

SAFE AND CARING SCHOOLS

Background

The Division is committed to developing positive social environments and ensuring that all schools are welcoming and caring for everyone. We provide learning environments in which students and staff feel physically, psychologically, socially, emotionally and culturally secure. Three specific areas which we are committed to enhancing and maintaining:

- A Healthy Sense of Belonging
- Positive Actions, Interactions, and Traditions
- Smooth Transitions Within and Between Schools

A welcoming and caring school community embeds the academic, character, and relationship domains of the Pyramid of Success. All members of the Division school community:

- respect each person's worth and dignity;
- foster caring and peaceful relationships;
- celebrate individual differences and diversity;
- contribute to positive learning environments.

The Division recognizes that students' ideas and suggestions are vital in creating safe and healthy learning environments. In keeping with the Division's vision "Every Student, Every Day, A Success", we are committed to considering or honouring students' voices when decisions which affect them are made. The Division also acknowledges and appreciates the critical role that parents/guardians play in enhancing student success.

Definitions

Welcoming and caring school - A welcoming and caring school is physically, emotionally and psychologically safe for students and staff. It is an environment wherein all persons are accorded respect and dignity, and their safety and well-being are paramount considerations.

Caring - To be concerned with, and attend to, the needs of others.

Respect - To show regard or consideration for another's worth, honour, and esteem.

School community - Includes students, school staff, parents, Division Office staff, School Board, School Council, and all community members with ties to or interests in the neighborhood school or school division.

Procedures

1. A Healthy Sense of Belonging

Within Division schools, we create and maintain positive social environments which develop a healthy sense of belonging by:

- 1.1 welcoming all students, staff, community agencies, and visitors into our schools;
- 1.2 supporting staff, students, school councils and parents to develop and maintain conditions which ensure a safe and caring school environment;
- 1.3 providing students and staff with an inclusive, accepting environment;
- 1.4 ensuring that all students are able to identify a staff advocate within their school community;
- 1.5 establishing positive relationships, characterized by mutual respect; and
- 1.6 respecting everyone's worth, dignity, and diversity.

2. Positive Actions, Interactions, and Traditions

Within Division schools, we develop and maintain healthy actions, interactions, and traditions for students, staff, and community members by promoting:

- 2.1 that students are safe and cared for in all activities;
- 2.2 a shared responsibility exists among students, staff, and parents for modeling and encouraging positive student behavior;
- 2.3 all schools strive to develop and sustain positive social environments within the explicit philosophy of welcoming and caring schools;
- 2.4 students are respected in their learning environment by staff who continually evaluate programs, practices, and policies;
- 2.5 students, parents, and staff are aware of school's expectations for respectful behavior and the resulting consequences when behavior is not upheld;
- 2.6 descriptive, supportive feedback, which reinforces appropriate behavior, is consistently provided;
- 2.7 students develop positive approaches to solving problems and resolving conflicts; and
- 2.8 mutually respectful communication exists among all members of the school community.

3. Smooth Transitions Within and Between Schools

We create and support smooth transitions within and between Division schools by:

- 3.1 encouraging on-going communication among staff, students, and parents;
- 3.2 ensuring that expectations for respectful student behavior and positive conduct are reviewed with all students on an on-going basis;
- 3.3 providing the opportunity for parental involvement in the education of their children;
- 3.4 ensuring open, timely communication, and providing relevant student information and documentation for all students transferring into, within, and between schools; and
- 3.5 working with community agencies to provide additional support for students and families in need (while working within the boundaries of confidentiality).

The Division remains committed to providing welcoming and caring school environments for everyone. In the Division, we believe that everyone will be treated with dignity and respect. As a Division we also believe that, when a student is in the greatest need, we will provide the greatest support. It is with these beliefs that we, as a system, are growing and sustaining positive social learning environments.

Legal References: The School Act (Preamble, Sections 1, 8, 12, 18, 20, 22, 24, 27, 45, 60, 123, 124, 125)
Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
Individual's Rights Protection Act
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
Alberta Education Policy: Review by the Minister (3.4.1)
Alberta Education Policy: Teacher Growth, Supervision, and Evaluation (2.1.5), Procedure 14 (a)
Teaching Quality Standard (Ministerial Order 016/97), Section 1 (3) (b)
Basic Education in Alberta (Ministerial Order 004/98), Student Learning Outcomes, Bullet 9
Student Record Regulation A.R. 71/99
Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12
A Safe Place: Creating Peaceful Schools (1994)
A.T.A. Code of Professional Conduct
BRSD Administrative Procedure #160 (June 2006)
Vice Principal Committee (2011)

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