

SUPERIOR-GREENSTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Section PERSONNEL

Policy Name EMPLOYEE CODE OF CONDUCT

707

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POLICY

It is the policy of the Superior-Greenstone District School Board to expect its employees to adhere to the highest standards of personal and professional competence, integrity, and impartiality, and to adhere to the Ministry of Education's Provincial Code of Conduct.

The *Human Rights Code of Ontario* has primacy over provincial legislation and school board policies and procedures such that the *Education Act* regulations, Ministry of Education PPM, and board policies are subject to, and shall be interpreted and applied in accordance with the *Human Rights Code of Ontario*.

The Provincial Code of Conduct

Purposes of the Code

Subsection 301(1) of Part XIII of the Education Act states that "the Minister may establish a code of conduct governing the behaviour of all persons in schools". Subsection 301(2) sets out the purposes of this provincial code of conduct, as follows:

1. To ensure that all members of the school community, especially people in positions of authority, are treated with respect and dignity.
2. To promote responsible citizenship by encouraging appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community.
3. To maintain an environment where conflict and difference can be addressed in a manner characterized by respect and civility.
4. To encourage the use of non-violent means to resolve conflict.
5. To promote the safety of people in the schools.
6. To discourage the use of alcohol, illegal drugs and, except by a medical cannabis user, cannabis.
7. To prevent bullying in schools.

Where Applied

- on school property
- on school buses
- at school-related events or activities
- in other circumstances that could have an impact on the school climate
- in a virtual learning environment

Standards of Behaviour

Respect, Civility, and Responsible Citizenship

All members of the school community must:

- respect and comply with all applicable federal, provincial, and municipal laws;
- comply with all Ministry of Education, school board and school policies
- demonstrate honesty and integrity;
- respect differences in people, their ideas, and their opinions;
- treat one another with dignity and respect at all times, and especially when there is disagreement;
- respect and treat others fairly, regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status, 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;
- refrain from using discriminatory comments, abusive language, or swearing at another person
- 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 use personal mobile devices during instructional time except under the following circumstances:
 - for educational purposes
 - for health and medical purposes
 - to support special education needs

Safety

All members of the school community must not:

- engage in bullying behaviours, including cyberbullying;
- commit sexual assault;
- traffic in weapons or illegal drugs;
- give alcohol or cannabis to a minor;
- commit robbery or theft;
- be in possession of any weapon, including firearms;
- threaten or intimidate another person;
- be in possession of, or be under the influence of alcohol, cannabis (unless the individual has been authorized to use cannabis for medical purposes), and illegal drugs;
- provide others with alcohol, illegal drugs, or cannabis (unless the recipient is an individual who has been authorized to use cannabis for medical purposes);
- inflict or encourage others to inflict bodily harm on another person;
- engage in or circulate hate propaganda and other forms of behaviour motivated by hate or

bias;

- commit an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to school property or to property located on the premises of the school or to the property of a member of the school community.

Record, take or share non-consensual recordings or photos of members of the school community (including and not limited to in-person and virtual meetings)

Roles and Responsibilities

School Boards

School boards provide direction to their schools to promote student achievement and well-being and to ensure accountability in the education system. It is the responsibility of school boards to:

- develop policies that set out how their schools will implement and enforce the provincial Code of Conduct and all other rules that they develop that are related to the provincial standards that promote and support respect, civility, responsible citizenship, and safety;
- establish a process that clearly communicates the provincial Code of Conduct and school board codes of conduct to all parents, students, principals, teachers, other school staff, and members of the school community in order to obtain their commitment and support;
- review these policies regularly with those listed above and revise them as necessary;
- seek input from school councils, as well as from the board's Parent Involvement Committee, Special Education Advisory Committee, and Indigenous Education Advisory Council;
- develop effective intervention strategies and respond to all infractions related to the standards for respect, civility, responsible citizenship, and safety;
- provide opportunities for all of the staff to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to promote student achievement and well-being in a safe, inclusive, and accepting learning environment.

Wherever possible, boards should collaborate to provide coordinated prevention and intervention programs and services, and should endeavour to share effective practices.

Principals

Under the direction of their school boards, principals take a leadership role in the daily operation of a school. They provide this leadership by:

- demonstrating care for the school community and a commitment to student achievement and well-being in a safe, inclusive, and accepting learning environment;
- holding everyone under their authority accountable for their own behaviour and actions;
- empowering students to be positive leaders in their school and community;
- communicating regularly and meaningfully with all members of their school community.
- model the standards of respect, civility and responsible citizenship

Teachers and Other School Staff

Under the leadership of their principals, teachers and other school staff maintain a positive

learning environment and are expected to hold everyone to the highest standard of respectful and responsible behaviour. As role models, teachers and other school staff uphold these high standards when they:

- help students work to their full potential and develop their sense of self-worth;
- empower students to be positive leaders in their classroom, school, and community;
- communicate regularly and meaningfully with parents;
- maintain consistent and fair standards of behaviour for all students;
- demonstrate respect for one another, all students, parents, volunteers, and other members of the school community;
- prepare students for the full responsibilities of citizenship, in particular the skill of respectful communication, both in-person and online.
- Model the standards of respect, civility, and responsible citizenship. This includes modelling the appropriate use of personal mobile devices. Educators are not to use personal mobile devices during instructional time, unless explicitly for work-related purposes.

Students

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 students:

- come to school prepared, on time, and ready to learn;
- show respect for themselves, and for others, and for those in positions of authority;
- refrain from bringing anything to school that may compromise the safety of others;
- follow the established rules and take responsibility for their own actions.

Parents/Guardians

Parents/Guardians play an important role in the education of their children, and can support the efforts of school staff in maintaining a safe, inclusive, accepting, and respectful learning environment for all students. Parents/Guardians fulfil their role when they:

- are engaged in their child's schoolwork and progress;
- communicate regularly with the school;
- help their child be 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 provincial Code of Conduct, the board's code of conduct, and, if applicable, the school's code of conduct;
- encourage and assist their child in following the rules of behaviour;
- assist school staff in dealing with disciplinary issues involving their child.

Community Partners

Through outreach, existing partnerships may be enhanced and new partnerships with community-based service providers and members of the community (e.g., Elders, Senators, Knowledge Keepers) 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.

Police

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 the Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol, 2015, developed by the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services and the Ministry of Education.

PROCEDURES

1.0 Policy Manual

The Board's Policy Manual shall serve as the basic guideline for employees and volunteers in their day-to-day discharge of their duties.

2.0 Scope

2.1 General Standard

This Employee Code of Conduct represents general standards.

2.2 Other Professional Codes

It is understood that some employees will also be governed by a professional code of ethics.

2.3 Minimum Expectation

The expectation for any employee or volunteer shall never be less than is outlined in this Code.

2.4 Extension

2.5 Application

This Code applies, with appropriate changes and modifications, to all employees and volunteers.

3.0 Confidential Information

3.1 Access

An employee may have access to confidential information by reason of their employment with the Board.

3.2 Confidentiality

Any employee with access to confidential information must not make such information available without the authorization of a supervisor. To ensure the status of information, a supervisor must make every effort to consult within management to assure himself/herself concerning release.

3.3 Caution

Particular care and caution should be exercised when dealing with information that involves:

- a) Items under litigation,
- b) Personnel matters,
- c) Information about suppliers that might be useful to a competitor,
- d) Information the infringes on the right to privacy of others, including but not

- limited to staff and students,
- e) Information dealing with complaints where the identity of the complainant is given in confidence,
- f) Any items under negotiation,
- g) Any schedule of prices in a tender,
- h) Information relating to progress, conduct, disabilities or curriculum of a student.

3.4 Freedom of Information

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Regulations and other Board policy pertaining thereto must also be consulted to ensure compliance.

4.0 **Media Relations**

4.1 Authorization

Only the Chair of the Board and the Director of Education (or their designate) are authorized to comment publicly to the media.

Staff should follow the specific provisions developed for special projects, etc. which operate outside of normal structures but are Board-sponsored.

4.2 Distinction

This Code is not, however, intended to restrict the ability of any employee to express an opinion on non-Board matters, where the employee makes it clear that they are commenting as a private citizen and not in their professional capacity.

5.0 **Conflict of Interest- Board policy 723 - Conflict of Interest, applies**

6.0 **Use of Board Property**

6.1 Loans

Board policy applies specifically to the loaning of Board property for off-school premises use.

6.2 Personal Use

Board property shall not be used by Board employees for personal use unless prior, written approval is secured from one's immediate Supervisor. A copy of the approval, including terms and conditions for loan, shall be retained by the approving Supervisor.

7.0 **Gifts and Benefits**

7.1 Parameters

In order to preserve the integrity and image of the Board, acceptance of gifts by individual employees shall be discouraged.

7.2 Exceptions

The Board recognizes that moderate hospitality is an accepted courtesy of a business relationship. Recipients of such courtesies should not allow themselves to reach a position whereby they might be, or might be deemed by others to have been, influenced in making a business decision as a consequence of accepting such hospitality.

7.3 Frequency and Scale

The frequency and scale of hospitality accepted should be no greater than the employee's Supervisor would allow to be claimed on an expense account, if it were charged to the Board.

7.4 Acknowledgement

Where gifts are accepted, their acceptance must be publicly acknowledged.

7.5 Consultation

Employees are under an obligation to consult with their Supervisors regarding accepting specific gifts and benefits.

7.6 Non-Biased Purchasing Policy

In order to preserve a non-biased purchasing policy, Board staff should not be able to benefit personally from Board purchasing, unless a specific exception is made in the interests of the Board.

7.7 More Stringent Rules

Each Supervisor may prescribe a more stringent set of rules to cover employee conduct. Should this be undertaken, it should be in writing and made available to the employees affected.

8.0 Hiring Relatives

The hiring practices of the Board are governed by Board Policy and supporting Management Guidelines.

In general, the fact that a potential employee is related to an existing employee neither prejudices nor advances that person's hiring prospects.

9.0 Personal Behaviour and Decorum

9.1 Behaviour

Every employee should at all times behave in a manner that will not bring discredit upon himself or herself or the Board while working on site or where they are representatives of the Board inclusive of virtual environments.

9.2 Decorum

Employees are expected to report to their duties in a work attire suitable to the work being undertaken and this should allow the employee to present himself/herself in a professional manner.

10.0 Reporting Violations & Enforcement

10.1 Awareness and Enforcement

The Code of Conduct applies to all employees and volunteers. Supervisors are to ensure that all employees are aware of the contents and expectations contained therein.

It is the responsibility of every Supervisor to insure to the best of their ability that this Code is being adhered to by his/her subordinates their direct reports.

10.2 Reporting an Employee or Volunteer

Any individual who is of the opinion that an employee or volunteer is breaching this Code should bring this to the attention of their superior as soon as possible.

Alternatively, reports may be made under another reporting stream, such as those outlined in Policy 717 – Workplace Harassment & Human Rights, Policy 720 – Workplace Violence, Policy 723 – Conflict of Interest, or Policy 726 – Whistleblower.

Code of Conduct violations will be managed using the provisions of the appropriate

policies outlined above.

10.3 Reporting a Supervisor

Where an employee has reason to believe that a Supervisor is committing a serious breach of this Code, that employee may report the concern to the next level of management in total confidence (see Management Guideline 207 – Lines of Communication Regarding Complaints).

Alternatively, reports may be made under another reporting stream, such as those outlined in Policy 717 – Workplace Harassment & Human Rights, Policy 720 – Workplace Violence, Policy 723 – Conflict of Interest, or Policy 726 – Whistleblower.

Code of Conduct violations will be managed using the provisions of the appropriate policies outlined above.

10.4 Reprisal

SGDSB is committed to providing safe learning and working environments for all and urges individuals to report concerns or potential Code of Conduct violations. Reprisal or retaliation against any individual who files a complaint in good faith is expressly prohibited.

10.5 Resolutions and Corrective Action

Where a Code of Conduct violation is found, the SGDSB will endeavor to provide resolutions which are grounded in understanding and culturally sensitive. Depending on the nature and/or severity of the violation, employees or volunteers may be subject to remedial or disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Reports made in bad faith are considered to be a violation of this policy, and are subject to the remedial actions outlined above.

11.0 Severability

The provisions of this Code of Conduct are severable and if any provision, section or word is held invalid or illegal, such shall not affect or impair any of the remaining provisions, sections or words.