

Creating a Welcoming, Caring, Respectful, and Safe Learning Environment at Strathcona- Tweedsmuir School



Support for a Gay-Straight Alliance at Strathcona-Tweedsmuir School

Approved by the Board of Governors
February 22, 2018
Updated August 24, 2018

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to meet the legislative requirements of the *School Act* to ensure that Strathcona-Tweedsmuir School (“STS”) provides each enrolled student and every employed staff member with a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging.

The Strathcona-Tweedsmuir School Board 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 STS. The Board is committed to providing a learning and working environment in which students and staff are treated with respect and dignity and not discriminated against in accordance with the provisions of the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

STS encourages its members to:

- Respect differences in people, their ideas and opinions;
- Treat one another with dignity and respect at all times, and especially when there is disagreement;
- Respect and treat others fairly, regardless of their race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status or sexual orientation;
- Respect the rights of others;
- Show proper care and regard for STS property and for the property of others;
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity; and
- Respect the needs of others to work in an environment of learning and teaching.

POLICY

Principals understand that they have a responsibility to provide a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging. This policy ensures that STS will continue to meet the expectations for the establishment of student organizations and activities in accordance with section 16.1 of the *School Act*:

16.1(1) If one or more students attending a school operated by a board 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 Principal of the school shall (a) immediately grant permission for the establishment of the student organization or the holding of the activity at the school, and (b) subject to subsection (4), 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.

(3) 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.

(3.1) 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 if no staff member is available to serve as a staff liaison referred to in subsection (1), 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.

(6) 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.*

- *Notification is otherwise consistent with the usual practices relating to notifications of other student organizations and activities in STS.
- The disclosure of personal information of students and members of the STS community is governed by the *Personal Information Protection Act*;

This *Support for a Gay-Straight Alliance at Strathcona-Tweedsmuir School Policy* must be reviewed by the Board of Governors by June 30 of each year and confirmed by a resolution and posted on a publicly accessible part of STS' website in accordance with the *School Act*. This policy will be provided upon request to any individual.