POLICY 2 – SAFE AND CARING LEARNING AND WORK ENVIRONMENTS

BACKGROUND

The Prairie Land Public School Division Board of Trustees is committed to providing each student enrolled in a school operated by the Board and each staff member employed by the Board with a safe and caring environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours.

Parents, children, students and staff are to be treated with dignity, respect and fairness by the Board, staff and contractors. The Board values positive relationships and equal opportunity, and expects every member of the school community to be respected and supported. Learning and work environments, including digital spaces, shall be free from discrimination, prejudice, harassment, intimidation, bullying and violence.

The Board affirms the rights and responsibilities established by the Education Act, the Alberta Human Rights Act, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and other applicable legislation. These commitments shall be implemented in accordance with applicable law through Board policy and Division Administrative Procedures.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Expectations for conduct shall be clearly established, communicated and consistently applied. Students and parents shall ensure that their conduct safeguards and contributes to a safe and caring environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours. Staff shall fulfill their corresponding statutory and professional responsibilities.

The Board shall establish, implement and maintain a student code of conduct that addresses bullying behaviour and meets section 33(3) of the Education Act. The code, including school codes implementing the Board's requirements, shall be publicly available, provided to all Division staff, students and parents of students, reviewed every year and consistent with any further requirements established by Ministerial order. It shall contain:

- A statement of purpose focused on a safe and caring environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours.
- Statements addressing the prohibited grounds of discrimination under the Alberta Human Rights Act.
- Statements defining acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, whether or not it occurs within the school building, during the school day or by electronic means.
- Statements specifying consequences that take account of a student's age, maturity and individual circumstances, and ensuring support for students affected by inappropriate behaviour and students who engage in it.
- Statements prohibiting violence of any kind at school and during school-related activities, and requiring students, without putting their own safety or well-being at

risk, to assist in preventing violence by reporting concerns to school staff and cooperating with staff intervention efforts.

Every student shall be free to express any perspective or idea at school in a manner that complies with the Board's student code of conduct and all applicable legislation. Differences of opinion shall be addressed respectfully; expression shall not be used to justify prohibited conduct.

Courses, programs of study and instructional materials shall encourage a wide range of perspectives and ideas, foster critical thinking and the acquisition of knowledge and skills, reflect the diverse nature and heritage of Alberta society, promote understanding and respect for others, and honour and respect Albertans' common values and beliefs. They shall not promote or foster doctrines of racial or ethnic superiority or persecution, social change through violent action or disobedience of laws. Education programming not prescribed, approved or authorized under the Education Act shall be delivered impartially, fairly, neutrally and without personal bias.

The Board shall not directly or indirectly require an employee to participate in an exercise, or affirm, recite or make a statement, that is inconsistent with the employee's conscientious, political, social or ideological beliefs, except where the participation or statement comprises part of a course or program of study, or religious instruction or exercises, prescribed or approved under the Education Act, or religious instruction, exercises or activities related to the management, administration or operation of the Board, as provided in section 33(1.2).

In accordance with section 35.1 of the Education Act, the Board shall support voluntary student organizations and activities that promote a safe and caring school environment and encourage respectful and responsible behaviour.

The Board shall establish and implement methods that facilitate meaningful parental involvement in student learning and decisions respecting non-instructional school activities. Such involvement shall be consistent with statutory student rights and applicable privacy requirements.

Complaints concerning discrimination, harassment, bullying, intimidation or violence shall be taken seriously, documented and addressed promptly and effectively through consistently applied procedures. Professional learning shall support staff in meeting these obligations and responding to the needs of students and the school community.

The Superintendent shall ensure that Administrative Procedures and student codes of conduct give effect to this policy and applicable legislation. ~~Each year,~~ The Board shall monitor evidence of safe and caring learning and work environments through the Division's Annual Education Results Report and related Education Plan reporting, and use the results to inform its planning and advocacy.

Legal References: *Education Act, sections 16, 31, 32, 33 and 35.1*
Alberta Human Rights Act
Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

	Professional Conduct and Competency for Teachers and Teacher Leaders Regulation
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