

## **ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION**

### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

#### **COMMITMENT TO STUDENT SUCCESS**

Teachers and staff, in partnership with the community, provide all students with learning opportunities that enable them to develop the knowledge, skills, and values to become positive, responsible, and contributing members of society.

#### **CODE DEVELOPMENT**

This Code of Conduct has been developed in accordance with Ministry of Education requirements and the Thames Valley District School Board policies and procedures. It has also been endorsed by students and staff.

#### **INTRODUCTION**

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.

All students, parents/guardians, teachers and staff members have the right to be safe, and to feel safe, included, and accepted, in their school community. With this right comes the responsibility to contribute to a positive school climate.

The promotion of strategies and initiatives such as Student Success and Character Development, along with the employment of prevention and intervention strategies to address inappropriate behavior, fosters a positive school climate that supports student achievement and the well-being of all students.

The TVDSB Code of Conduct and our schools' codes of conduct include the Provincial standards of behavior.

These standards of behavior apply not only to students, but also to all school members, i.e. individuals involved in the school system – principals, teachers, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers, community groups – whether they are on school property, on school buses or at school-related events or activities, or in other circumstances that could have an impact on the school climate.

A whole school approach involving all members of the school community is needed to build and sustain a positive school climate.

Responsible citizenship involves appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community. Active and engaged citizens are aware of their rights, but more importantly, they accept responsibility for protecting their rights and the rights of others.

Boards and schools should therefore focus on prevention and early intervention as the key to maintaining a positive school environment in which students can learn and teachers can teach.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSES OF THE CODE**

### **The Purposes of the Code 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 prevent bullying in schools;
- To encourage the use of non-violent means to resolve conflict;
- To promote the safety of people in the schools;
- To discourage the use of alcohol and illegal drugs;
- To maintain an environment where conflict and difference can be addressed in a manner characterized by respect and civility.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Principals**

Under the direction of their school boards, principals take a leadership role in the daily operation of a school. They provide this leadership by:

- Demonstrating care for the school community and a commitment to academic excellence in a safe, inclusive, and accepting teaching and learning environment;
- Holding everyone 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.

### **Teachers and Other School Staff**

Teachers and school staff, under the leadership of their principals, 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 other school staff uphold these high standards when they:

- Help students work to their full potential and develop their sense of self-worth;
- Empower students to be positive leaders in their classroom, school, and community;
- Communicate regularly and meaningfully with parents;
- Maintain consistent standards of behaviour for all students;
- Demonstrate respect for all students, staff, parents, volunteers, and other members of the school community;
- Prepare students for the full responsibilities of citizenship.

### **Students**

Students are to be treated with respect and dignity. In return, they must demonstrate respect for themselves, for others, and for the responsibilities of citizenship through acceptable behaviour. Respect and responsibility are demonstrated when students:

- Come to school prepared, on time, and ready to learn;
- Show respect for themselves, for others, and for those in authority;
- Refrain from bringing anything to school that may compromise the safety of others;
- Follows the established rules and takes responsibility for his or her own actions.

### **Parents and Guardians**

Parents and guardians play an important role in the education of their children, and can support the efforts of school staff in maintaining a safe, inclusive, accepting, and respectful learning environment for all students. Parents fulfill their role when they:

- Show an active interest in their child's school work and progress;
- Communicate regularly with the school;
- Help their child be neat, appropriately dressed, and prepared for school;
- Ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time;
- Promptly report to the school their child's absence or late arrival;
- Show that they are familiar with the provincial Code of Conduct, the board's code of conduct, and school rules;
- Encourage and assist their child in following the rules of behaviour;
- Assist school staff in dealing with disciplinary issues involving their child.

### **Community Partners and Police**

Through outreach, partnerships already in place may be enhanced and new partnerships with community-based service providers and members of the community (e.g. Aboriginal Elders) may also be created. Community based service providers are resources that Boards can use to deliver prevention or intervention programs. Protocols are effective ways of establishing linkages between Boards and community-based service providers and of formalizing the relationship between them. These partnerships must respect all applicable collective agreements.

The police play an essential role in making our schools and communities safer. Police investigate incidents in accordance with the TVDSB Police/School Board Protocol. This protocol is based on a provincial model that was revised in 2011.

The protocol outlines the types of incidents that require mandatory reporting to police and those for which reporting is discretionary. The following incidents require mandatory reporting to police. Note that mandatory police reporting does not mean that police will lay charges in every situation; however, for the incidents listed, police *must* be notified. The incidents listed include those that happen at school, during school-related activities in or outside school, or in other circumstances if the incident has a negative impact on school climate.

The following incidents require **mandatory notification of police**:

- All deaths;
- Physical assault causing bodily harm requiring medical attention;
- Sexual assault;
- Robbery;
- Criminal harassment;
- Relationship-based violence;
- Possessing a weapon, including possessing a firearm;

- Using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person;
- Trafficking in weapons or in illegal drugs;
- Possessing an illegal drug;
- Hate and/or bias motivated occurrences;
- Extortion;
- Arson;
- Gang related occurrences;
- Vandalism causing serious damage;
- Bomb threats.

## **STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR**

### **Respect, Civility, and Responsible Citizenship**

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 a disagreement;
- Respect and treat others fairly, regardless of, for example, race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, 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 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;
- Seek assistance from a member of the school staff, if necessary, to resolve conflict peacefully;
- Use respectful language (for example, refrain from swearing) when speaking to a teacher or another person in a position of authority.

### **Safety**

All members of the school community must not:

- 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 bullying behaviours;
- Commit sexual assault;
- Traffic in weapons or illegal drugs;
- Give alcohol to a minor;
- Commit robbery;

- 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.

## **SUSPENSION POLICY**

The suspension and expulsion policy is in accordance with the Education Act, the Ontario Ministry of Education and the Board's Safe Schools Policies and Procedures. Within the continuum of progressive discipline, the purpose of a suspension is to caution students and deter them from continuing with or repeating unacceptable behaviour; prevent other students from being exposed to or involved in dangerous and damaging activities; discipline students who have transgressed the rules of the school; and to warn parents or guardians of serious discipline problems with their children. Police will be involved in accordance with the Police/School Board Protocol.

### **Activities For Which Suspension Must be Considered Under Section 306(1) of the *Education Act***

- 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
- Persistent opposition to authority
- Use of profane or improper language
- Engaging in any act considered by the principal to be injurious to the moral tone of the school
- Engaging in any act considered by the principal to be injurious to the physical or mental well-being of any member of the school community
- Engaging in any act considered by the principal to be contrary to the Board or school Code of Conduct or the Board's Safe Schools Policies and Procedures

### **Activities For Which Expulsion Must be Considered Under Section 310(1) of the *Education Act***

- 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 sexual assault
- Trafficking in weapons or in illegal drugs
- Committing robbery
- Bullying (if the student has been previously suspended for engaging in bullying and the student's continuing presence in the school creates an unacceptable risk to the safety of another person)
- Any activity listed in subsection 306(1) that is motivated by bias, prejudice, or hate
- Giving alcohol to a minor
- Activities engaged in by the pupil that cause the pupil's presence in the school to be injurious to the physical or emotional well-being of other pupils or persons in the school
- Activities engaged in by the pupil that cause extensive damage to the property of the Board
- Any act considered by the principal to be a serious violation of the Board or school Code of Conduct or any of the Board's policies and procedures related to safe schools

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY APPROPRIATE USAGE PROCEDURE**

Students are expected to use computer equipment, access to networks and the Internet responsibly for educational goals. So that all students can benefit from using computers for learning in a safe environment, the following rules apply.

### **Personal Safety**

- Students shall not give out personal information about themselves or others (such as address, phone number, pictures of themselves) to strangers met through the Internet/Social Media;
- Web pages/Social Media shall not contain personal information about students (address, phone numbers, pictures unless parents have given consent);
- Students shall report to a teacher or other school staff member any computer or Internet/Social Media related activity (e.g. threats, abusive language) that gives them concern or appears to threaten the safety of people or places.

### **Use of Equipment, Software and Networks**

- All equipment, including cables and network drops shall be used in ways that do not cause damage;
- Use of computer resources including the Internet/Social Media shall respect the safety and rights of others. Information shall not be accessed, downloaded, stored or distributed that is illegal, abusive, threatening, obscene, harassing or otherwise inappropriate;
- Students shall not share passwords or use the passwords of others nor should they try to hack into computer systems;
- Computer files or the data in files shall not be deleted, modified, moved or copied unless permission has been given to do so by a school staff member;
- Creating and transmitting computer viruses, hoaxes, email worms, sending junk mail or similar nuisance behaviour or related threats to computer security is not permitted;
- Software used shall be properly licensed unless it is made available free of the creator ("freeware"). Licensed software shall not be copied illegally;
- Email, conferencing, on-line chat and content of web pages shall respect the safety and rights of others;
- Students shall report to a teacher or other school staff member any inappropriate use of computer equipment, software or networks, including the Internet/Social Media;
- Students shall not pretend to be someone else;
- Students shall not intentionally access Internet sites with inappropriate content of no educational value;
- If using the work of others, credit must be given and permission obtained if copyright materials are used;
- Handheld audio and video devices (e.g. cameras, MP3 players, cell phones) may be used in the classroom and other designated areas of the school with the express permission of the school administration;
- No one is to use his or her portable handheld device to audiotape or videotape other individuals (staff, student, parent or community members) without their permission while on school property, or at any school events.

Inappropriate use of the Board's computer resources will result in consequences. If the actions of a student appear to break the law, the police will be informed.