



## **DDSB Student Code of Conduct and Distance Learning**

Students participating in Distance Learning will be expected to abide by the School Code of Conduct at all times. All members of the school community will continue to be responsible for adhering to the expectations in applicable legislation, policies and procedures and our regular school Code of Conduct.

Durham District School Board schools will focus on prevention, early intervention with progressive discipline and restorative practices as the key to maintaining a positive, safe, welcoming, respectful, accessible, equitable and inclusive virtual learning environment free from discrimination in which students can learn and educators can teach. When inappropriate behaviour occurs, all staff members will utilize a range of interventions, supports and consequences that are developmentally appropriate, that include opportunities for students to learn from mistakes, that consider mitigating factors, and that focus on improving behaviour.

### **Distance Learning Considerations:**

Due to the nature of the on-line environment (digital classroom) of distance learning special considerations and expectations need to be in place to promote the safety and well-being of all students in a virtual environment. All members of the school community are entitled to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect as within a regular classroom environment. Staff will promote responsible digital citizenship and monitor student conduct and intervene using Bias-Aware Progressive Discipline.

### **Student Expectations:**

- 1) Be engaged in your classroom activities- ask for help if needed.
- 2) Complete your assigned work to the best of your ability.
- 3) Protect your passwords and only access your own account.
- 4) If posting or engaging in a video or video chat adhere to acceptable use standards and follow your school dress code.
- 5) If posting information or videos as part of an assignment please ensure copyright rules are followed.
- 6) All digital communications with others need to be done in a respectful manner and adhere to your School's Code of Conduct.
- 7) Report any incident of cyberbullying or harassment to a parent or school staff member. You can also complete a Report Bullying Now Form from your school's webpage.

**Parent/Guardian are encouraged to:**

- 1) Be engaged in your child's learning- if needed contact the teacher by email if your child needs assistance.
  - 2) Support your child to complete their work to the best of their ability.
  - 3) Encourage your child to participate positively and remind them of the Code of Conduct.
  - 4) Allow the virtual classroom/live sessions to be focused between the educator(s) and students.
- Save your questions or comments for a follow up email if needed.

## **DDSB@Home Secondary Provincial - Code of Conduct**

### **Introduction**

The Durham District School Board is committed to providing a safe and secure school environment. The legislation and regulations, as revised, prescribe certain rights, standards, expectations and processes for determining consequences:

- A school is a place that promotes responsibility, respect, civility and academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment.
- All students, parents, teachers and staff have the right to be safe, and feel safe, in their school community. With this right comes the responsibility to be law-abiding citizens and to be accountable for actions that put at risk the safety of others or oneself.
- The Ontario Code of Conduct sets clear provincial standards of behaviour. It specifies the consequences for student actions that do not comply with these standards.
- The Provincial standards of behaviour apply not only to students, but also to all individuals involved in the publicly funded school system – parents or guardians, volunteers, teachers and other staff members – whether they are on school property, on school buses or at school-authorized events or activities.

The Code of Conduct for the Durham District School Board reflects the provincial policy. The Durham District School Board encourages and supports the principles of prevention and response in Codes of Conduct developed by schools.

A student may be suspended or expelled from his or her school, expelled from attending any school in the School Board, and/or prohibited from engaging in school-related activities if the student commits an infraction of the Code of Conduct while he or she is at school, engaged in a school-related activity, or engaged in conduct that has a relationship to the school, school community, the reputation of the school or Board, or has an impact on the school climate.

### **Guiding Principles (Ontario Schools Code of Conduct)**

The Durham District School Board and DDSB@Home Secondary School support the provincial guiding principles and endorse recognition, acceptance and sensitivity toward ethno-cultural diversity.

- All participants involved in the publicly funded school system - students, parents or guardians, volunteers, teachers and other staff members - are included in the Ontario Schools Code of Conduct whether they are on school property, on school buses or at school-authorized events or activities.
- All members of the school community are to be treated with respect and dignity, especially persons in positions of authority.
- 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.
- Members of the school community are expected to use non-violent means to resolve conflict. Physically aggressive behaviour is not a responsible way to interact with others.
- The possession, use, or threatened use of any object to injure another person endangers the safety of oneself and others.
- Alcohol, illegal drugs and intoxicants are addictive and present a health hazard. Ontario schools will work cooperatively with police, drug and alcohol agencies to promote prevention strategies and, where necessary, respond to school members who are in possession of, or under the influence of, alcohol, illegal drugs and/or intoxicants. (As well, smoking in school buildings and on school property is prohibited by law.)
- Insults, disrespect and other hurtful acts disrupt learning and teaching in a school community. Members of the school community have a responsibility to maintain an environment where conflict and difference can be addressed in a manner characterized by respect and civility.
- Recognition and acceptance of, and sensitivity toward, ethno-cultural diversity are expectations of and within the school community.

## **Principles of Prevention**

School climate is the tone or prevailing attitude within the school which encompasses the physical environment of a school as well as the behaviour of individuals within that environment. A positive school climate can prevent or reduce discipline problems.

The following factors contribute to a positive school climate with increased safety and security and the reduction of discipline problems:

### *(a) Positive Academic Environment*

- Focus on student success, learning for all, student achievement
- Ensure a creative and stimulating learning atmosphere
- Communicate academic expectations clearly
- Ensure students see themselves reflected in the curriculum

### *(b) Values/Skills Curriculum*

- Provide formal and informal instruction to promote concepts of respect, caring for self and others, conflict resolution, concern for the environment, and principles of law and citizenship

- Focus on equity and inclusive education
- Provide for Character Education development

*(c) Physical Environment*

- Promote an enhanced physical environment that fosters pride and caring about surroundings
- Encourage actions to remodel school areas that are prone to problems

*(d) Supportive Climate for Students and Staff*

- Promote programs to enhance personal wellness
- Establish peer programs to provide support, encouragement, awareness, and education
- Provide access to counselors, teachers and support personnel to assist with personal problems, school and career issues

*(e) Codes of Conduct*

- Prepare and annually review codes of conduct in collaboration with students, staff and parents, and communicate them clearly to all involved
- Implement Progressive Discipline in a manner that is fair and equitable
- Encourage staff as role models for effective communication, mutual respect and problem resolution

*(f) Parent or Guardian/School Collaboration*

- Foster a welcoming school environment to encourage increased participation by parents/guardians in their child's education, school activities and school policy-making
- Involve parents/guardians in activities aimed at creating a home environment compatible with that of the school where non-violent resolution of problems prevails
- Offer access to appropriate supports for parents/guardians

*(g) Community Partnerships*

- Promote community awareness and participation in the school to enhance cohesiveness, support and effective use of resources
- Increase involvement of students in community service activities to create a climate of caring, respect and trust

*(h) Student Participation*

- Involve students in establishing a positive school culture and climate through problem solving, and opportunities for input into safe school initiatives to create a sense of ownership of and responsibility for the school community
- Provide leadership opportunities at the school and in the community

*(i) Staff Knowledge and Understanding*

- Understand and apply Progressive Discipline including mitigating and other factors
- Understand and apply bullying prevention and awareness strategies, and interventions and support strategies
- Understand and apply Character Education initiatives
- Devise school climate enhancement initiatives

## **Roles and Responsibilities (Ontario Schools Code of Conduct)**

The Durham District School Board and DDSB@Home Secondary School accept the provincial direction regarding individual roles and responsibilities. In addition to school staff, students and parents, other members of the public, who interact with members of the school community while present in or on school property or premises, have a responsibility to respect others in the school and to conduct themselves accordingly.

**Principals**, under the direction of their school board, take a leadership role in the daily operation of a school. They provide this leadership by:

- demonstrating care and commitment to academic excellence and a safe teaching and learning environment;
- holding everyone, under their authority, accountable for their behaviour and actions;
- empowering students to be positive leaders in their school community;
- communicating regularly and meaningfully with all members of their school community.

**Teachers and School Staff**, under the leadership of their principal, 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 when they:

- help students work to their full potential and develop their 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 and parents;
- prepare students for the full responsibilities of citizenship.

**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 themselves, 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 action.

**Parents** play an important role in the education of their children and have a responsibility to support the efforts of school staff in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. Parents fulfill this responsibility 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;
- encourage and assist their child in following the rules of behaviour;
- assist school staff in dealing with discipline issues;
- demonstrate respect for all students, staff and parents.

## **Community Partners and the Police**

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. 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 and adhere to the Code of Conduct.

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 developed by the Ministry of the Solicitor General and the Ministry of Education.

## **Standards of Behaviour**

The Durham District School Board and DDSB@Home Secondary School support the provincial standards of behaviour which include respect, civility, responsible citizenship and physical safety.

### **Respect, Civility and Responsible Citizenship**

All school members must:

- respect and comply with all applicable federal, provincial and municipal laws;
- demonstrate honesty and integrity;
- respect differences in people, their ideas and opinions;
- treat one another with dignity and respect at all times, and especially when there is disagreement;

- respect and treat others fairly, regardless of their race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age 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.

## **Physical Safety**

**Weapons** - All school members must:

- not be in possession of any weapon, including but not limited to firearms;
- not use any object to threaten or intimidate another person;
- not cause injury to any person with an object.

**Alcohol, Drugs and Intoxicants**- All school members must:

- not be in possession of, or under the influence of, or provide others with, alcohol, illegal drugs or intoxicants.

**Aggression** - All school members must:

- not engage in bullying behaviours;
- not commit sexual assaults;
- not inflict or encourage others to inflict bodily harm on another person;
- seek staff assistance, if necessary, to resolve conflict peacefully.

## **Consequences**

The Durham District School Board supports a proactive approach to discipline in schools. Progressive Discipline will be the underlying philosophical approach to determining the consequences for students whose behaviour is deemed to be inappropriate and requires disciplinary action.

Positive reinforcement of students, parental involvement, community links, liaising with the community police officers, and modelling behaviours related to non-violence are strategies used in schools to promote acceptable behaviour and maintain a safe school climate creating positive school environments.

Consequences for unacceptable behaviour may range from initial intervention strategies such as counselling and parental communication to detention, behaviour contracts, Restorative Practices, Support and Responsibility Agreements, suspension and expulsion. Peer mediation and conflict resolution programs are important initiatives that support the implementation of the Code of Conduct.

The Durham District School Board supports a restorative approach in our schools to establish positive learning environments and to support discipline issues as they arise. Within the culture of Restorative Practice, there is a continuum of interactions that support positive relationships. When things go wrong, there is a framework for dealing with the issues.

Mitigating factors must be considered before determining appropriate consequences.

Where behaviour is persistent or the incident is of a serious nature, suspension may result. The purpose of a suspension is to exclude the student from the learning environment. In situations where consideration for expulsion is appropriate the principal, after completing an investigation, may recommend expulsion of the student to the Board. Consequences should be appropriate to the nature of the unacceptable behaviour.

## **Suspensions, Expulsions, Mitigating and Other Factors**

Suspension is a consequence imposed upon a student whereby he or she is prohibited from attending at his or her school and from engaging in all school-related activities for a defined period of time. Expulsion is a consequence imposed upon a student, by the Board, for an activity that is determined to warrant that the student be excluded from his or her school, or from all schools in the Board, and from engaging in all school-related activities, for an undefined period of time. In the case of a suspension, the Principal must also conduct an investigation to determine whether to recommend to the Board, in consultation with his or her Area Superintendent, that the pupil be expelled.

### **Mitigating and Other Factors**

The following mitigating and other factors (as specified and as may be amended from time to time by the Education Act and Regulations thereunder) will be considered:

- student does not have the ability to control his or her behaviour;
- student does not have the ability to understand the foreseeable consequences of his or her behaviour; or student's continuing presence in the school does not create an unacceptable risk to the safety of any person.

The following criteria shall also be taken into account if they would mitigate the seriousness of the activity for which the pupil may be or is being suspended or expelled:



- pupil's history
- whether a progressive discipline approach has been used with the pupil;
- whether the activity for which the pupil may be or is being suspended or expelled was related to any harassment of the pupil because of his or her race, ethnic origin, religion, disability, gender or sexual orientation or to any other harassment;
- how the suspension or expulsion would affect the pupil's ongoing education;
- the age of the pupil; or
- in the case of a pupil for whom an individual education plan has been developed,
  1. whether the behaviour was a manifestation of a disability identified in the pupil's individual education plan,
  2. whether appropriate individualized accommodation has been provided, and
  3. whether the suspension or expulsion is likely to result in an aggravation or worsening of the pupil's behaviour or conduct.

## **Nexus**

Principals may consider a suspension if there is nexus to the school. Nexus is a direct and causal link between the student's conduct and a definitive impact on the school climate. Nexus may be established when any of the following circumstances exist:

- A student is afraid to come to school
- A student is worried about reprisals or retaliation
- Parents are complaining about disruption to the school environment
- School staff is worried about their physical or emotional well-being and safety.

## **Activities Leading to Possible Suspension**

A Principal shall consider whether to suspend a pupil if he or she believes that the pupil has engaged in any of the following activities while at school, at a school-related activity or in other circumstances where engaging in the activity will have an impact on the school climate:

- uttering a threat to inflict serious bodily harm on another person\*;
- possessing alcohol or illegal drugs\*;
- being under the influence of alcohol;
- swearing at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority
- committing an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to school property at the pupil's school or to property located on the premises of the pupil's school\*\*;
- bullying; or,
- any other activity that is an activity for which a principal may suspend a pupil under a policy of the Board.

Other suspendable infractions including but not limited to:

- possessing alcohol, illegal drugs or, unless the pupil is a medical cannabis user, cannabis;
- being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or, unless the pupil is a medical cannabis user, cannabis;
- smoking or vaping within 20 metre of school property;
- committing vandalism, destruction, damage to school property or to the property of others located on or in school premises;
- stealing property;
- engaging in intimidation, extortion\*, harassment\*, or verbal aggression;
- misusing or misappropriating school property or services, including computers and other technology systems
- engaging in hate motivated incidents\*;
- engaging in gang related activity\*;
- possessing dangerous objects or substances, including for example laser pointers; gloves with studs on knuckles; or any other item deemed by the principal to be unsafe or a hazard to persons or property in the school;
- committing physical assault on another person\*\*;
- engaging in or encouraging a fight;
- engaging in conduct that constitutes opposition to authority;
- demonstrating poor attendance that warrants disciplinary action;
- engaging in behaviour that is disruptive to the learning environment of the class or school;
- engaging in conduct that is detrimental to the moral tone of the school;
- wearing clothing/apparel that is inappropriate, offensive or violates the school Dress Code;
- engaging in unauthorized gambling or games of chance;
- engaging in another activity that, under the Code of Conduct of the school, is one for which a suspension is warranted.

(\*require police involvement as outlined in the Police/School Board Protocol)

\*\*discretionary police involvement as outlined in the Police/School Board Protocol)

### **Activities Leading to a Suspension, Investigation, and Possible Expulsion**

A Principal shall suspend a pupil if he or she believes that the pupil has engaged in any of the following activities while at school, at a school-related activity or in other circumstances where engaging in the activity will have an impact on the school climate:

1. (a) possessing a weapon\*;  
(b) possessing a firearm\*;
2. using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person\*;
3. (a) committing physical assault on another person that causes bodily harm requiring treatment by a medical practitioner\*; assault/physical intimidation of an employee\*;
4. committing sexual assault\*;

5. trafficking in weapons or in illegal drugs\*;
6. committing robbery\*;
7. giving alcohol to a minor\*\*;
8. bullying, if,
  - (a) Grades 4 to 12 - the pupil has previously been suspended for engaging in bullying, and
  - (b) JK to Grade 12- the pupil's continuing presence in the school creates an unacceptable risk to the safety of another person.
9. any activity listed in subsection 9.2 that is motivated by bias, prejudice or hate based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other similar factor.
10. committing an act of vandalism which can be regarded as particularly egregious, due to factors such as seriously compromising the learning environment, or posing a significant safety risk to others\*;
11. any other activity that, under a policy of a board, is an activity for which a Principal must suspend a pupil and conduct an investigation to determine whether to recommend to the board that the pupil be expelled.

Other suspendable infractions including but not limited to:

- a) hate motivated violence\*;
- b) gang related violence\*;
- c) trafficking in controlled or intoxicating substances not prescribed or dispensed for medical purposes\*;
- d) uttering threats or threatening conduct intended to intimidate\*\*;
- e) engaging in harassment\*;
- f) ongoing conduct that is so refractory (persistent) that the student's presence in the school or classroom is considered by the principal to effect a danger or possibility of harm, physical or emotional, to others in the school or to the reputation of the school.

(\*require police involvement as outlined in the Police/School Board Protocol.)

A suspension shall be for no less than one school day and no more than 20 school days and, in considering how long the suspension should be, a Principal shall take into account the mitigating factors, as well as the other factors.

When a Principal suspends a pupil, the pupil shall be assigned to a program for suspended pupils, as established by the Board in accordance with any policies or guidelines issued by the Minister. A pupil who is suspended is not considered to be engaged in school-related activities by virtue of participating in a program for suspended pupils.

## **Notice to Parent/Guardian of Victims**

The Education Act requires Principals to inform parents/guardians of students who have been harmed as a result of any incident for which suspension or expulsion must be considered. When notifying the parent/guardian of a victim, requires a principal to disclose the following:

- the nature of the incident that resulted in harm to the student;
- the nature of the harm to the student; and
- the steps taken to protect the student's safety, including the nature of any discipline in response to the incident

Principals must not share the name of the aggressor or any other identifying or personal information with the parents of the victim beyond what is listed above.