

Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

1. **Statement of Purpose** - Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education is committed to providing welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments that respect diversity and a sense of belonging for students that includes the establishment of a code of conduct for students that address bullying behaviour. Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education affirms the rights, as provided for in the Alberta Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, of the students enrolled in a school operated by the board. Students will not be discriminated against as provided for in the Alberta Human Rights Act or the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. (School Act Sec 45.1). The treatment of all persons with respect and dignity is a core value within the District. Expectations for student conduct arise from *School Act* requirements and the school district's Catholic values.
In our ministry, we value and celebrate:
 - Teaching and living our Catholic faith
 - Our Catholic traditions
 - Our ability to offer a full range of educational programs for all students
 - That every child is a unique creation who possesses an intrinsic dignity which must always be respected
 - Parents as primary educators. Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children
2. **Definition of Bullying** - Section 1.1 (b.1) Alberta School Act, defines "bullying" 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."
3. **Communication** - The Student Code of Conduct must be:
 - Made publicly available
 - Reviewed every year, and
 - Provided to all staff, students and parents/legal guardians
4. **The Alberta Human Rights Act** - Our priority is to ensure that all of our students are provided with a respectful and compassionate school environment rooted in Catholic values and teachings. This includes
 - Adhering to the Alberta Human Rights Act
 - Respecting School authorities and School and District property, as well as, the property of others
5. **Shared Responsibility** - Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education recognizes that responsibility for student conduct is a shared responsibility between

the District, students, their parents/guardians and the broader community. The students in our District are expected to behave in a virtuous manner that is charitable, courteous, respectful of others and supportive of the school philosophy and the goals of Catholic education.

6. **Acceptable and Unacceptable Behavior** - As required in Section 12 and Section 45.1(3) of the School Act the following behaviors are deemed acceptable and unacceptable within the Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education.

6.1 Acceptable Behaviors

Students are expected to meet the requirements of the School Act (Section 12) which states a student shall conduct himself or herself so as to reasonably comply with the following code of conduct:

- Be diligent in pursuing the student's studies
- Attend school regularly and punctually
- Co-operate fully with everyone authorized by the board to provide education programs and other services
- Comply with the rules of the school
- Account to the student's teachers for the student's conduct
- Respect the rights of others
- Ensure that the student's conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging
- 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
- Positively contribute to the student's school and community

6.2 Unacceptable Behaviors

The following are examples of unacceptable behaviors with regard to student conduct in schools that interfere with the establishment of welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments that respect diversity and a sense of belonging for students in school, online or in our community:

- Defiance and disrespect
- Inappropriate use of language
- Behaviors that interfere with the learning of others and/or the school environment or that create unsafe conditions whether or not the behavior occurs within the school building, during the school day or by electronic means.
- Open opposition to authority
- Bullying, including cyber-bullying
- Breaches of digital on-line safety
- Physical harm/assault; Personal and/or sexual harassment
- Possession or use of weapons
- Drug, tobacco, e-cigarette, alcohol use, possession or distribution
- Inappropriate student dress

- Inappropriate use of mobile devices
- Theft and vandalism; Threats or intimidation
- Extortion; Discrimination

7. Progressive Discipline Plan - The school's discipline plan will outline the expectations, consequences and the progression of actions to be taken depending on the severity and/or frequency of the occurrences and will take into account the student's age, maturity and individual circumstances, and must ensure that support is provided for students who are impacted by inappropriate behaviour, as well as for students who engage in inappropriate behaviour. As well, parental and district involvement may be requested to support school discipline procedures.

At all times, teachers and administrators will use their professional judgment in applying consequences. Each school will keep a record of any disciplinary action taken with a student or group of students.

Consequences are intended to have a positive effect on the student's journey through reconciliation, either formally or informally, with the school community and those affected by the student's behaviour.

The following consequences are progressive in their degree of intervention and will be enacted depending on the frequency and severity of occurrences. They will be applied consistently and fairly to all students, notwithstanding the individual differences of children and the uniqueness of specific circumstances and situations.

Progressive discipline is a whole school approach that utilizes a continuum of interventions, supports, and consequences, including:

Prevention measures and initiatives:

- Early and ongoing intervention strategies
- Strategies to address unacceptable behavior

Interventions and consequences increase when:

- The concerning behavior is persistent
- The concerning behavior escalates
- There is a very serious infraction of the code of conduct

Interventions and consequences may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Informal Conferences
- Restriction of Privileges
- Parent Conferences
- In School Suspensions
- Risk Assessment
- Suspension / Expulsion (AP 357)
- Student Redirection
- Behaviour Support Plan
- Learner Support Plan
- Involvement of Instructional Services and Supports
- Involvement of External Services and Supports

The Principal may involve police in disciplinary matters when criminal activity has become evident. When police are involved, the Principal will conduct a separate, parallel investigation at the school level and provide disciplinary action separate from any criminal charges that may be issued.

8. Student Support - Support will be offered to students impacted by inappropriate behaviour and to those students who engage in inappropriate behaviour. This is significant because while the student code of conduct must address the consequences for inappropriate behaviour, it also ensures that support (not just consequences) is provided to those students who engage in unacceptable behaviour. Examples of how support could be provided to students who have engaged in unacceptable behaviour include mentoring, restorative processes, regular check-ins with teachers or schools counsellors, counselling, etc.

9. Consideration of Student Diversity - The *School Act* requires that the student code of conduct address consequences for unacceptable behaviour and that these reasonable consequences take into account the student's age, maturity, and individual circumstances. The specific circumstances of the situation and of the student need to be taken into account when determining appropriate consequences. For example, any diverse needs that the student has – whether they are physical, behavioural, communicational, mental health, trauma, etc. must be considered.

References:

School Act, Section 15, 20, 23, 39, 40, 41, 43, 60, 61, 96, 113, 123, 124
 Alberta Human Rights Act
 Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act
 Public Health Act, Social Development Act, Vital Statistics Act
 Youth Justice Act
 Section 23 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
 Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Regulation 200/95
 Student Record Regulation 225/2006
 Student Evaluation Regulation 177/2003
 Calgary Catholic Student Code of Conduct-Appendix A
 Children First Act Disclosure of Information Regulation 231/2013