

8.3 | Safe and Caring School Policy

Policy

Elves' Board of Directors (the Board) has a responsibility to ensure that every student enrolled in Elves' School Program (School), and every School staff member, is provided with a welcoming, caring, and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging.

It is the mandate of Elves' School Program to help students reach their maximum potential. Prior to commencing participation in Elves' School Program, students' physical, psychological, and cognitive abilities are assessed, and learning and behavioural goals are established through Individual Program Plans (IPPs).

This Policy addresses the right of all students enrolled in the Elves' School Program to participate in inclusive activities regardless of religion, cultural identification, socioeconomic status, or gender or sexual identity, with consideration to complex cognitive, physical, social, emotional, and neurobehavioral profiles.

Definitions:

Students: Children and young adults, six to 20 years of age, who are enrolled in Elves' School Program and receive funding from the Government of Alberta's Ministry of Education.

Unacceptable Behaviour: For the purpose of this Policy, any behaviour that a student may engage in that causes risk of, or actual, harm to self, peers, Elves' staff, family members, community members, or surroundings.

Policy Requirements:

Principal Responsibility in accordance with section 16.1(1) of the School Act

1. If one or more students attending a school operated by the Board request a staff member, employed by the Board for support, to establish a voluntary student organization, or to lead an activity (collectively the "Requested Activity") intended to promote a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging, the principal of the School shall, in addition to the other duties set out in this Policy, ensure that the Requested Activity promotes at the School a welcoming, caring,

Created: November 2003

Updated: December 2015

Approved: March 2018

Section: Human Rights

Page: 1 of 6

Elves Special Needs Society – Policy and Procedure Manual

respectful, and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging.

Board Responsibility in relation to Student Organizations at the School under s. 16.1 of the School Act

1. In accordance with section 45(4)(b) of the *School Act*, which legislatively mandates the Board to include the text of section 16.1(1), (3) (3.1) (4) and (6)” of the *School Act* in this Policy, if one or more students attending the School request a staff member employed by the Board for support to establish a voluntary student organization, or to lead an activity intended to promote a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging, the School principal shall:
 - a. immediately permit the establishment of the student organization or the holding of the activity at the School, and
 - b. subject to section 5 (below), within a reasonable time from the date that the principal receives the request, designate a staff member to serve as the staff liaison to facilitate the establishment, and the ongoing operation, of the student organization or to assist in organizing the activity.
2. The students may select a respectful and inclusive name for the organization or activity, including the name “gay-straight alliance” or “queer-straight alliance,” after consulting with the principal.
3. For greater certainty, the principal shall not prohibit or discourage students from choosing a name that includes “gay-straight alliance” or “queer-straight alliance.”
4. The principal shall immediately inform the Board and the Minister of Education (the Minister) if no staff member is available to serve as a staff liaison referred to above at subsection 2(b) and, if so informed, the Minister shall appoint a responsible adult to work with the requesting students in organizing the activity, or to facilitate the establishment, and the ongoing operation, of the student organization at the School.
5. The principal is responsible for ensuring that notification, if any, respecting a voluntary student organization or an activity referred to in subsection (1) is limited to the fact of the establishment of the organization or the holding of the activity.

Additional Legislatively Mandated Principal Responsibilities

Created: November 2003

Updated: December 2015

Approved: March 2018

Section: Human Rights

Page: 2 of 6

Elves Special Needs Society – Policy and Procedure Manual

1. As legislatively mandated by section 45(4)(c) of the *School Act*, the principal is responsible for ensuring that notification, if any, respecting a voluntary student organization or an activity referred to in section 16.1(1) of the *School Act*,
 - a. is limited to the fact of the establishment of the organization or the holding of the activity, and
 - b. is otherwise consistent with the usual practices relating to notifications of other students.

Section 45.1(3) School Act Statutory Requirements

1. As legislatively mandated in section 45.1(3) of the *School Act*, this Policy and the Student Code of Conduct set out in this Policy (Code of Conduct):
 - a. herein affirms the rights, as provided for in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, of each staff member employed by the Board and each student enrolled in the School;
 - b. herein states that staff members employed by the Board and students enrolled in the School will not be discriminated against as provided for in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* or the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms to the degree the same applies in law to the School.

Code of Conduct

1. As legislatively mandated by section 45(5) of the *School Act*, the Code of Conduct herein set out has the following purpose of identifying that Elves' School Program serves individuals with complex learner needs therefore modifications and accommodations are essential to ensuring a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment for all learners.
2. In order to ensure that students conduct themselves in an appropriate manner at all times, the students attending the School shall be subject to this Code of Conduct.
3. Students with the support of parents, teachers and the educational team shall conduct themselves so as to reasonably comply with the following Code of Conduct:
 - i. be diligent in pursuing their studies;
 - ii. attend school regularly and punctually;
 - iii. co-operate fully with everyone authorized by the board to provide education programs and other services;

Created: November 2003

Updated: December 2015

Approved: March 2018

Section: Human Rights

Page: 3 of 6

Elves Special Needs Society – Policy and Procedure Manual

- iv. comply with school rules;
 - v. be accountable to their teachers for their conduct;
 - vi. respect the rights of others;
 - vii. ensure that they contribute positively to the environment and culture of the School;
 - viii. refrain from, report, and not tolerate bullying or bullying behaviour directed to others in the school, whether or not it occurs within the school building, during the school day, or by electronic means.
1. Activities that may constitute a violation of this Code of Conduct include, but are not limited to, bullying whether in person during the school day or by electronic means, physical harm or assault upon others, harassment, hazing, gang activities, weapons in school, drug and alcohol use, and improper conduct on busses or on field trips.
 2. Unacceptable behaviors are supported through multidisciplinary supports address deficiencies in skill sets due to cognitive, physical, or social-emotional impairments. Structured interventions provide the student with an opportunity for critical learning and reflection in the areas of personal accountability and responsibility, the development of empathy, as well as communication, conflict resolution, and social skills development.
 3. IPPs are designed to facilitate learning, encourage positive behaviours, and address unacceptable behaviours caused by complex physical, communication, intellectual, or neurodevelopment profiles. Students who receive interventions designed to address unacceptable behaviours have the right to access:
 - i. A therapeutic environment
 - ii. Services which promote personal wellness
 - iii. Treatment by experienced personnel from many disciplines and experiential backgrounds, both internally and externally, including staff trained in Mandt System® techniques
 - iv. Programs that teach functional skills specific to each student
 - v. Behavioural assessments, and ongoing evaluation, in a variety of settings
 - vi. Individualized treatment procedures that are not punitive in nature
 4. Unacceptable behaviors including but not limited to self-injurious or aggressive behaviors, destruction or property, or elopement or will be addressed through Environmental and Positive Behavioral Supports. Behavioral Plans established by the learning team must be approved by the parents. Dependent upon the degree and severity of behavior, Behavioral Support Plans will also be reviewed by other members of the Elves team and or developed with the support and input from external medical professionals.

Created: November 2003

Updated: December 2015

Approved: March 2018

Section: Human Rights

Page: 4 of 6

Elves Special Needs Society – Policy and Procedure Manual

5. When a student engages in unacceptable behaviour, consequences may include, but are not limited to:
 - vii. temporary assignment of a student to an alternate supervised area within the school;
 - viii. temporary assignment of a student to an alternate learning location;
 - ix. short term removal of privileges including removal from school-related extra-curricular activities and/or groups;
 - x. interventions such as positive behaviour supports, contracts, counselling, restorative practices;
 6. Where applicable, the response to behaviors must align with the individuals cognitive, physical and social emotional abilities to understand the nature of intervention and adjust personal behavior specific to consequence. In the assessment of the potential consequences of unacceptable behaviour, the School shall also consider a student's age, maturity, individual circumstances, and frequency of the misconduct. In addition, the specific circumstances of the situation and of the student must be taken into account when determining appropriate responses to unacceptable behaviour. Where applicable, unacceptable behavior could be grounds for modifications to service delivery.
 7. The School must ensure that support is provided for students who are impacted by unacceptable behaviour, as well as for students who engage in unacceptable behaviour in accordance to Elves' Policy and Procedure Manual, Section 18 - Students - Behavioral Programs.
 8. This Code of Conduct shall be made publically available on the School website and shall be provided to all staff, students, and parents.
 9. This Code of Conduct shall be reviewed each school year.
4. The *Personal Information Protection Act* governs the disclosure of personal information by the Board.

Elves Special Needs Society – Policy and Procedure Manual

References

- *Alberta School Act*, RSA 2000, c S-3: preamble, sections 2, 3, 16, 28
- *Alberta Bill of Rights*, RSA 2000, c A-14: preamble, sections 1 and 2
- *Alberta Human Rights Act*, RSA 2000, c A-25.5: sections 7, 8 and 11
- *2017 Bill 24*, Third Session, 29th Legislature, 66 Elizabeth II (“*Bill 24*”)
- *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1990), article 5
- *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, 999 U.N.T.S. 171, article 18(4) (which protects the rights of parents to guide their children’s religious upbringing)
- *Alberta’s Personal Information Protection Act*
- *Elves’ Policy and Procedure Manual*, Section 18- Students – Behavioral Programs