school approach that utilizes a continuum of interventions, supports, and consequences to address inappropriate student behaviour and to build on strategies that promote positive behaviours. When inappropriate behaviour occurs, disciplinary measures should be applied within a framework that shifts the focus from one that is solely punitive to one that is both corrective and supportive. Schools should utilize a range of interventions, supports, and consequences that include learning opportunities for reinforcing positive behaviour while helping students to make good choices.

Interventions (in no particular order) may include:

- Discussion with a teacher, member of the support staff, vice-principal or principal
- Attendance / performance/ behaviour contracts
- Time Out
- Reflection Sheet
- Parental contact and involvement in applying an appropriate remedy
- Loss of privilege to participate in specified school activities
- Peer mediation
- Individual or group counseling
- Assessment
- Detention
- Restitution for damage or stolen property
- Community service
- Restorative justice practices

Student breaches of the Board's Code of Conduct and **[name of school]**'s Code of Conduct will be dealt with in accordance with Operational Procedure PR697: Promoting a Positive School Climate.

Suspension

The behaviours for which a principal may consider suspending a student include:

- Uttering a threat to inflict serious bodily harm on another person;
- Possessing alcohol or illegal drugs;
- Being under the influence of alcohol;
- Swearing at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority;
- Committing an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to school property at the pupil's school or to property located on the premises of the pupil's school;
- Bullying;
- Willful destruction of school property; vandalism causing damage to school or Board property or property located on school or Board premises;
- Use of profane or improper language;
- Use of tobacco;
- Theft;
- Aid/incite harmful behaviour;
- Physical assault;
- Being under the influence of illegal drugs;
- Fighting;
- Possession or misuse of any harmful substances;
- Extortion;
- Inappropriate use of electronic communications or media devices; and
- An act considered by the principal to be a breach of the Board's or School's Code of Conduct.

Expulsion

The behaviours for which a principal will consider recommending to a Committee of the Board that a student be expelled include:

- Possessing a weapon, including possessing a firearm;
- Using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person;
- Committing physical assault on another person that causes bodily harm requiring treatment by a medical practitioner;
- Committing a sexual assault;
- Trafficking in weapons or in illegal drugs;
- Committing robbery;
- Giving alcohol to a minor;
- Bullying if,
 - i. the pupil has previously been suspended for engaging in bullying, and
 - ii. the pupil's continuing presence in the school creates an unacceptable risk to the safety of another person;
- Sexual harassment;

- Racial harassment;
- Hate-motivated occurrences;
- Distribution of hate material;
- Possession of explosive substance;
- Any activity listed in section 306(1) motivated by bias, prejudice or hate based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other similar factor; and
- An act considered by the principal to be a serious breach of the Board or School Code of Conduct.

(NOTE: Individual schools may insert specific expectations and requirements provided they are consistent with the Board's Code of Conduct)

These may include the following:

Attendance and late policies

Students will be on time for classes and will attend classes regularly. Students are responsible for the work missed due to absence. Students who skip classes or repeatedly arrive late may receive consequences based on the principles of progressive discipline and in accordance with Operational Procedure PR697 Promoting Positive School Climate.

School Dress Code

“Dress Code” is the appropriate dress established by the school in consultation with parents through the school council, and may include a school uniform.

“School Uniform” refers to any common standard of attire with respect to colour and design which students are required to wear at school.

It is expected that, subject to the discretion of the principal to permit exceptions regarding compliance in appropriate circumstances, every student in the school will comply with the Dress Code.

The Dress Code does not apply to religious, cultural or similar forms of attire. The Dress Code does not restrict, in any way, a student's right to dress in a manner that is prescribed by religious, cultural, ethnic or similar tenets and custom.

“Inappropriate Dress” refers to a standard of attire, which does not meet the school community standards of decency. Inappropriate Dress at [Name of School] includes:

- (a) language and/or any representations on attire that indicates gang affiliation;
- (b) attire that depicts violence, profanity, racial or gender discrimination or discrimination of any kind whatsoever;

- (c) attire that otherwise demeans an identifiable individual or group; and
- (d) [add any other types of inappropriate dress]

The Dress Code applies to all students in [Name of School]. Failure to comply with the Dress Code may result in disciplinary consequences, up to and including suspension.

Lockers

Lockers are the property of the Board and are subject to inspection by the Administration.