

Code of Conduct Procedure

RATIONALE:

The Education Amendment Act (Keeping Our Kids Safe at School) came into force in February 2010, amending Part XIII of the Education Act dealing with behaviour, discipline and safety. Policy and Program Memorandum 145 (2009) "Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour" provided direction to school boards regarding progressive discipline policies. HWDSB Code of Conduct establishes standards of behaviour that are consistent with the Provincial Code of Conduct and apply to all members of the school community. The Code of Conduct promotes respect within the learning and teaching environment, and sets clear provincial and board standards of behaviour. Furthermore, Bill 13, Accepting Schools Act, 2012, reestablishes the importance of promoting a positive school climate that is inclusive and accepting of all pupils and promotes the prevention of bullying.

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) believes that all individuals attending on Board or school property, on school buses, or at school-related events or activities, should be treated with dignity and respect.

The Code of Conduct promotes a positive school climate, which is a contributing factor to a safe and orderly environment. It also supports Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board's commitment to Character Education.

Violations of the Code of Conduct shall be addressed through other relevant Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board Policies and provincial legislation (see Key Roles and Responsibilities).

Boards are required to revise their Codes of Conduct and Principals are to engage in reviews of School Codes of Conduct to align their policies with the changes in the Policy/program 128, December 2012.

Purpose of the Code of Conduct (Education Act 301(2))

- 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 maintain an environment where conflict and difference can be addressed in a manner characterized by respect and civility;
- 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 prevent bullying in schools.

Code of Conduct Procedure

TERMINOLOGY:

School climate: may be defined as the sum total of all of the personal relationships within a school. These relationships must be founded in mutual acceptance, inclusion, respect, responsibility and civility, and must be modeled by all.

Respect, Civility and Responsible Citizenship: All members of the school community, including trustees, Board employees, students, parents/ guardians, Home and School, School Council, visitors, volunteers, contractors, community members on school premises, while on school buses, at school related events or activities, or in any other circumstances that could have an impact on the climate of the school must:

- respect and comply with all applicable federal, provincial, and municipal laws,
- respect and model HWDSB Character Education attributes and comply with the Equity Policy and other Board policies
- 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, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, creed, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, family 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
- not swear at a teacher, or at another person in a position of authority.
- follow standards consistent with the Provincial Code of Conduct
- promote the prevention of bullying
- model to others what is appropriate and respond to inappropriate behaviour

Safety: No member of the school community should:

- engage in any bullying behaviours including the use of any physical, verbal, electronic, written or other means of bullying
- engage in gender-based violence and incidents based on homophobia, transphobia, or biphobia
- commit sexual assault
- traffic weapons or illegal drugs
- give drugs or alcohol to a minor
- commit robbery
- be in possession of any weapon, including firearms

Code of Conduct Procedure

- 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 propaganda and other forms of behaviour motivated by hate or bias; and/or
- commit an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to school property or to property located on the premises of the school.

PROCEDURES:

1.0 Key Roles and Responsibilities

1.1 All members of the school community have a responsibility to uphold the HWDSB Code of Conduct. Violations of the Code of Conduct will be addressed through relevant policy and legislation.

1.1.1 For Board personnel, including Executive Council, examples would include:

- Respectful Working and Learning Environments,
- Harassment Policy
- Ontario Human Rights Code

1.1.2 For parents/guardians, examples would include:

- A verbal request to stop the offending behaviour,
- A letter of warning advising them to stop the inappropriate behaviour and advising them if the offending behaviour persists, they may be issued a trespass notice,
- Or a trespass notice issued in relation to any of the following: Access to School Premises (Ont. Reg.474/00), Trespass Act, Ontario Human Rights Code.

1.1.3 For students, examples would include:

- Promoting Positive Student Behaviour and Progressive Discipline Policy
- Suspensions
- Expulsions
- Ontario Human Rights Code

1.1.4 For Trustees, examples would include:

- Trustee Code of Ethics,
- Ontario Human Rights Code

Code of Conduct Procedure

1.1.5 For Third Parties, examples could include:

- Provincial Code of Conduct
- Harassment Policy

1.2 Principal Roles/Responsibilities

1.2.1 Principals will hold everyone to the highest standard of respectful/responsible behaviour and will take a daily leadership role in the school when they:

- demonstrate care and commitment to academic excellence in a safe teaching and learning environment
- hold everyone under their authority, accountable for their behaviour and actions
- empower students to be positive leaders in their school and community
- communicate regularly and meaningfully with all members of their school community
- model respect, responsibility, and civility and ensure these are taught as part of the curriculum
- encourage and promote a positive school climate through modeling and ongoing professional development for staff
- promote the prevention of inappropriate behavior, including bullying, sexual assault, gender-based violence and incidents based on homophobia, transphobia, or biphobia
- notify the parent of student who may have been harmed in an incident as well as the student the principal believes has engaged in the activity that resulted in the harm
- maintain consistent standards of behaviour for all students; and
- model the character attributes of Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board.

1.3 Teacher and Staff Roles/Responsibilities

1.3.1 Under the leadership of their principals, teachers and school staff maintain order in the school and are expected to hold everyone to the highest standard of respectful/responsible behaviour. As role models, they can do this when they:

- help students work to their full potential and their sense of self-worth
- empower students to be positive leaders in their classrooms, school, and community
- communicate regularly and meaningfully with parents/guardians
- maintain consistent standards of behaviour for all students
- promote a safe learning environment for students
- promote the prevention of bullying

Code of Conduct Procedure

- address inappropriate student behavior and promote early intervention
- demonstrate respect for students, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers, and other members of the school community
- prepare students for the full responsibilities of citizenship; and
- model the character attributes of Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board.

1.4 Student Roles/Responsibilities

1.4.1 Students demonstrate respect and responsibility when they:

- come to school prepared, on time, and ready to learn
- show respect for themselves, others and those in authority
- refrain from bringing anything to school that may compromise the safety of self or others
- demonstrate responsibility for actions or behaviour off school property or outside of the school day that would have an impact on the school climate
- follow the established rules and take responsibility for their own actions
- model the character attributes of Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board
- promote the prevention of bullying
- demonstrate appropriate participation in the civic life of the community.

1.5 Parent/Guardian Roles/Responsibilities

1.5.1 Parents/Guardians support a safe and respectful learning environment 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
- become familiar with the Code of Conduct and school rules
- promote the prevention of bullying
- encourage and assist their child in following the rules of behaviour; and
- assist school staff in dealing with disciplinary issues involving their child.

1.6 Trustees and Executive Council Roles/Responsibilities

1.6.1 Trustees and Executive Council members will model behaviour consistent with the Code of Conduct and character attributes of Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board when they:

Code of Conduct Procedure

- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of policies developed by board under clause

2.0 Community Partners, Police, Volunteers, Board retained Contractors and Consultants and Visitors Roles/Responsibilities

- 2.1 All community partners and service providers, volunteers, Board retained contractors and consultants, and visitors should be made aware of the Code of Conduct to enable them to model it when in schools or at school related events, or on school property. Any agreements, protocols and/or contracts with partners, contractors and consultants will clearly articulate the expectation that all individuals and groups shall follow standards consistent with the Code of Conduct.
- 2.2 The police play an essential role in making our schools and communities safer. The police investigate incidents in accordance with the protocol developed with Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board that was revised in 2011, based on a provincial model.

3.0 Development of School Codes of Conduct

- 3.1 Under the leadership of the Principal, the development of the School Code of Conduct shall include the School Council and the Safe Schools Team.
- 3.2 The following shall also be considered when developing the School Code of Conduct:
 - Involve staff, student councils/students where appropriate, Home and School, and community members if available
 - Ensure the School Code of Conduct is consistent with the HWDSB Code of Conduct and the Provincial Code of Conduct
- 3.3 The School Code of Conduct shall include:
 - the definition of positive school climate
 - the purpose of the Code of Conduct to prevent bullying in schools
 - the standards of behaviour identified as respect, civility, and responsible citizenship
 - the key roles and responsibilities for staff, students, and parents/guardians
- 3.4 School Codes of Conduct should be reviewed every three years.

4.0 Communication of School Codes of Conduct

- 4.1 Ensure each staff member, and new staff each year, are provided with a copy of the School Code of Conduct.

Code of Conduct Procedure

- 4.2 Provide each student with a copy of the Code of Conduct to be sent home each year. (The student responsibilities may be included in the student agenda with a reference to the full policy on the HWDSB website, and the availability of the full policy in the school).
- 4.3 Direct and/or facilitate visitors, volunteers, etc. to view the HWDSB Code of Conduct on the Board website.
- 4.4 Ensure the School Code of Conduct is placed on the school website.