

Student Rights and Responsibilities 2018–2019

Shauna May Seneca School

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Updated: October 15, 2018

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 is entitled to a welcoming, inclusive, safe and healthy learning environment that supports high-quality learning, respects diversity, and nurtures a sense of belonging and a positive sense of self.

As a District, we have established clear behaviour expectations for all students, from Kindergarten to Grade 12. The expectations are outlined in the District'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, our expectations for student conduct, and the potential responses when students demonstrate unacceptable behaviour.

Parental involvement in public education plays a vital role in promoting positive student behaviour. We are pleased that our ongoing partnership with families continues to make a difference for our schools and students.

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.



Michelle Draper
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 Board Policy [HG.BP—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
- helping them to attend school regularly and to develop the skills required to meet the school's expectations
- encouraging and modelling collaborative, positive and respectful relationships with others in the school community
- working collaboratively with the school to resolve student conduct issues
- reporting to the school any circumstances which may impact student safety

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

- contribute to the development of a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment
- 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 responsible 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 and safe learning environment that respects diversity 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 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 Shauna May Seneca we believe:

Shauna May Seneca School staff are committed to creating a professional learning community that supports all students to learn at high levels. Teachers are focused on building a collaborative environment centred on essential learning outcomes, common assessments and best practices. Project-based, innovative and authentic learning opportunities help build a setting where students demonstrate active learning and engagement. We value all stakeholders and believe we share a collective responsibility in creating a safe, secure and caring environment.

Our Mission

It is the mission of Shauna May Seneca School to be a school of excellence that ensures high levels of learning for ALL students. To help achieve this goal we apply the following three Big Ideas to guide our work.

A Focus on Learning: Staff engage in the process of continuous and ongoing assessment to ensure students have learned the concepts taught. Additional time and support will be assigned to students who have not yet met the learning standard.

A Focus on Collaboration: At Shauna May Seneca School, adult learning drives student learning. To facilitate this, staff engage in regular collaboration to discuss and agree upon curricular outcomes, the most effective instructional strategies, common assessments, and data analysis.

A Focus on Results: The success or failure of our current instructional practices is determined by the results of our students. Effective practices are retained and ineffective strategies are evaluated to determine how to improve our results. This process is ongoing and continuous.

We know you will be impressed with the dedication and commitment of our staff to your child's success. We also understand that achieving excellence is not possible through the efforts of staff alone. For Shauna May Seneca School's mission to become a reality, we require the co-operation and support of our parent community. We encourage parents to take an active role in the academic experiences of their children. Together we will ensure the success of every child.

Rights and Responsibilities

Our school District 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.

All members of the Edmonton Public Schools community, including students, parents, staff and Trustees have a role and a shared responsibility to create and support welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments.

Students and parents have a right to be informed about District 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.

All members of our school community are expected to respect diversity and refrain from demonstrating any form of 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.

These rights and responsibilities are communicated in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *School Act* and are reinforced in District policies and regulations including [AE.BP—Welcoming, Inclusive, Safe and Healthy Learning and Working Environments](#), [HG.BP—Student Behaviour and Conduct](#), [HG.AR—Student Behaviour and Conduct](#), and [HFA.AR—Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity](#) which are available to the public.

At Shauna May Seneca, everyone in our school community has the right to learn and work in an environment that is respectful, safe, healthy and focused on learning and success. In order to preserve these rights, students must also be aware of their individual responsibilities.

Rights and Responsibilities:

1. I have a right to an education.

It is my *responsibility* to listen, to learn, to practice, to complete school assignments and to graciously accept remedial assistance when necessary. I will not disturb, disrupt or interfere with the instruction of my teachers and/or the learning of fellow classmates.

2. I have a right to happiness and to be treated with dignity and respect in the school.

It is my *responsibility* to treat others with honour and polite consideration. I will not laugh at, tease or put down other students, staff or adults.

3. I have a right to hear and be heard in this school.

It is my *responsibility* to help maintain a calm, peaceful and quiet school. I will not interrupt, shout or make loud noises when others are speaking.

4. I have a right to be safe and secure in this school.

It is my *responsibility* not to threaten, push, pinch, hit, kick, spit at or hurt the bones, skin or feelings of others.

5. I have a right to free expression in learning about myself and others.

It is my *responsibility* to learn about myself and others in this school. I am free to express my feelings

and opinions as long as I am not rude or disrespectful, or disturb the order of the school and/or personal and public property.

6. I have a right to be myself in this school.

It is my *responsibility* to respect others as individuals and to not treat them unfairly because of their ability, weight, height, gender, age or colour, or because they think and act differently than I do.

7. I have a right to privacy and my own personal space.

It is my *responsibility* to respect the personal property of others and accept their right to privacy.

8. I have a right to assistance and support in learning self-control.

It is my *responsibility* to practice self-control and ask for assistance when necessary. I will expect to be corrected when I abuse the rights of others, as they will be corrected if my rights are abused. No one will silently stand by and witness the violation of personal rights. I can expect that all these rights will be mine as long as I am fulfilling all my responsibilities.

Student Behaviour Expectations

To ensure that Shauna May Seneca is a positive learning environment for everyone, all students are expected to comply with expectations set by our school District, as well as school rules which are in place for the benefit of all members of our school community.

Through Board Policy HG.BP—Student Behaviour and Conduct, the Board expects that students behave in accordance with Section 12 of the *School Act*. Section 12 states that students will conduct themselves so as to reasonably comply with the following Code of Conduct:

- be diligent in pursuing the student's studies;
- attend school regularly and punctually;
- co-operate fully with everyone authorized by the Board to provide education programs and other services;
- comply with rules of the school;
- account to the student's teachers for the student's conduct;
- respect the rights of others;
- ensure the student's conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging;
- 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; 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; and

- 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.

Student Dress Code

At Edmonton Public Schools, students are expected to dress in a manner that reflects a positive sense of self within a welcoming, 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.

Dress code expectations will be implemented in a manner that empowers students to make decisions that promote a positive sense of self and contribute to a respectful learning environment.

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 *School 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

Student Behaviour Expectations at Shauna May Seneca:

Student Behaviour and Conduct policy

Students are expected to learn, practice and demonstrate positive personal and interpersonal character traits that contribute to the development of productive learning environments:

- while involved in school-sponsored or related activities
- while on school property
- during any recess or lunch periods on or off school property
- while travelling to and from school
- beyond the hours of school operation if the behaviour or conduct detrimentally affects the welfare of individual students or the governance, climate or efficiency of the schools

At Shauna May Seneca School, we believe:

- Each student has the right to learn and grow in an environment that is safe and productive.
- No student has the right to choose behaviour that infringes upon the rights of others.
- Both home and school share the responsibility of teaching children appropriate, acceptable behaviour. This co-operative effort is essential to encourage children to achieve their academic and social potential.

Shauna May Seneca School has developed a school-wide discipline process that reflects these beliefs. The majority of students behave responsibly most of the time. Some students, however, make inappropriate choices. The discipline policy is designed to help these students understand that they have chosen to behave inappropriately and encourages them to learn and apply more acceptable choices.

School-wide rules

1. Do your best work.
2. Keep your body to yourself.
3. Respect yourself and others.
4. Take care of people's property.
5. Work and play safely.
6. Use the WITS problem solving process.

When students encounter inappropriate behavior, they should use:

Five steps to problem-solving

STEP 1: **Walk** away.

STEP 2: **Ignore** what the person is doing.

STEP 3: **Talk** it out by asking the person to stop. (Explain why you want them to stop. For example, "It hurts my feelings.")

STEP 4: **Seek** help from your teacher or come to the office to ask for help.

Classroom expectations

Teachers and students will develop their own classroom expectations that will contribute to a positive learning environment. These expectations will be posted in the classroom and communicated to parents.

Appropriate behaviour

Shauna May Seneca School staff recognizes positive behaviour in a variety of ways. Some examples include: verbal praise, telephone calls, notes home and assemblies.

Unacceptable Behaviour

Any behaviour 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. Edmonton Public Schools' policy on student behaviour and conduct outlines the following:

Students are accountable for their behaviour whether or not it occurs on school property or within the school day. When behaviour that occurs off school property, or outside of regular school hours, threatens the safety or well-being of individuals within the school community or disrupts the learning environment, school administrators may apply consequences for the behaviour.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour include, but are not limited to:

1. behaviours that interfere with the learning of others and/or the school environment
2. behaviours that create unsafe conditions
3. acts of bullying, harassment, threats, or intimidations whether it be in person, indirectly, or by electronic means
4. physical violence
5. retribution against any person who has intervened to prevent or report bullying or any other incident or safety concern
6. possession, use or distribution of substances restricted by federal, provincial, municipal, District or school authorities
7. any illegal activity such as:
 - a. possession, use or distribution of illegal substances
 - b. possession of a weapon or use of a weapon (or replica) to threaten, intimidate or harm others
 - c. possession, use, display, or distribution of offensive messages, videos or images
 - d. theft or possession of stolen property
8. any breach of rules and expectations established by District administrative regulations or a school-based code of conduct
9. failure to comply with Section 12 of the *School Act*.

Bullying and Conflict

Bullying is defined in the *School 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.

Unacceptable behaviour is categorized into minor and major offences based on the severity of the behaviour and its impact on others:

MINOR OFFENCES

Staff members will handle minor offences as they occur. Staff will encourage students to recognize occasions of poor judgment and assist them in developing appropriate problem-solving techniques.

MAJOR OFFENCES

Major offences are broken down into two main categories:

1. Behaviour which interferes with or threatens the orderly functioning of the school.
2. Behaviour that adversely affects the safety and well-being of others.

Some examples of major offences are:

- open defiance of authority
- physical or emotional abuse of self or others abuse of property
- continuous disruptive behaviour
- repeated minor offences

School Responses to Unacceptable Behaviour

If students fail to meet classroom, school or District expectations, a range of responses or consequences may be put in place to address unacceptable behaviour. Edmonton Public Schools' policy outlines 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 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

Students are expected to cooperate with investigations by school administration. When contemplating and conducting a reasonable search of student property (including electronic devices), school administration must balance a student's reduced expectation of privacy in relation to school matters, with the need to provide a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging for students and staff.

At Shauna May Seneca, 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.

Our goal is to help students understand they are in control of and responsible for their behaviour. The choice to behave acceptably is always with the student. Staff will assist students to recognize when they have chosen behaviour that is acceptable or unacceptable.

Major offences will be handled with a formal process. Open communication will be maintained throughout as a plan of action is chosen and put in place. The consequences for major offences will be decided on an individual basis. The consequence for an act of vandalism, for example, may be to have the student restore or pay for the vandalized article, or, if serious enough, have the police involved.

Depending on the severity of the offence, major offences can also result in a time-out, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, assistance through out-of-school agencies or extended support from Edmonton Public Schools. In keeping with our school philosophy, the student will continue to receive all the positive support we can provide to help him or her stay in the school.

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.

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