

	School Policy:	Mutual Respect Policy
	Category:	
	Last Modified:	November 21, 2019
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	Approved By:	Board of Governors

PREAMBLE

Strathcona-Tweedsmuir School recognizes that to achieve our vision, our environment must provide respect, dignity, equity and safety for all members of the Strathcona-Tweedsmuir School community. Strathcona-Tweedsmuir School (“STS”) promotes responsibility, respect, civility and academic excellence in a safe, caring and welcoming learning and teaching environment.

POLICY

Strathcona-Tweedsmuir School (“STS”) promotes responsibility, respect, civility and academic excellence in a welcoming, caring, welcoming, and safe learning and teaching environment.

All students, parents, volunteers and employees have the right to be safe, and feel safe, in their school community.

STS is committed to providing a learning and working environment in which all individuals 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, ancestry, place of origin, colour, creed, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status or disability;
- 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.

PRINCIPLES

- This Policy applies to all students, parents, employees and volunteers while on STS premises, during out-of-school activities that are part of the STS program and activities while travelling in a vehicle that is owned by the School or under contract to it.
- Fairness will guide the actions of STS with all parties involved, including those against whom a complaint has been made.
- Alleged victims and alleged perpetrators are entitled to have allegations addressed as discretely as circumstances permit and, where information pertaining to the allegations is referred or disseminated, the status of the allegations as allegations only should be articulated.

DEFINITIONS

DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination generally refers to actions toward or practices regarding members of a group that result in the targeted group or individual being disadvantaged. Discrimination is prohibited by the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

The *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* provide that every person has a right to equal treatment with respect to goods, services, accommodation and facilities without being discriminated against on the basis of race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, gender identify, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income or family status or sexual orientation of that person or class of persons or of any other person or class of persons.

HARASSMENT

Harassment is a form of discrimination and is against the law. The Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission defines “Harassment” as “unwanted physical contact, attention, demands, jokes or insults when they occur under any of the areas protected in the *Alberta Human Rights Act*.”

Harassment is not the normal exercise of supervisory responsibilities, including training, direction, instruction, counselling and discipline.

Harassment can manifest itself in many ways. Types of behaviour which constitute harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Jokes or hostile comments relating to any of the elements identified in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*;
- Physical or verbal teasing;
- Display or distribution of sexist, racist or derogatory pictures, materials or graffiti;
- Intimidation, offensive remarks, belittling and threatening behaviour;
- Leering (suggestive staring), obscene/offensive gestures;
- Inappropriate inquiries or comments about a person’s gender, gender expression, gender identity, or sexual orientation;
- Practical jokes which cause awkwardness or embarrassment, endanger safety or negatively affect others;
- Derogatory nicknames; and/or
- Unwelcome physical contact regardless of whether said contact has a sexual connotation.

Sexual harassment is defined as a course of vexatious comment or conduct of a sexual nature that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. Behaviour may not be overtly sexual in nature but may relate to the person’s gender and demeans or causes personal humiliation or embarrassment. Sexual harassment includes such conduct as sexually suggestive comments, sexual solicitations, advances and reprisals and physical contact of a sexual nature.

Harassment also includes the use of confrontational tactics by parents which challenge a teacher or which have the consequences of reducing a teacher’s ability to conduct himself or herself effectively within the school and which harm the teacher’s well-being or professional reputation. It also includes confrontational tactics by teachers towards students. Behaviour which constitutes this type of harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Inappropriate comments;
- Intimidating or aggressive behaviour;
- Verbal or emotional abuse;
- The application of force or physical or sexual unwelcome contact;

BULLYING

Members of the STS community must not engage in bullying, which is defined as repeated and hostile or demeaning behaviour by an individual where the behaviour is intended by the individual to cause harm, fear, or distress to another individual in the school community, including psychological harm, or harm to the individual’s

reputation. All members of the community are expected to refrain from, report and refuse to tolerate bullying or bullying behaviour, even if it happens outside of the school or school hours, or electronically.

SCOPE OF APPLICATION

The Policy will be enforced where activities related to the business of STS take place. These include:

- Activities within offices, classrooms, staff rooms, cafeterias/lunch rooms and other STS property;
- Events associated with STS, including extra-curricular activities;
- Situations outside of STS operated premises but relating to STS (e.g. field trips, external work assignments, work-related conferences, training sessions, travel or social gatherings); or
- Activities in other locations where harassment may have a subsequent effect on the work relationship, performance, or environment at STS.

COMPLAINTS & PROCEDURES

All those who are covered by this Policy have a right to make a complaint. STS will endeavour to resolve matters amicably and through an informal resolution. Employees or faculty members who have a complaint against another employee or faculty member are encouraged to resolve the matter amicably without involving a supervisor.

In the event that a complaint is not resolved informally:

Students

Complaints about students will be dealt with under the Student Code of Conduct.

Faculty/Staff

Complaints about staff or faculty will be dealt with by the staff or faculty member's supervisor.

In certain circumstances, such as where a conflict of interest exists or where the complaint involves more than one supervisor, the complaint may be taken directly to the Head of the School.

Notwithstanding the above, with employee complaints, the Head of School, in his or her sole discretion, retains the right to resolve the complaint or to refer the matter to mediation.

Parents/Volunteers

Complaints against parents or volunteers will be dealt with by the Head of School. If substantiated, the Head of the School may issue a warning or ban the parent or volunteer from STS premises for a set period of time.

Frivolous or Vexatious Complaints

STS does not condone frivolous or vexatious complaints. If it is determined as a result of an investigation that a complaint was made maliciously with intent to harm or made in bad faith, formal disciplinary action could be taken against the complainant.

This Mutual Respect 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 Bill 24. This policy will be provided upon request to any individual.