

Student Rights and Responsibilities 2023–2024

D.S. MacKenzie School

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Our Commitment to High Quality Learning Environments

At Edmonton Public Schools, we are deeply committed to the success and well-being of our students. Each student deserves a welcoming, inclusive, safe and healthy learning environment that supports their learning, respects diversity, and nurtures a sense of belonging.

As a Division, we have established clear behaviour expectations for all students, from Kindergarten to Grade 12. The expectations are outlined in the Board's [Student Behaviour and Conduct Policy](#) which was developed in consultation with students, parents, staff and community members. The policy outlines the rights and responsibilities of students and our expectations for student conduct, and the potential responses when students demonstrate unacceptable behaviour.

The role of parents and families in their child's education plays a vital role in promoting positive student behaviour. Partnerships with families continue to make a difference for our students and staff. By working together, we will ensure our students learn the importance of good character and conduct, and our schools will remain safe and secure places to learn and thrive.



Trisha Estabrooks
Board Chair

Student Success and Safety—Our Highest Priorities

It is our shared responsibility to ensure that each student can learn and realize their potential within a safe and caring learning environment. In addition to teaching the necessary learning outcomes, our schools are places where students can develop the character and skills needed to become responsible, respectful, compassionate and successful citizens.

School staff use the *Education Act*, S.A. 2012, c.E-03, Board Policy [HG.BP—Student Behaviour and Conduct](#) and Administrative Regulation [HG.AR – Student Behaviour and Conduct](#) as the basis for creating this **Student Rights and Responsibilities** document. This document is designed to communicate expectations, and balances the overarching rights and responsibilities that are communicated in our policy with the unique context of each school. The expectations and processes outlined in this document are implemented by principals in collaboration with school staff, parents and local communities.

Ensuring each student can thrive in a safe, productive and welcoming learning environment is essential to our work in improving student achievement and high school completion rates. By working together to promote positive attitudes and responsible, respectful behaviour in our schools, we believe students will receive the greatest benefit during their educational journey.



Darrel Robertson
Superintendent of Schools

Supporting Student Success

Members of the Edmonton Public Schools community, including students, parents, staff and trustees, have a shared responsibility to help students be successful in school. Safety and well-being is fundamental to our students thriving as learners, and experiencing success and fulfillment both at school and in their lives. This *Student Rights and Responsibilities* document has been created to communicate clear expectations for how our students are expected to behave in order to ensure they become the best students and citizens they can be.

Parents support their child's success and positive behaviour by:

- taking an active role in their child's personal and academic success
- reviewing expectations outlined in this document with their child and helping them develop the skills required to meet the school's expectations
- helping them to attend school regularly and punctually
- encouraging and modelling collaborative, positive and respectful relationships with others in the school community
- contributing to a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment
- reporting to the school any circumstances which may impact student safety

Students are responsible for their behaviour and effort, and are expected to:

- contribute a welcoming, caring, inclusive, respectful and safe learning environment that commits to anti-racism and equity
- learn, practice and demonstrate positive personal and interpersonal skills and attributes
- use their abilities and talents to gain maximum learning benefit from their school experience
- attend school regularly and punctually
- be accountable for behaviour which impacts others in the school, whether or not the behaviour occurs within the school building or during the school day or by electronic means

School staff will help your child succeed by:

- providing a welcoming, caring, respectful, inclusive and safe learning environment that respects diversity, commits to anti-racism and equity, and fosters a sense of belonging
- ensuring that students and parents understand the school's expectations for student behaviour
- establishing supports and processes at the school to proactively guide positive student behaviour
- helping students develop and practice the skills and attributes to meet these expectations
- working with students, parents and other school staff to address behaviour concerns, including implementing appropriate responses to address inappropriate student behaviour

To support a shared understanding of the language and intent of this document, refer to the [glossary](#) for a definition of terms.

Our Belief and Commitment

At D.S. MacKenzie School we believe:

Developing and maintaining a welcoming, caring, safe and respectful learning environment that fosters integrity, mutual respect and dignity for all is a priority at D.S. MacKenzie School. Our focus is on developing an inclusive environment so every learner feels safe to think creatively, form strong relationships, and receive the highest level of education in academia, humanity and leadership.

More than a school, D.S. MacKenzie is a truly unique junior high experience. We are highly dedicated to changing and growing in how we not only educate our students in the classroom but how to educate them for everyday life. We choose to be on the forefront of assessment and education striving to create great citizens and awesome leaders.

Every staff member at D.S. MacKenzie has been chosen for their diverse abilities, knowledge and experiences. Our highly educated team provides a unique and inspiring experience for students to feel included, engaged and supported. We believe in mentoring student behavior by teaching responsibility and ownership to create a safe school community. There are times when students will make inappropriate choices. When this happens, we will work with the student to repair the harm they have caused to individuals and the school community.

Our Philosophy

D.S. MacKenzie is an innovative junior high on the southside of Edmonton. Focusing on cross-curricular education, we ensure students have the space to cultivate creativity and develop personal connections. Our interactive curriculum ensures hands-on learning for the student body that choose DSM as their place of education. At D.S. MacKenzie, we are forward thinking, forward moving.

Our Beliefs

At D.S. MacKenzie School we believe:

- Learning should be rigorous and relevant
- Assessment clarifies goals, feedback and success
- Teaching is learner centered
- Students are complex, dynamic and capable
- Effective instruction is engaging and empowering
- We are a positive and dedicated community
- All means ALL

Rights and Responsibilities

Our Division recognizes the following fundamental rights and responsibilities:

All students have the right to be treated with dignity, respect and fairness by other staff and students.

Students, parents, staff and trustees have a shared responsibility to create and support welcoming, caring, respectful, inclusive and safe learning environments.

All members of our school community are expected to respect diversity and not engage in any form of bullying, harassment, threats, intimidation or discrimination on the basis of race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status or sexual orientation.

Students and parents have a right to be informed about Division and school expectations for student behaviour. To support this right, all schools' Student Rights and Responsibilities documents will be posted on SchoolZone and on school websites.

Anti-Racism and Equity

- All members of the Edmonton Public Schools community:
 - have the right to learn and work in an environment that
 - is free of discrimination, prejudice, and racism
 - recognizes diversity as a strength
 - supports each individual to be included and feel represented in their greater school community, and
 - have the responsibility to:
 - demonstrate respect for diverse cultural perspectives, traditions, languages, beliefs and values
 - learn and work together as a part of the broader school community to end racism and discrimination
 - report, not participate in, and not tolerate acts of racism or discrimination.

These rights and responsibilities are communicated in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Education Act* and are reinforced in Division policies and regulations which are publicly available and include [AE.BP—Welcoming, Inclusive, Safe and Healthy Learning and Working Environments](#), [HG.BP—Student Behaviour and Conduct](#), [HG.AR—Student Behaviour and Conduct](#), [HFA.AR—Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity](#) and [HAAB.BP – Anti-Racism and Equity](#).

The following framework outlines the balance between individual and collective rights and responsibilities surrounding academic integrity, conduct and interpersonal character traits of students at D.S. MacKenzie School.

- 1. I have a RIGHT to education. I have the right to be in an environment where everyone works together to benefit the learning of all. It is my responsibility to put forth my best effort in listening, learning and, graciously accepting assistance when necessary, and behaving in a responsible manner.**
- 2. I have a RIGHT to be treated with dignity and respect. I have the right to be treated respectfully by all members of the school community. It is my responsibility to respect D.S. Mackenzie – our community, visitors, the school building, peers, and myself thereby promoting school spirit, a productive learning environment, and a positive school reputation.**
- 3. I have a RIGHT to learn in a safe and secure environment. I have the right to a positive education in a comfortable, accepting atmosphere free from intimidation and harassment. It is my responsibility to respect and uphold the safety and security of all members of the DS MacKenzie community.**

Student Behaviour Expectations

To ensure that D.S. MacKenzie School is a positive learning environment for everyone, all students are expected to comply with expectations set by our school Division and mandated by the *Education Act*, as well as school rules which are in place for the benefit of all members of our school community. These expectations apply to all students in the school community, including while learning and engaging with others both in-person and online.

Board Policy [HG.BP – Student Behaviour and Conduct](#) and Administrative Regulation [HG.AR – Student Behaviour and Conduct](#) outline that students are expected to behave in accordance with section 31 of the *Education Act* which states that, a student, as a partner in education, has the responsibility to:

- attend school regularly and punctually,
- be ready to learn and actively engage in and diligently pursue the student's education,
- ensure the student's conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning, environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging,
- respect the rights of others in the school,
- refrain from, report and not tolerate bullying or bullying behaviour directed toward others in the school, whether or not it occurs within the school building, during the school day or by electronic means,
- comply with rules of the school and the policies of the Board,
- cooperate fully with everyone authorized by the Board to provide education programs and other services,
- be accountable to the student's teachers and other school staff for the student's conduct, and
- positively contribute to the student's school and community.

Furthermore, students are expected to:

- resolve conflict or seek assistance to resolve conflict in a peaceful, safe, and non-threatening manner that is conducive to learning and growth. Strategies for addressing conflict between students may include counselling, mediation, or forms of restorative practice.
- use school and personal technology appropriately and ethically
- ensure that they conduct themselves with academic integrity and refrain from and report all incidents of academic misconduct including, but not limited to, cheating and plagiarizing.

Regular Attendance – It’s the Law

Regular attendance is strongly linked to student academic success and a student’s sense of belonging at school. The *Education Act* reminds parents and students that students are expected to attend school and be punctual every day. Students are only considered to be excused from attending school if they must be away due to:

- sickness or other unavoidable cause
- the day being recognized as a religious holiday by the religious denomination that the child belongs to
- suspension or expulsion
- an exemption from compulsory attendance granted by the Board for a defined period of time

Expectations for Student Attire

At Edmonton Public Schools, students are expected to dress in a manner that reflects a welcoming, respectful, inclusive, safe and healthy learning environment. School expectations for student attire take into account a student’s right to fairness, dignity and respect, and will not discriminate against students based on race, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, socio-economic status, or body type. Some examples of this are durags, turbans, hijabs and burkas.

Student safety and wellbeing are our highest priorities. Students are also expected to refrain from wearing, carrying, or displaying any clothing or accessories which pose a safety hazard. Students are not permitted to wear lanyards around their neck.

Responsible and Ethical Use of Technology

Our Division is committed to assisting students to become ethical, informed digital citizens. We strive to ensure that appropriate and responsible technology use supports high quality teaching and learning, while also ensuring a respectful, inclusive, and safe learning and working environment.

Technology refers to any computer, software, network, or internet access on any electronic device, including those owned by the student or the Division. Division technology is intended for educational purposes and cannot be used for purposes that are illegal, unethical, disrespectful, hateful, inappropriate, or that cause harm.

Students are accountable for their behaviour when using technology, including when a student's online behaviour outside of the school building or beyond the school day impacts others in the school community. A range of responses as outlined in [HG.BP – Student Behaviour and Conduct](#) and [HG.AR – Student Behaviour and Conduct](#), including loss of technology privileges, may be put in place to address unacceptable use of technology.

As digital citizens, students have the following responsibilities:

- **Demonstrate respect and integrity**
 - understand that expectations for conduct and academic integrity while online, including when using personal devices and outside of school hours, are consistent with school and Division expectations (for example, students should only join online classes in which they are enrolled)
 - use good judgment and participate appropriately in online environments such as meetings, chats, and other applications, and when posting or sharing digital content
 - communicate in a manner that is appropriate, respectful and inclusive at all times

- **Be safe and secure**
 - protect passwords and personal information of self and others including photos, name, age, address and other contact information
 - students must ensure they log in only to their assigned EPSB account, and log off devices and meetings when finished
 - obtain permission before downloading files, including games, music, and movies
 - report, and refrain from searching, viewing, downloading, or sharing, any illegal or inappropriate content
 - do not record or share any audio or video of in-person or online classrooms or other learning activities
 - obtain consent before photographing, recording, or sharing a photo or recording of another person

- **Respect and protect property**
 - demonstrate proper care and security of personal and Division technology
 - understand that students are responsible for the care and security of personal devices brought to school

D.S. MacKenzie School is a Student Owned Device School.

It is important our students make the most of their opportunities to learn, progress, and innovate. We are focused on providing students with opportunities to develop a wide range of skills and abilities that will create a foundation for future success. All D.S. MacKenzie students are asked to bring their own device (chromebook preferred) to school to support their learning. Other personal devices, such as cell phones, may be brought to school at the discretion of families with the understanding that these items are not to be used during class time unless directed by a teacher.

With this right comes the responsibility for safety and security. Students are expected to sign and follow the responsibilities as laid out in our student technology agreement. These include students taking responsibility and care for their device by:

- charging their device each night
- bringing it to school every day
- using it in class, only as allowed and laid out by the teacher

If Edmonton Public School Board staff have reasonable grounds to believe that an electronic device contains evidence pertaining to a breach of the District's Student Behavior and Conduct Policy and/or the School Behavior Policy, is the expectation that students make available to school administration the unaltered contents of the permanent and/or removable memory of the electronic device.

Unacceptable Behaviour

Any behaviour, whether or not it occurs on school property, or within the school day, which disrupts the educational atmosphere of the school or which interferes with the rights of others to learn, to be respected or to feel safe is unacceptable.

As outlined in Board Policy [HG.BP – Student Behaviour and Conduct](#) and Administrative Regulation [HG.AR – Student Behaviour and Conduct](#) and supported by the *Education Act*, unacceptable behaviour includes, but is not limited to:

- behaviours that interfere with the learning of others and/or the school environment
- behaviours that create unsafe conditions
- acts of bullying, harassment, threats, or intimidations whether it be in person, indirectly, or by electronic means
- physical violence
- retribution against any person who has intervened to prevent or report bullying or any other incident or safety concern
- possession, use, or distribution of substances restricted by federal, provincial, municipal, Division or school authorities
- any illegal activity such as:
 - possession, use, or distribution of illegal substances
 - possession of a weapon or use of a weapon (or replica) to threaten, intimidate or harm others
 - possession, use, display, or distribution of offensive messages, videos or images
 - theft or possession of stolen property
- any breach of rules and expectations established by Division administrative regulations or a school-based code of conduct
- failure to comply with *Education Act*, section 31 regarding student responsibilities

Bullying and Conflict

Bullying is defined in the *Education Act* as 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 or more other individuals in the school community, including psychological harm or harm to an individual's reputation. Bullying also includes the distribution of an intimate image of another person knowing that the person depicted in the image did not consent to the distribution, or being reckless as to whether or not that person consented to the distribution.

Bullying can take different forms:

- physical (e.g., pushing, hitting)
- verbal (e.g., name-calling, threats)
- social (e.g., exclusion, rumours)
- electronic (e.g., using technology to harass or threaten)

Conflict occurs when there is a breakdown in relationships between individuals that results from a disagreement or misunderstanding. While conflicts may require adult intervention, they are considered to be a natural part of how students learn to navigate relationships.

All students are expected to refrain from, report and not tolerate bullying or bullying behaviour directed toward others in the school, whether or not it occurs within the school building, during the school day or by electronic means. Students are also expected to resolve conflict or seek assistance to resolve conflict in a peaceful, safe, and non-threatening manner that is conducive to learning and growth. School staff can help address conflict between students using strategies that may include counselling, mediation, consequences and/or forms of restorative practice.

School Responses to Unacceptable Behaviour

Our Division acknowledges the importance of responsive discipline which involves a continuum of interventions that aim to build a sense of community in schools, facilitate healthy relationships, support behavioural changes, repair harm, and hold students accountable.

Edmonton Public Schools' Board Policy [HG.BP – Student Behaviour and Conduct](#) and Administrative Regulation [HG.AR – Student Behaviour and Conduct](#) outline the following:

Unacceptable behaviour may be grounds for disciplinary action which 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.

The specific circumstances of the situation and of the student are taken into account when determining appropriate responses to unacceptable behaviour.

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

- temporary assignment of a student to an alternate supervised area within the school
- temporary assignment of a student to an alternate learning location
- short term removal of privileges
- interventions such as positive behaviour supports, contracts, counselling, restorative practices
- replacement or reimbursement for loss of, or damage to property
- in-school or out-of-school suspension
- referral to Attendance Board
- recommendation for expulsion

At D.S. MacKenzie School, we are committed to ensuring that our school is a safe and productive learning environment. Where necessary, interventions or disciplinary action may be used to address unacceptable behaviour by students. We partner with external agencies to support our students in making better choices and to positively contribute to our school community.

We approach student behaviour and conduct in a way that supports positive student behaviour and personal development by managing discipline through proactive, responsive, and restorative strategies.

These strategies include, but are not limited to:

- conversation in the context of the classroom, that usually involve the classroom teacher or other classroom staff
- where appropriate, restorative conversations between students will be facilitated by staff

- in more serious concerns that involve safety, or repeated concerns, administrative staff (e.g. principal, assistant principal, etc.) may be included for restorative conversations or meetings
- responses to student behaviours, including consequences or interventions, will take into account a student's age, maturity and individual circumstances
- the responses to behaviour of one student will not be discussed with a parent/family member of another child
- where appropriate, parents are included in the process of conversation and consequence, and will be informed of consequences and interventions for their child, with the understanding that school administration is responsible for final decisions
- age appropriate responses to unacceptable behaviour may include: time spent working on academic tasks at the office area or in another classroom, in-school or out-of-school suspension, restorative practices, etc.
- processes are in place for documenting student reflection pages, as well as log entries, letters of suspension and formal communication with parents. Our goal is to support students to become positive, productive citizens within and outside of our school walls. Although staff focus on encouraging and celebrating the positive, there are times when students will make choices that are inappropriate or unsafe. When this happens, we will work with students, parents and families to respond to unacceptable behaviour in a way that helps students to learn from their mistakes, and to help all students continue to feel safe and respected at D.S. MacKenzie.

Edmonton Public Schools is helping to shape the future in every one of our classrooms. We're focused on ensuring each student learns to their full potential and develops the ability, passion and imagination to pursue their dreams and contribute to their community.

