



## **Atlas Learning Academy Safe, Caring, Welcoming and Respectful School Policy**

### **PART I - Commitment**

Consistent with its mission and vision, Atlas Learning Academy Board is committed to a safe, inclusive, equitable, and welcoming learning and teaching environment for all students and staff.

All students have the right to learn and work in an environment free of discrimination, prejudice, and harassment. This right is guaranteed under the:

- *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*;
- The *Alberta Human Rights Act* as amended March 10, 2015, and the *Alberta Human Rights Act*, including the right not to be discriminated against by reason of race, national origin, colour, religion or gender identity or gender expression. Legislation also provides as a fundamental right the “right of parents to make informed decisions respecting the education of their children;” and,
- Requirements of the *Alberta School Act* (and upon Proclamation the *Education Act, Section 35.1*) that provide for support measures that support the equality and non-discrimination of dignity of students who may belong to minority groups, including sexual orientation.

### **PART II - Rights**

The Atlas Learning Academy Board will not tolerate harassment, bullying, intimidation, or discrimination on the basis of a person's actual or perceived differences or gender identity or gender expression.

The Atlas Learning Academy Board believes that all students have the right to:

- be treated fairly, equitably, and with dignity and respect;
- have their confidentiality protected and respected;
- self-identification and determination;
- freedom of conscience, expression, and association;
- be fully included and represented in an inclusive, positive, and respectful manner by all school personnel;
- have equitable access to the same supports, services, and protections provided to heterosexual students and their families;
- have avenues of recourse (without fear of reprisal) available to them when they are victims of harassment, prejudice, discrimination, intimidation, bullying, and/or violence; and
- Have their unique identities, families, cultures, and communities included, valued and respected within the school environment.

## PART III - Measures

The Atlas Learning Academy Board has implemented measures that:

- Define appropriate expectations, behaviours, language, and actions in order to prevent discrimination, prejudice, and harassment through greater awareness of, and responsiveness to, their harmful effects.
- Ensure that all such discriminatory behaviours and complaints will be taken seriously, documented, and dealt with expeditiously and effectively through consistently applied policy and procedures.
- Improve students' understanding of the individual lives of minorities, including sexual and gender minorities, and their families, cultures, and communities.
- Develop, implement, and evaluate inclusive educational strategies, professional development opportunities, and administrative guidelines to ensure that minorities including gender minorities and their families are treated with respect and dignity in all aspects of the school community in a manner consistent with the school's mission and vision.
- Support the establishment of Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs), or similar student support groups, where student interest has been expressed;
- Identify a staff member to serve as a safe contact for sexual and gender minority students. The principal will inform the school community about the location and availability of this Safe Contact Resource Person;
- Ensure staff will not refer students to programs or services that attempt to change or repair a student's sexual orientation or gender identity; and
- Ensure administration and staff recognize the confidentiality of the sexual orientation and gender identity of all students and protect them from unwanted disclosure of such information.

16.1(1) If one or more students attending a school operated by a board requests a staff member employed by the board for support to establish a voluntary student organization, or to lead an activity intended to promote a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging, the principal of the school shall:

(a) immediately grant permission for the establishment of the student organization or the holding of the activity at the school, and

(b) subject to subsection (4), within a reasonable time from the date that the principal receives the request designate a staff member to serve as the staff liaison to facilitate the establishment, and the ongoing operation, of the student organization or to assist in organizing the activity.

(3) The students may select a respectful and inclusive name for the organization or activity, including the name "gay-straight alliance" or "queer-straight alliance", after consulting with the principal.

(3.1) For greater certainty, the principal shall not prohibit or discourage students from choosing a name that includes "gay-straight alliance" or "queer-straight alliance".

(4) The principal shall immediately inform the board and the Minister if no staff member is available to serve as a staff liaison referred to in subsection (1), and if so informed, the Minister shall appoint a responsible adult to work with the requesting students in organizing the activity or to facilitate the establishment, and the ongoing operation, of the student organization at the school.

(6) The principal is responsible for ensuring that notification, if any, respecting a voluntary student organization or an activity referred to in subsection (1) is limited to the fact of the establishment of the organization or the holding of the activity.

- The principal is responsible for ensuring that any notification, if any, respecting a voluntary student organization or activity referred to in section 16.1(1) of the School Act is limited to the fact of the establishment of the organization or the holding of the activity, and is otherwise consistent with the usual practices relating to notifications of other student organizations and activities.

Alberta Government (2016). Guidelines for best practices. Creating learning environment that respect diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions.

Retrieved from <https://education.alberta.ca/media/1626737/91383-attachment-1-guidelines-final.pdf>

Province of Alberta (2015). School Act. Revised statutes of Alberta 2000 Chapter S-3. Alberta Queen's Printer, Edmonton.

The disclosure of personal information by Atlas Learning Academy is governed by, and in accordance with the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA)

## PART IV – Legal Basis

When implementing the above policy directions, Atlas Learning Academy will act reasonably in the best interests of the student in keeping with the guidelines outlined by the Supreme Court of Canada (Loyola College vs. Quebec, 2015), the Alberta Human Rights Act and the Alberta School Act.

### **Atlas Learning Academy Student Code of Conduct Policy**

#### **Purpose**

In keeping with its mission and Alberta legislation, and its Safe and Caring Policy, the Atlas Learning Academy is committed to:

- Providing all students with a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment;
- Establishing a reasonable and caring balance between individual and collective rights, freedoms and responsibilities within the school community; and,
- Publishing as part of student registration, school start information and other forms, writing expectations for student behaviour (to students and their parents) while at school, at school-related activities, or while engaging in activities that may have an impact on others in the school.

#### **Expected Conduct**

Consistent with Section 13 of the School Act and in keeping with the mission and vision of Atlas Learning Academy, each student is responsible for acting positively in support of a welcoming and caring learning environment by:

- Acting at all times in keeping with the vision and mission underlying the school;
- Respecting oneself and the rights of others in the school;
- Conducting oneself in a manner that contributes to a welcoming, caring and respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging;
- Refrain from and refuse to tolerate bullying whether in or outside of the school or school hours or electronically;
- Inform a responsible, trusted and caring adult in a timely manner of incidents of bullying, harassment, intimidation or other unwelcoming or uncaring acts;
- Attend school regularly and punctually;
- Diligently and actively being prepared to learn and actively pursue learning;
- Being accountable for individual behaviours to teachers and school staff;
- Cooperating with school staff to make the school a positive learning environment for all; and,
- Knowing and following the rules of the school;

## Unacceptable Conduct

Unacceptable behaviours that may negatively affect a member of the Atlas Learning Academy community or the school's learning environment, whether in or outside of the school or school hours or electronically, include, but are not limited to:

- *Discrimination.* In keeping with the *Alberta Human Rights Act*, no student or person may discriminate against a student on the basis of an individual student's race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religious beliefs, gender (including pregnancy, sexual harassment, and gender identity) physical disability, mental disability, marital status, family status, source of income or sexual orientation.
- *Acts of bullying, harassment or intimidation.* As defined by the School Act, Section 1.1(b.1) bullying is defined as the "repeated and hostile or demeaning behaviour by an individual in the school community where the behaviour is intended to cause harm, fear or distress to one more individuals in the school community, including psychological harm or harm to an individual's reputation.
- Physical violence.
- *Acts of retribution* against an individual who has intervened to prevent bullying or informed about bullying or other unacceptable behavior.
- *Illegal activities* including, those involving illegal or restricted substances, possession or use or threat of use of weapons, and theft or damage to property.

Minor breaches are handled effectively in an informal manner on a daily basis and may not warrant documentation or communication. Interventions are handled at different levels depending on the seriousness of the breach of conduct and as guided by this document.

## Consequences

Students are expected to conduct themselves in keeping with their responsibilities as students.

The school will investigate each instance of unacceptable conduct and pursue disciplinary action in a matter consistent with the principles of fundamental justice and the school's student discipline policy. In grave circumstances, an individual found to have engaged in unacceptable conduct may be subject to possible suspension or expulsion.

Unacceptable behaviour may be grounds for disciplinary action, and provides the student with an opportunity for critical learning and reflection in the areas of personal accountability and responsibility, the development of empathy, as well as communication, conflict resolution, and social skills development.

In the assessment of the potential consequences of unacceptable behaviour, the School shall also consider a student's age, maturity, individual circumstances, and frequency of the misconduct. In addition, the specific circumstances of the situation and of the student must be taken into account when determining appropriate responses to unacceptable behaviour.

When a student engages in unacceptable behaviour, consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- i. temporary assignment of a student to an alternate supervised area within the school; temporary assignment of a student to an alternate learning location;
- ii. short term removal of privileges including removal from school-related extra-curricular activities and/or groups;
- iii. interventions such as positive behaviour supports, contracts, counselling, restorative practices;
- iv. replacement or retribution for loss of or damage to property in-school or out-of-school suspension; and/or recommendation for expulsion.]

## **Remediation and Support**

In order to foster a positive learning environment, the Atlas Learning Academy will engage in reasonable and caring efforts to support both the individual(s) who may have been the subject or victim(s) of unacceptable behaviour(s) and to support perpetrators of unacceptable conduct to improve their conduct.

Supportive actions the Atlas Learning Academy may include, but are not limited to:

- Mentoring of individual students by older students;
- More focused attention to individual students;
- Regular follow-up meetings of specific teachers with individual students;
- Student Peer Support Groups, including GSA's as appropriate;
- Counselling; and  
Restorative justice processes.

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