



Code of Conduct

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Memo To: All Staff and Catholic School Advisory Council Chairs

From: Director of Education

ACCESSIBILITY:

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PURPOSE:

On June 5, 2012, Bill 13, the Accepting Schools Act, was passed, amending the Education Act. The amendments came into force September 1, 2012.

The revised provincial Code of Conduct states that:

“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.

Building and sustaining a positive school climate is a complex challenge requiring evidence-informed solutions. A whole-school approach, which involves all members of the school community, is also important in supporting efforts to ensure that schools are safe, inclusive, and accepting. It is an effective approach to making systemic changes that will benefit all students and the broader community.

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

The provincial Code of Conduct sets clear provincial standards of behaviour. These standards of behaviour apply to students whether they are on school property, in a virtual learning environment, on school buses, at school-related events, or activities in before and after school programs or in other circumstances that could have an impact on the school climate.

They also apply to all individuals involved in the publicly funded school system - principals, teachers, early childhood educators, other school staff, parents, school bus drivers, volunteers, and members of various community groups.

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.”



The Waterloo Catholic District School Board (WCDSB) recognizes the inherent dignity and worth of the individual. All individuals concerned with the school system - trustees, staff, students, parents, visitors to schools – are subject to the following code of conduct; a code of conduct that will be implemented within the Catholic faith life experience of each school community and consistent with the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations (OCSGE), the Safe School's provisions of the Education Act and Regulations and the constitutional right of Catholic school boards to manage their schools as stated through section 93 of the Constitution Act, 1867.

REFERENCES:

- [WCDSB Mission and Vision](#)
- [Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations](#)
- [Suspension and Expulsions: APC012](#)
- [Accepting Schools Act, Sept. 1, 2012](#)
- [The Education Act Regulation 472/07: Behaviour, Discipline and Safety of Students](#)
- [Bill 157: Education Amendment Act \(Keeping Our Kids Safe at School, 2009\)](#)
- [PPM 145: Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour](#)
- [Equity and Inclusive Education Policy: APC037](#)
- [PPM 128: The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct](#)
- [PPM 119 Equity and Inclusivity](#)
- [Ontario Human Rights Code \(OHRC\)](#)
- [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(MFIPPA\)](#)
- [Personal Health Information and Protection Act \(PHIPA\)](#)
- [Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act \(PIPEDA\)](#)

FORMS:

- APC018-01F [Principal Delegation of Authority to Teacher – Bill 157](#)

REPORTS:

- N/A

APPENDICES:

- N/A

COMMENTS AND GUIDELINES:

The Provincial Code of Conduct

Purposes of the Code

Subsection 301(1) of Part XIII of the Education Act states that “the Minister may establish a code of conduct governing the behaviour of all persons in schools”. Subsection 301(2) sets out the purposes of this provincial code of conduct, as follows:

1. To ensure that all members of the school community, especially people in positions of authority, are treated with respect and dignity.
2. To promote responsible citizenship by encouraging appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community.
3. To maintain an environment where conflict and difference can be addressed in a manner characterized by respect and civility.
4. To encourage the use of non-violent means to resolve conflict.
5. To promote the safety of people in the schools.

6. To discourage the use of alcohol and illegal drugs.
7. To prevent bullying in schools.

Standards of Behaviour

RESPECT, CIVILITY, AND RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP

All members of the school community must abide by the following:

- 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 disagreement
- Respect and treat others fairly, regardless of, for example, race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, sex, creed religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression sexual orientation, age, family status, marital status 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
- Seek assistance from a member of the school staff, if necessary, to resolve conflict peacefully
- 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; including by ensuring that personal mobile devices are only used during instructional time for the educational purposes as directed by an educator, for health and medical purposes and to support special education needs
- Not swear at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority

Safety

All members of the school community must not engage in the following behaviours:

- Engage in bullying behaviours; including cyberbullying
- Commit sexual assault
- Traffic in weapons or illegal drugs
- Give alcohol, or cannabis to a minor
- Commit robbery
- 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, cannabis or illegal drugs; unless the individual has been authorized to use cannabis for medical purposes
- Inflict or encourage others to inflict bodily harm on another person
- 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

Roles and Responsibilities

SCHOOL BOARDS

School boards provide direction to their schools to ensure opportunity, academic excellence, and accountability in the education system. It is the responsibility of school boards to do the following:

- Develop policies that set out how their schools will implement and enforce the provincial Code of Conduct and all other rules that they develop that are related to the provincial standards that promote and support respect, civility, responsible citizenship, and safety

- Establish a process that clearly communicates the provincial Code of Conduct and school board codes of conduct to all parents, students, principals, teachers, other school staff, and members of the school community in order to obtain their commitment and support
- Review these policies regularly with those listed above
- Seek input from school councils, their Catholic Parent Involvement Committees (CPIC), and their Special Education Advisory Committee; and Indigenous Advisory Committee
- Develop effective intervention strategies and respond to all infractions related to the standards for respect, civility, responsible citizenship, and safety
- Provide opportunities for all of the staff to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to develop and maintain academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment.

Wherever possible, boards should collaborate to provide coordinated prevention and intervention programs and services, and should endeavour to share effective practices.

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 doing the following:

- 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

Under the leadership of their principals, teachers and other school staff 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 undertake the following:

- 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 a student:

- Comes to school prepared, on time, and ready to learn
- Shows respect for himself or herself, for others, and for those in authority
- Refrains 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

Parents 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 fulfil their role when they do the following:

- 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 code of conduct
- Encourage and assist their child in following the rules of behaviour
- Assist school staff in dealing with disciplinary issues involving their child

PARISH, COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND THE POLICE

Community partners and police play an essential role in making our schools and communities safer. 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.

Clergy and parish members provide support and resources in the development of the faith life, providing the foundation for the moral tone of our school communities.

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. The police investigate incidents in accordance with the protocol developed with the local school board. These protocols are based on a provincial model that was revised in 2015 by the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services and the Ministry of Education.

Promoting Positive Student Behavior (previously AP Memo APC035)

WCDSB emphasizes the importance of all students having a safe, caring and accepting school environment in order to maximize their learning potential and to ensure a positive school climate for all members of the school community.

WCDSB is committed to working with schools, parishes, families and the community in building and sustaining a positive learning environment for students that is safe, engaging, faith-based and academically challenging. Students learn best within an inviting school culture supported by caring and committed staff. A Catholic school community immersed in the Gospel of Jesus and filled with his Spirit is committed to the values of compassion, tolerance, forgiveness and reconciliation.

Our progressive discipline approach in responding to student behaviour is rooted in our recognition that each student is made in God's image, has a right to be included in our schools and a responsibility to act towards others with respect. The right of teachers to teach and students to learn in a safe and respectful environment is key to a safe, effective school.

To meet the goal of creating a safe, caring, and accepting school environment, WCDSB supports the use of positive practices as well as consequences for inappropriate behaviour, including progressive discipline, which includes suspension and expulsion where necessary. (See Suspensions and Expulsions AP Memo APC012)

The Board does not support discipline measures that are solely punitive or the use of exclusion as a disciplinary measure. Schools are encouraged to implement proactive positive practices and corrective supportive practices when necessary.

Positive Practices

In order to promote and support appropriate and positive student behaviours WCDSB supports the use of positive practices for: (1) prevention, and (2) positive behaviour management.

WCDSB also encourages principals/designates to review and amend, as appropriate, school initiatives, Individual Education Plans, Behaviour Management Plans and Safety Plans at regular intervals as well as following any incidences of misbehavior.

Preventative practices may include:

- Human Rights strategy pursuant to PPM 119
- Anti-bullying and violence prevention programs
- Mentorship programs
- Student success strategies
- Social Justice and Mission involvement
- Citizenship and community development
- Student leadership
- Promoting healthy student relationships as well as healthy lifestyles

Positive behaviour management practices may include:

- Program modifications or accommodations
- Class placement
- Positive encouragement and reinforcement
- Individual, peer and group counselling
- Conflict resolution / Dispute resolution
- Restorative Justice Practices
- Mentorship programs
- Alternative Suspension Programs
- Promotion of healthy student relationships
- Sensitivity programs
- Safety Plans
- School, Board and community support programs; and Student success strategies

Progressive Discipline:

WCDSB recognizes that, in some circumstances, positive practices might not be effective or sufficient to address inappropriate student behaviour. In such circumstances, WCDSB supports the use of consequences. In circumstances where a student will receive a consequence for his/her behaviour, it is the expectation of the Board that the principle of progressive discipline, consistent with the Human Rights Code, Ministry of Education direction and PPM 145, will be applied, if appropriate.

Progressive discipline is most effective when dialogue between the school and home regarding student achievement, behaviour and expectations is open, courteous and focused on student success.

When addressing inappropriate behaviour, school staff should consider the particular student and circumstances, including any mitigating and other factors as set out in Suspensions and Expulsions AP Memo APC012, the nature and severity of the behaviour, and the impact on the school climate.

Progressive Discipline Consequences

Progressive discipline may include early and/or ongoing intervention strategies as referenced in the positive practices section above. Examples of progressive discipline that may be employed are:

- Contact with the pupil's parent(s)/guardian(s); Oral reminders
- Review of expectations
- Written work assignment with a learning component; Volunteer service to the school community
- Peer mentoring; Referral to counselling
- Conflict mediation and resolution
- Consultation

Progressive discipline may also include a range of interventions, supports and consequences when inappropriate behaviours have occurred, with a focus on improving behaviour, such as one or more of the following:

- Meeting with the pupil's parent(s)/guardian(s), pupil and principal
- Referral to a community agency for anger management or substance abuse counselling
- Detentions
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Withdrawal from class
- Restitution for damages
- Restorative practices
- Transfer to an alternate learning environment

It is the expectation of the Board that, provided that there is no immediate risk of physical harm to any individual, staff members who work directly with students on a regular basis, including administrators, teachers, educational assistants, social workers, child and youth workers, psychologists, and speech and language pathologists, shall, in accordance with Board procedures, respond to any such inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour or any other behaviour that causes a negative school climate or for which a suspension or expulsion may be imposed, which they have observed or heard during the course of their duties or otherwise while on school property or during a school related event.

Continuum of Interventions

If the early and ongoing interventions have not met with success the principal will move further along the continuum of interventions and make reference to the procedures as outlined in Suspensions and Expulsions AP Memo APC012 to determine the next steps for the student.

Ideally the principal will have the opportunity to consult with the parent and student prior to this occurring so that they understand that further infractions limit the school's flexibility in approach.

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

Whenever possible, the Board will attempt to have an administrator present on school property. A principal may delegate authority for discipline matters or any issues pertaining to this Code of Conduct or other board policies to a vice-principal or teacher.

A delegation of authority to a teacher will only come into effect if there are no administrators present on school property.

Those who are delegated authority for discipline matters must respect and implement their duties and decisions as required by the Education Act, Board policies and procedures and the Human Rights Code of Ontario.

Delegation of Authority to a Vice-Principal

Vice-principals may be delegated authority by the principal to receive oral and written reports of suspension and expulsion infractions from Board employees and transportation providers in accordance with this procedure, and to report infractions to the Police in accordance with the School Board-Police Protocol AP Memo APC013.

Vice-principals may be delegated authority by the principal to conduct an investigation and/or inquiry when an infraction has occurred requiring further information before further action can be taken.

A vice-principal may be delegated authority to consider and implement progressive discipline measures following the investigation of an incident, which has occurred on school property, or during a school activity or in circumstances having an impact on the school climate and that by its nature does not require the principal to consider imposing a suspension and does not require the principal to consider imposing a suspension pending an inquiry for the purposes of recommending an expulsion.

A vice-principal may be delegated authority to impose a suspension of five or fewer days in accordance with these procedures.

A vice-principal may be delegated authority to create and facilitate all aspects of the Student Action Plan process when a student has been suspended for five or more days or when a student who is referred to the Discipline Committee of the Board for expulsion.

A vice-principal may be delegated authority to notify a parent/guardian of a student who has been the victim of an incident in accordance with the notification provisions outlined in these procedures, including an incident that might lead to a suspension or recommendation for expulsion.

The vice-principal may communicate the supports being provided for the victim, such as a Safety Plan, as well as any other Board and community supports in accordance with these procedures.

A vice-principal may be delegated authority to develop a victim's Safety Plan.

A vice-principal may be delegated authority to develop a Transition Plan for a student where a decision has been made by the Superintendent in consultation with the principal and consistent with the Human Rights Code that the student must be transferred to another school in accordance with these procedures following an incident.

The vice-principal may also be delegated responsibility for organizing and conducting the transfer meeting.

Authority delegated to the vice-principal shall be identified in writing in documentation identifying all of the vice-principal's responsibilities and duties within the school, and may include one or more of the following duties:

- Receive reports about suspension and expulsion infractions from Board employees and transportation providers
- Contact police in accordance with the Police and School Response Protocol
- Conduct investigations and inquiries
- Consider and implement progressive discipline measures
- Impose suspensions of between one (1) and five (5) days
- Develop and implement Student Action Plans
- Notify a parent/guardian of a student who has been the victim of an incident
- Develop a Safety Plan
- Develop a Transition Plan
- Organize and be responsible for a school transfer meeting.

The principal may delegate the performance of one or more of the above noted responsibilities to a vice-principal to be performed by the vice-principal despite the principal's presence in the school.

Despite authority to conduct investigations and inquiries, as noted above, where, in the vice- principal's opinion, the allegations might attract discipline requiring a suspension of five (5) or more days, the vice-principal shall consult with and/or receive direction from the principal or superintendent throughout the investigation process.

A vice-principal may not be delegated the power to impose a suspension of more than five (5) days or make the final decision with respect to recommending to the Board that a student be expelled.

Delegation of Authority to a Teacher

A teacher may be delegated authority by the principal of a school. Written notice identifying the authority being delegated to the teacher, the timeframe for the delegation of the authority and the resources available to the teacher must be provided in [Principal Delegation of Authority to Teacher](#) (Form APC018-01F).

When the delegation of authority to a teacher is not permitted in writing due to unforeseen circumstances, the principal will communicate with the teacher (in person or via phone) with a follow-up email. The written notice [Principal Delegation of Authority to Teacher](#) (Form APC018-01F) will follow at the earliest convenience of the principal upon his/her return to the school. Written notice identifying the authority being delegated to the teacher, the timeframe for the delegation of the authority and the resources available to the teacher in charge must be provided in [Principal Delegation of Authority to Teacher](#) (Form APC018-01F).

When a teacher has been identified to assume duties for a particular timeframe, communication by internal electronic mail shall be provided to all staff members of the school, who are anticipated to be in attendance during the particular timeframe, identifying the name of the teacher designated authority and the timeframe for the administration's absence.

A written notice identifying the authority being delegated to the teacher, the timeframe for the delegation of the teacher will be delegated authority to receive reports about suspension and expulsion infractions from Board employees and transportation providers, in which case, the teacher shall at the earliest opportunity inform the principal or vice-principal and when the absence of the principal and vice-principal might be for 1 or more days, the neighbouring school principal or the superintendent.

A teacher may be delegated authority to contact the police in an emergency or in the event of an incident requiring police involvement in accordance with the School Board -Police Protocol AP Memo APC 013.

A teacher may be delegated authority by the principal to conduct an investigation when an infraction has occurred requiring further information before action can be taken. When it appears that the incident might attract discipline in the form of suspension or expulsion, the teacher delegated authority shall **not** proceed to investigate, but shall at the earliest opportunity provide the principal or vice-principal, and in the absence of the principal and vice-principal for one or more days, the neighbouring school principal or the superintendent, with a detailed written and oral account of the steps taken and information determined up to that point.

All incidents on school property occurring during a school related activity or having an impact on school climate that might result in suspension or suspension and a recommendation for expulsion shall be reported by the teacher delegated authority to the principal, or the vice- principal in the principal's absence, at the earliest opportunity, and in the absence of the principal and vice-principal for 1 or more days, the neighbouring school principal or the superintendent.

In such circumstances, the teacher may be delegated authority to provide information to the parent/guardian of a student, who is **not** an adult student and where the teacher is **not** of the opinion that informing the parent/guardian would put the student at risk of harm, about the fact that harm has been caused and the nature of the harm that has occurred.

The teacher shall also inform the parent/guardian that, at the earliest opportunity, an administrator will contact the parent/guardian to provide further information about the activity causing harm and the steps that will be taken to support the victim and ensure the victim's safety. The teacher delegated authority may inform a parent/guardian of an adult student if that student consents to the disclosure of information.

A teacher shall **not** be delegated authority to share with the parent/guardian of a victim the name of the suspected perpetrators and/or the discipline measures that might be taken by the school to address the infraction.

The teacher may be delegated authority to consider and implement a strategy of progressive discipline following the initial investigation of an incident, which has occurred on school property, during a school activity, or in circumstances having an impact on the school climate, that by its nature does not require the principal to consider imposing a suspension and does not require the principal to consider imposing a suspension pending an inquiry for the purposes of recommending an expulsion.

A teacher shall not be delegated authority to suspend a student.

If at any time the teacher delegated authority is uncertain or uncomfortable about the duties that have been delegated and/or the possible application of the Human Rights Code, s/he should take immediate steps to contact an administrator. In emergency circumstances, where an administrator is not available, the teacher delegated authority shall contact the emergency administrator who has been identified as a resource.

Dress code (Previously AP Memo APC005)

WCDSB believes that equity derives from the respect and dignity due all persons as created in the image of God.

A responsible citizen is one who contributes to the common good. A collaborative contributor is one who respects the rights, responsibilities and contribution of self and others.

To this end the Board's guiding principles with respect to a dress code that illustrates positive student behavior are as follows:

All schools within the jurisdiction of the Waterloo Catholic District School Board shall adopt an appropriate dress code for students as follows:

Each school's appropriate dress code shall be in keeping with the Board's mission, vision, and Catholic social teachings.

All secondary schools within the jurisdiction of the board have adopted a mandatory school uniform policy. An annual review/monitoring process for secondary school uniform policy shall involve consultation with parents through the Catholic School Advisory Council (CSAC) and other stakeholders (staff, students).

Elementary schools within the jurisdiction of the board will adopt an appropriate dress code policy or may establish a school uniform policy. The dress code or school uniform shall be determined by the majority of parents through the CSAC. Majority is defined as at least 65% of the families of students registered at the school.

The appropriate dress code for each school shall state the principles upon which the school policy is based (e.g. working towards safer and more respectful learning and teaching environment). The appropriate dress code policy shall contain the following statement concerning the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Canadian Charter of Rights & Freedoms: "The School's Dress Code and/or School Uniform Policy have been developed in compliance with the Canadian Charter of Rights & Freedoms and the Ontario Human Rights Code."

The appropriate dress code policy shall contain a statement of expectations for student compliance with the student dress code/uniform policy.

DEFINITIONS

Dress Code -is defined as the standard of student dress agreed upon by the school community and in keeping with the Education Act & Regulations.

School Uniform -is defined as the standard of student dress consistent in style, colour and pieces (i.e. shirts, pants, kilts) worn by all students and in keeping with the Education Act & Regulations.

PROCEDURES

ELEMENTARY DRESS CODE

1. The principal, in consultation with the CSAC, shall develop a student dress code as part of the student Code of Conduct.
2. A school's student dress code shall be accepted by a majority (65%) of the families of students registered at the school.
3. A school's student dress code shall be reviewed at least once every five years with the school community.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL UNIFORM

The principal and/or the CSAC may initiate the process of adopting a school uniform.

Elementary schools considering a school uniform shall:

1. Inform the appropriate superintendent
2. Establish a representative committee including parents, staff, students and school administration. The purpose of the committee will be to determine whether or not the school community concurs with the adoption of a school uniform, explore the implications of introducing a uniform including affordability and, subject to the acceptance of the school community, implement the introduction of a school uniform; this representative committee must recognize that the administration of the school uniform is the responsibility of the CSAC (includes ordering of uniform, sale of uniform and affordability issues).
3. Develop an action plan

The development of an action plan will include the following:

- a. data collection;
- b. public consultation;
- c. a communication plan;
- d. cost effectiveness and subsidy plans;
- e. clear voting procedures and clear ballot questions;
- f. a decision to implement or not (based on a vote of 65% of the families of students registered at the school) ;
- g. a strategy for compliance;
- h. acquisition of apparel;
- i. an annual monitoring process;
- j. a five (5) year commitment to the uniform;
- k. publish annually the school uniform policy.