



TITLE

Safe Caring and Inclusive Schools Policy

DOCUMENT #

201

CROSS REFERENCED DOCUMENTS

1. Discipline Policy

INITIAL EFFECTIVE DATE

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1. Introduction

PROTECT THEM ALL

You shall not hate your brother in your heart, but you shall reason frankly with your neighbor, lest you incur sin because of him. You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.

- Leviticus 19:17-18

Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'

- Matthew 25:40

Every student at Tyndale Christian School (TCS) has the right to be free from harassment, violence, name-calling, and intimidation, and all students should be treated with dignity and respect. TCS affirms the rights of students and staff members to not be discriminated against as provided for in the Alberta Human Rights Act to the extent applicable and subject to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the nature and character of TCS as a private, voluntary religious association.¹ Consequently, TCS has zero tolerance toward bullying.

Bullying is ultimately a condition of human brokenness that torments too many children (and adults!). It occurs for all kinds of terrible reasons and sometimes for no reason at all. TCS does not tolerate bullying because it violates the commands of God (Leviticus 19:17-18; Proverbs 6:16-19; Matthew 5:44-45; Romans 12:17-21; I John 3:15). TCS insists on zero tolerance toward bullying. Every individual child is protected completely and equally. Human dignity is bestowed by God on all persons. Therefore, the goal at TCS is to *Protect Them All!*

2. Policy

TCS strives to provide a safe, caring, welcoming and respectful Reformed Christian school environment for all students, staff and parent volunteers. TCS will take a firm and intentional approach to ensure that all students have a safe and respectful learning environment and are treated with respect and dignity.

¹ See e.g. *H.S. v. The Private Academy*, 2017 HRTO 791; *Caldwell et al. v. Stuart et al.*, [1984] 2 S.C.R. 603; *Loyola High School v. Quebec (Attorney General)*, 2015 SCC 12.



3. Background

God commands us to exhibit brotherly love in our relationships with one another.

3.1. Biblical Principles:

- a) Take care of yourself. (Matt. 7:1-5, 1 Cor. 6:19-20, Rom. 12:1)
- b) Take care of each other. (Matt. 7:12, Rom. 12:9-21, 1 Cor. 13:4-7)
- c) Take care of this place. (Gen. 1:28, Ps. 127:1, Matt. 25:14-30, Ps. 24:1)

3.2. Six characteristics of a safe and caring school are:

- a) a respectful and caring school culture
- b) safety and security
- c) a focus on teaching and learning
- d) positive relationships among students and staff
- e) social and behavioural expectations
- f) community involvement

4. Procedures

4.1. Education

- a) At the beginning of each school year, all students, parents/guardians and teachers are required to review the TCS Parent/Student Handbook.
- b) At the beginning of each school year, and throughout the year as required, the classroom teachers will review established expectations with their students.
- c) At the beginning of each school year, and throughout the year as required, the classroom teachers will review with their students the concept of restoration and provide strategies to work towards reconciliation with peers and/or adults.
- d) Community based presentations that are consistent with the Reformed character of TCS and which promote a safe and caring school environment may be utilized by the teachers upon approval by Administration. .

4.2. Harassment/Bullying

- a) The School Board will ensure there are programs in place to educate staff members, students and parents of the issue of harassment/bullying.
- b) All staff members are to become knowledgeable of harassment/bullying behaviours and the mechanism for dealing with and resolving such behaviour by reviewing the harassment/bullying section of the Staff Handbook and attending any inservices offered by the School Board.



- c) Teachers will take a proactive stance to prevent and increase awareness of harassment/bullying in their classrooms using age appropriate language and examples.
- d) Students should be taught to work out issues of conflict among themselves and when necessary, how to seek out assistance from a staff member.
- e) If students observe another student being harassed or bullied, they shall inform their classroom teacher.
- f) If a teacher observes or suspects a student is being bullied by another student, he/she shall investigate the complaint, interview participants and/or witnesses, and review evidence as necessary. If bullying is confirmed, the teacher will assist the students in resolving the conflict. If the conflict remains unresolved, the teacher shall advise the Principal. The Principal will meet with the students and schedule a meeting with the parents/guardians of the students.
- g) If a teacher observes or suspects a student is being harassed by an adult, he/she shall advise the Principal. The Principal and the teacher will investigate the complaint, interview participants and/or witnesses, and review evidence as necessary. Detailed documentation of steps taken and findings shall be made by the Principal and the teacher. If harassment is confirmed, the Principal shall advise the student's parents, and contact the appropriate authorities, i.e. police, social services.
- h) If a teacher is harassed by a student, parent, or other staff member, they shall attempt to resolve the conflict with the offender. If the conflict remains unresolved, the teacher shall advise the Principal. The Principal will schedule a meeting with the parents/guardians and/or the offending party.
- i) Any conflict that cannot be resolved with the Principal will be referred to the School Board.

4.3. Discipline

When discipline of a student(s) is required to ensure a safe and caring school environment, it will be handled pursuant to the Student Discipline Policy.

The principal and the staff will ensure that consequences of unacceptable behaviour are fair and given on a case by case basis. Disciplinary action must take into account the student's age, maturity, and individual circumstances. The principal and the staff must also provide support for students who are impacted by inappropriate behaviour, as well as for students who engage in inappropriate behaviour.

4.4. Restoration

As a Christian school, we strive to achieve reconciliation and unity in the spirit of Matthew 18:15 – 19. Students and staff will be encouraged to seek reconciliation with one another and, if required, seek out the assistance of a third party within the school (i.e. a teacher or staff member). If reconciliation is not achieved, all parties will meet with the Principal to work towards restoration.

If the conflict involves the Principal, the parties will meet with the Chair of the School Board to work towards restoration.



5. **Definitions**

5.1. **Harassment/Bullying**

Bullying means 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, whether by in-person or electronic means, whether during or outside of school hours, including psychological harm or harm to an individual's reputation.

- a) **Harassment** – by an adult toward a student
- b) **Bullying** – by a student towards a student

5.2. **Examples of Harassment/Bullying**

Bullying and harassment can include, but is not limited to, the following behaviours:

- a) **Physical Aggression**
spitting; pushing; tripping; hitting; shoving; kicking; hair pulling; hiding personal possessions (lunch, etc.); damaging property; attacking family or friends; coercion; intimidation; threatening with a weapon; defacing property; stealing.
- b) **Verbal Aggression**
inappropriate teasing; name calling; offensive remarks, inappropriate jokes or innuendo, mocking; sarcasm; putdowns; whistling/catcalls; leaving nasty or threatening notes; threatening or intimidating phone calls; giving dirty looks; racist, sexist taunting; daring another to do something dangerous; verbal threats against property; verbal threats of violence or inflicting bodily harm; coercion; extortion; includes all forms of communication including mail, e-mail, fax, voice mail, notes or yearbook journaling
- c) **Nonverbal – Body Language**
inappropriate glaring; snickering; gestures; ignoring (silent treatment); shunning; confining; surrounding; blocking, unwelcome physical contact such as inappropriate touching or patting
- d) **Intimidation**
stealing; extortion; pranks; dares (public challenge); bribery; threats; locking in a confined space; swarming; stalking; anonymous phone calls; gossip; breaking confidence
- e) **Discrimination**
racial slurs; imitation of accent; put downs about cultural differences; insults about appearances

6. **Request for the Creation of Student Support Organizations/Clubs**

6.1. **Establishment of a Club:**

As part of Tyndale Christian School's commitment to ensuring that all students are able to experience a welcoming, safe, caring, and respectful Reformed Christian environment, Tyndale Christian School



promotes the establishment of voluntary student-organized clubs designed to achieve this goal. These clubs may be established if they are created in a respectful fashion, and in conformance with the philosophy and basis of the school. Clubs such as these provide students the opportunity to learn how to live out their calling to show love to God and to their neighbour (Galatians 5:14; John 13:34; Mark 12:29-31).

6.2. Guidelines

The following guidelines apply to the establishment of clubs dedicated to the promotion of a welcoming, safe, caring, respectful Reformed Christian learning environment:

- a) If one or more students request a staff member employed by the School 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 for all students in the school, the principal of the school shall, without undue delay and after ensuring that the purpose of the voluntary student organization or activity is in harmony with the mission of the school, grant permission for the establishment of the student organization or the holding of the activity at the school.
- b) Within a reasonable time from the date that the principal receives the request the Principal will 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. The staff member is required to attend all meetings of the student club, voluntary student organization, or all planning meetings of student-initiated activities and provide regular updates to the Principal.
- c) An organization or activity includes an organization or activity that promotes equality and non-discrimination regardless of personal characteristics. Non-discrimination refers to the equal treatment and support of people, and does not require that behaviours, thoughts, or feelings that are contrary to a Reformed worldview be endorsed or promoted.
- d) In keeping with the biblical values of TCS (as identified in our mission statement and constitution), prayer, Bible reading, and biblical teaching (based on our Christian worldview as summarized in the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dordt, the confessional standards of the Canadian Reformed Churches) will be an integral component of any student club, voluntary student association, or student-initiated activity.
- e) The students may select a respectful and inclusive name that it is in harmony with the mission statement of the school.
- f) Section 45.1(4)(d) of the *School Act* requires this Policy to indicate that the *Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA)*² governs the disclosure of personal information by the School Board.³ *PIPA*, the *School Act*, the *Alberta Bill of Rights* and the Teacher's Professional Code of Conduct recognize

² The interpretation and application of *PIPA* is subject to the paramount provisions of the *Alberta Bill of Rights*, including sections 1(c) and 1(g), and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, sections 2 and 7.

³ Sections 45.1 and 16.1 of the *School Act* are currently under Constitutional challenge before the Courts: The Canadian Reformed School Society of Calgary recognizes that the application of any provisions of the *School Act* are subject to the paramount provisions of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Alberta Bill of Rights*, protecting freedom of conscience, religion, expression, association and the right of parents to make informed decisions concerning the education of their children.



latitude for parental notification for participation in student clubs and voluntary student associations:

- i. *PIPA* states that notification is allowed in situations where: “a reasonable person would consider that the disclosure of the information is clearly in the interests of the individual and consent of the individual cannot be obtained in a timely way or the individual would not reasonably be expected to withhold consent”. *PIPA* also states that notification is allowable in situations where, “the disclosure of the information is necessary to respond to an emergency that threatens the life, health or security of an individual or the public”.
- ii. The *School Act* states that “parents have a right and a responsibility to make decisions respecting the education of their children”.
- iii. The *Alberta Bill of Rights* guarantees as a fundamental freedom “the right of parents to make informed decisions respecting the education of their children.”
- iv. The Teacher’s Code of Professional Conduct states, “The teacher may not divulge information about a pupil received in confidence or in the course of professional duties except as required by law or where, in the judgment of the teacher, to do so is in the best interest of the pupil”.

6.3. Request form

The request form for the establishment of student organizations or clubs can be found at the end of this policy.

7. Conclusion

“There are six things that the Lord hates, seven that are an abomination to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil, a false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers.”

- Proverbs 6:16-19

Jesus summarizes all of this in Matthew 5:44-45 commanding us to love even our enemies. This command Paul reiterates in Romans 12:17-21 and in Ephesians 4:29 urging the church to “let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.” It is clear throughout the Bible that we have a duty to treat everyone with love, seeking to build each other up. This leaves no room for bullying or harassment at Tyndale Christian School.



Request Form for the Creation of Student Organizations/Clubs

SUPPORT FOR STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS/CLUBS

TCS will support the formation of student organizations that are consistent with the mission statement of the school. Should any stakeholder wish to start a club at TCS, the following request form must be submitted to the administration:

RATIONALE

1.) Name of organization/club: _____

2.) Please highlight the general goals of this club: _____

3.) Please explain how the formation of this club will help TCS better achieve its mission: _____

Parent Signature

Student Signature

Please submit this form to the administration.

Approved: ____ Yes ____ No

School Board President Signature

Principal Signature