

## **POLICY #9410 SAFE AND CARING SCHOOLS**

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### **STATEMENT OF VALUES**

School District No. 36 (Surrey) is strongly committed to Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination ([Policy #10900 – Anti Discrimination and Human Rights](#)). Creating safe and caring environments for all students and staff is a top priority of the district.

While the district is responsible to ensure that all students are treated with respect and dignity, the district also recognizes that school community members identifying (either publicly or privately) as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, questioning, Two Spirit (LGBTQ2S+) face a unique set of challenges within schools and communities. The creation of safe and caring environments specifically to students or staff who are LGBTQ2S+ is addressed in detail in this policy on Safe and Caring Schools and in [Regulation #9410.2 – Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity or Expression](#).

School community members identifying as LGBTQ2S+ are often targets of discriminatory behaviours and or exclusion. All members of the Surrey school district share the responsibility for upholding the values inherent in the Charter or Rights and Freedoms and for supporting students and staff in addressing and facing these unique challenges. Homophobic and or transphobic comments, discrimination, bullying, and attacks are demeaning to all students, parents or guardians and employees regardless of their actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity or expression.

The school district will not permit or tolerate any homophobic and or transphobic behaviour such as harassment, intimidation, discrimination or bullying, whether by commission or by failing to act to end such behaviour. Staff will respond to all incidents and provide support and assistance to those who are the intended or unintended targets of such behavior. In order to support safe, caring, inclusive and welcoming environments to our LGBTQ2S+ staff, students and families, the district makes commitments to the following actions.

#### **1. DISTRICT CODE OF CONDUCT**

- 1.1. The Surrey Board of Education is committed to providing safe and caring environments in which all learners can achieve academic excellence, personal growth and responsible citizenship.
- 1.2. The board promotes clearly defined behavioural expectations that represent the highest standards of respectful and responsible citizenship and lead to a culture of non-violence among all persons in all schools and at all school-authorized events and activities.

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To this end, the board expects that persons will:

- Comply with all applicable federal, provincial and municipal laws, and with district policy and regulations.
- Value and encourage learning and working environments that are inclusive and respectful of the diverse individual, collective, social and cultural needs of our community.
- Treat one another with dignity and respect.
- Refrain from engaging in, or encouraging acts of violence of any form.
- Show care and regard for school property and the property of others.
- Take appropriate measures to help those in need; and
- Respect those in positions of authority.

1.3. The board expects that all persons will not engage in behavior that constitutes discrimination based on grounds as set out in the *Human Rights Code*, including:

- Race
- Colour
- Ancestry
- Place of origin
- Political belief
- Religion
- Marital status
- Family status
- Physical or mental disability
- Sex
- Gender identity or expression
- Sexual orientation, and
- Age

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## **2. MANAGING STUDENT BEHAVIOUR IN SAFE AND CARING SCHOOLS**

2.1 Responsibility for an effective discipline program is shared among many partners including the district, schools, students, parents/guardians, community groups, social agencies and the RCMP. The board promotes understanding and acceptance of the interactive roles required to achieve safe and caring schools.

2.1. Safe and caring school environments are free of acts of:

- Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, threats, intimidation, verbal or written abuse, racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination of any kind, including but not limited to those listed in section 1.3 or any other distinguishing characteristic, or if based on an association with an individual or group with any of aforementioned characteristics.
- Any form of violence
- Theft
- Vandalism

2.2. Safe and caring school environments do not tolerate the presence of:

- Intoxicating or banned substances.
- Weapons (or replica weapons) and explosives; and
- Intruders or trespassers.

## **3. APPROPRIATE DRESS**

3.1. Each school shall adopt a dress code that attempts to balance individual liberty, social convention, functionality, community standards and school community values.

3.2. Staff and students are expected to dress in ways that are appropriate for their particular roles in the school and that show respect for themselves, for others and for the school.

3.3. In the case of student dress, there should be a partnership between student, parent and school that provides sufficient, but not excessive,

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guidance so students not only dress appropriately, but also learn to make good independent decisions regarding dress.

#### **4. SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT**

- 4.1. Each school shall establish a School Code of Conduct including statements of expectations regarding student behaviour. These codes of conduct shall be displayed in a prominent area in the school visible to visitors and ambassadors of the school (e.g. coaches, volunteers).
- 4.2. School Codes of Conduct shall be consistent with the *School Act* and relevant district policy and regulation, and shall be developed and reviewed in accordance with [Regulation #9410.1](#) and the Safe and Caring Schools Handbook of Procedures.
- 4.3. School Codes of Conduct will specifically reference each of the following prohibited grounds of discrimination which are set out in the *Human Rights Code*, and include:
  - Race
  - Colour
  - Ancestry
  - Place of origin
  - Religion
  - Marital status
  - Family status
  - Physical or mental disability
  - Sex
  - Gender identity or expression
  - Sexual orientation, and
  - Age

#### **5. AUTHORITY TO ACT**

- 5.1. Principals and vice principals are authorized by the board under the *School*

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*Act* to suspend a student from attendance at school in keeping with district policy, regulation and procedures and will make reasonable accommodation to continue the student's education program during the period of the suspension.

- 5.2. Principals and vice principals may conduct or authorize a search of a student, personal property or locker if there are reasonable grounds to believe that policy has been or is being violated and that evidence of the violation will be found in the location or on the person of the student searched. The search should be conducted in a sensitive manner and be minimally intrusive.

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[Reg #9410.2](#)