Greater Essex County District School Board

Policy: Safe Schools

Reference No: P-AD-16

The Greater Essex County District School Board is committed to creating and promoting a safe environment in its schools and Board properties for staff, parents/guardians, visitors, volunteers and the community. Safety of students is a primary concern of the GECDSB. It is important that all students have 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. All school staff play a critical role in building and sustaining a positive school climate.

Every member of the school community has a responsibility to assist in creating and maintaining safe, secure, and harmonious learning, teaching, and work environments. All members of the school community have a role in leadership and modeling of appropriate behavior. To that end, the GECDSB supports the local Police % School Protocol.

This policy authorized the creation of procedures for implementation, which shall be considered guidelines pursuant to the Education Act.

Corresponding GECDSB Regulations:

- R-AD-28 Code of Conduct
- R-AD-29 Bullying Prevention and Intervention
- R-AD-30 Progressive Discipline
- R-AD-37 Delegation of Authority Regarding Student Discipline
- R-AD-51 Suspension and Expulsion
- R-AD-08 Student Searches

Greater Essex County District School District

Regulation: Code of Conduct

Reference No: R-AD-28

Pursuant to the Education Act, principals are required to maintain proper order and discipline in schools, and pupils are responsible to the principal for their conduct and are required to accept such discipline as would be exercised by a reasonable, kind, firm and judicious parent/guardian.

Each school Principal shall establish a school code of conduct and review it on a regular basis in conjunction with the school improvement plan, considering the views of School Council. *Education Amendment Act* (Progressive Discipline and School Safety), 2007- s. 303

A school's Code of Conduct must be consistent with the Provincial and GECDSB Code of Conduct (Appendix 1).

1. The Provincial and GECDSB Code of Conduct

The Provincial and the GECDSB Code of Conduct set clear standards of behaviour that shall be incorporated into each school's Code of Conduct and shall apply not only to students, but also to all individuals involved in the publicly funded school system – parents/guardians, volunteers, teachers and other staff members, whether they are on school property, on school buses, at school-related events or activities, or in other circumstances that could have an impact on the school climate.

2. Communication

Principals on behalf of the Board, shall bring the provincial and the local codes of conduct to the attention of the school community on a yearly basis during the month of September, in staff handbooks, parent-student-handbooks and/or brochure/newsletter/flyer, web pages, in accordance with the Education Amendment Act (Progressive Discipline and School Safety) 2007.

The principal of a school shall maintain a Handbook for staff and students that shall include the school's Code of Conduct.

3. Requirements for Pupils

Requirements for pupils are outlined in Section 23 of Ontario Regulation 298, Operation of Schools - General.

Requirements for Pupils 23 (1) A pupil shall,

i) be diligent in attempting to master such studies as are a part of the program in which the pupil is enrolled;
ii) exercise self-discipline;
iii) accept such discipline as would be exercised by a kind, firm and judicious parent;
iv) attend classes punctually and regularly;
v) be courteous to fellow pupils and obedient and courteous to teachers;
vi) be clean in person and habits;
vii) take such tests and examinations as are required by or under the Act or as may be directed by the Minister; and
viii) show respect for school property.

(4) Every pupil is responsible for his or her conduct to the Principal of the school that the pupil attends,

i) on the school premises;
ii) on out-of-school activities that are part of the school program; and
iii) while traveling on a school bus that is owned by a board or on a bus or school bus that is under contract to a board.

4. Appropriate Dress

Pupils and staff should appreciate that clothing worn to school must be conducive to an academic environment. Clothing that detracts from the learning atmosphere which the schools are trying to promote is considered inappropriate. Clothing must also be appropriate for the pupil's age, for weather conditions, and for health and safety reasons.

While the selection of clothing worn at school is the responsibility of parents/guardians and pupils, the Principal reserves the right of final decision concerning dress and appearance.

a) Each school shall have in place policies on appropriate dress.

The *Education Amendment Act* (Progressive Discipline and School Safety) 2007, 302 (5) If required to do so by the Minister, a board shall establish policies and guidelines respecting appropriate dress for pupils in schools within the boards jurisdiction, and the policies and guidelines must address such matters and include such requirements as the Minister may specify.

a) The school Principal shall consider the views of the School Council with respect to the contents of the policies and guidelines, in the establishment of such policies/guidelines and in the annual review of such policies and guidelines.

Required policy elements are as follows:

- Decision Making Process

The process shall enable a majority (51% or as per the mandate of the by-laws of each School Council) of parents/guardians, through their School Council, to decide on what an appropriate dress policy should be for their own school. A majority of 66% of all families is required for major changes in dress code, such as the adoption of a school uniform.

- Involvement of School Councils

Board level: Parents/guardians, through School Council representatives, will be given the opportunity to provide input into the development of the board policy on appropriate dress.

School level: Using the decision making process developed and approved at the board level, a majority of parents/guardians, through their School Council representatives will be able to decide on what an appropriate dress policy should be for their own schools.

School level dress code shall incorporate the following in their policy/guidelines:

- statement of principles
- consistency with the Human Rights Code and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms
  i.e. cultural and religious dress, disabilities explanation of terms
- pupil compliance: expectations for pupil compliance with a board policy on appropriate dress, dress code or school uniforms.
- process to address affordability issues
- review/monitoring process

b) Pupils have a responsibility with regards to their personal dress. The following requirement for pupils is stated in Regulation 298, Operation of Schools - General 23 (1) (f) be clean in person and habits.

c) Parents/guardians should assist in their role by:
- assisting their children in selecting clothing that is appropriate for the school setting;and,
- ensuring that the clothing and footwear worn are safe in the various areas of the school(gym, stairs, playground equipment etc.)

d) All staff members should understand their role in modeling appropriate dress for pupils and in enforcing school policy.

5. Athletic Code of Conduct

The Greater Essex County District School Board recognizes that codes of conduct for sporting events are written in the constitutions of the Greater Essex County Elementary Athletic Association (G.E.C.E.A.A.) and the Windsor Essex County Secondary Schools' Athletic Association (W.E.C.S.S.A.A.). These codes govern the behaviour of pupil athletes, coaches, officials and spectators and violations of these codes are handled according to these guidelines.

Notwithstanding the above-mentioned athletic codes of conduct and penalties imposed therein, the provisions of the *Education Amendment Act* (Progressive Discipline and School Safety), 2007, *Accepting Schools Act*, 2012 and any Board policies, regulations or procedures shall take precedence. Therefore, a school Principal may also impose penalties, consequences and/or limitations upon pupil athletes, coaches, officials or spectators. Such penalties, consequences and/or limitations may be additional to those imposed by the G.E.C.E.A.A. and/or the W.E.C.S.S.A.A., and may be more severe or extensive in scope.

6. Professional Expectations

The Greater Essex County District School Board acknowledges and supports the *Ontario College of Teachers Act, 1996,* its regulations, statements and philosophy. It also acknowledges that others who practice their professions in the Board are governed by similar standards of practice related to the professional organization or college to which they may belong, i.e. College of Psychologists of Ontario, Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers, College of Early Childhood Educators, and College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario. It is expected that employees be familiar with and honour the standards of practice of their profession, and maintain professional relationships with pupils and others.

Legislative and Ministry Reference
Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum No. 128 Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Code of Conduct

GECDSB Policy
Safe Schools P-AD-16

Appendix 1
Provincial and GECDSB Code of Conduct

Code of Conduct

Standards of Behaviour

Respect, Civility and Responsible Citizenship

All school members must:

- respect and follow all applicable laws
- demonstrate honesty and integrity
- respect differences in people
- treat one another with dignity and respect at all times, especially when there is a disagreement
- respect and treat others fairly, regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability
- respect the rights of others
- show care and respect for school property and the property of others
- take the proper steps to help those in need
- respect all members of the school community, especially those in a position of authority
- respect the need of others to work in an environment that encourages learning and teaching
- seek help from school staff, if necessary, to resolve conflict peacefully
- not swear at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority

Safety

School community members must not:

- engage in any form of bullying, whether it is in person or through technology, like email or cell phone
- commit sexual assault
- traffic weapons, illegal and/or restricted drugs
- commit robbery
- give alcohol or cannabis to anyone under the legal age
- be in possession of a weapon, including firearms
- use any object to threaten or intimidate another person
- injure anyone with an object
- be in possession or under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, or give them to anyone else
- inflict or encourage others to inflict bodily harm
- engage in hate propaganda or other types of behaviour caused by hate or bias
- commit an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to school property at the student's school or to property on the school premises

Roles and Responsibilities

- School boards provide direction to their schools to ensure opportunity, excellence and accountability in the education system.
- Principals, under the direction of their school board, take a leadership role in the daily operation of a school.
- Teachers and school staff, under the leadership of their principals, help maintain order in the school and are expected to hold everyone to the highest standard of respectful and responsible behaviour
- As role models, staff uphold these high standards.
- 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.
- Parents play an important role in the education of their children and can support the efforts of school staff in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students.
- Community members need to support and respect the rules of their local schools.
- The police play an essential role in making our schools and communities safer. Police investigate incidents in accordance with the protocol developed with the local school board.

GREATER ESSEX COUNTY
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Ontario
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION