



Calgary French & International School

Policy #17:

Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning Environments **(also known as Mutual Respect)**

BACKGROUND:

The Calgary French & International School (CFIS) Society Board (the “Board”) recognizes that to achieve its mission, all students, employees, parents, volunteers, alumni and guests must be provided a welcoming, safe, caring, respectful, secure, sustainable and healthy holistic environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging. This environment is one where all students, employees, parents, volunteers, alumni and guests are committed to treat all others with mutual respect, dignity, and equity, free from fear of harassment or discrimination, and expect to be treated in the same manner.

SCOPE:

1. This policy applies to all members of the CFIS community, including all students, employees, parents, volunteers, alumni and guests.
2. This policy applies to:
 - a. All activities occurring on CFIS property, including but not limited to learning and communication platforms, and CFIS arranged transportation;
 - b. All activities during events associated with or otherwise reasonably and directly related to CFIS (i.e. including but not limited to field trips, travel studies, conferences, training sessions, etc.), whether on or off CFIS property, and including extra-curricular activities or events; and
 - c. All other activities associated with or otherwise reasonably connected to CFIS, including but not limited to any communications or behaviour between stakeholders related to CFIS that occur on external social media platforms or in other external forums.
3. This policy is not limited to in-person communications and/or interactions; it includes, without limitation, electronic communications, telephone conversations, and written correspondence.
4. This policy will be made publicly available, reviewed at least every year, and be provided to all CFIS staff, students and parents of students.

POLICY STATEMENT:

5. The rights of each employee, parent, volunteer, alumnus, guest and student of CFIS, as provided for in the *Human Rights Act* (Alberta) and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (collectively, the “**Legislation**”), are affirmed and employees, parents, volunteers, alumni, guests and students of CFIS shall not be discriminated against as provided for by the Legislation.
6. Without limitation to the foregoing, all members of the CFIS community have the right to:
 - a. Be treated with integrity, dignity and respect at all times, without prejudice, regardless of their race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, religious beliefs, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status, source of income, physical disability or mental disability;
 - b. Have their confidentiality and privacy protected and respected within the limits of applicable legislation. For further certainty, disclosure of personal information by CFIS is governed by the *Personal Information Protection Act* (Alberta);
 - c. Self-identification and determination; and
 - d. Have their needs, and the needs of others, respected within a positive environment.
7. In furtherance of the foregoing, if one or more students of CFIS request a CFIS employee or volunteer for support to establish a voluntary student organization at CFIS, or to lead an activity at CFIS intended to promote a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment at CFIS that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging, the Head of School and Chief Executive Officer (the “Head of School”) shall:
 - a. Grant permission for the establishment of the student organization or the holding of the activity at CFIS;
 - b. Subject to c. below, within a reasonable time from the date that the Head of School receives the request, designate an employee or volunteer to serve as the CFIS liaison to facilitate the establishment, and the ongoing operation, of such student organization or to assist in organizing such activity; and
 - c. Inform the CFIS Society Board and the Minister (as determined under the *Government Organization Act* (Alberta) as responsible for the *Education Act* (Alberta)) (the “Minister”) if no employee or volunteer is available to serve as the CFIS liaison, as referred to in b., and if so informed, the Minister shall appoint a responsible adult to work with the requesting students in organizing the activity or to facilitate the establishment, and the ongoing operation, of the student organization at CFIS.

For the purposes of this Section 7:

- i. an “organization” or “activity” includes an organization or activity that promotes equality and non-discrimination with respect to, without limitation, race, ancestry, place of origin, religious belief, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, family status, sexual orientation, age, marital status, source of income, including but not limited to organizations such as gay-straight alliances, diversity clubs, anti-racism clubs and anti-bullying clubs;

- ii. students may select a respectful and inclusive name for the organization or activity, including, if applicable, the name “gay-straight alliance” or “queer-straight alliance”, after consulting with the Head of School. For greater certainty, the Head of School shall not prohibit or discourage students from choosing a name that includes “gay-straight alliance” or “queer-straight alliance”; and
 - iii. the Head of School is responsible for ensuring that notification, if any, respecting a voluntary student organization or an activity referred to in this Section 6 is limited to the fact of the establishment of the organization or the holding of the activity and otherwise consistent with CFIS practices relating to other student organizations and activities.
8. On a non-exhaustive basis, behaviour which constitutes any of the following is considered to be inappropriate, and unacceptable under this policy:
 - a. Assault;
 - b. Verbal abuse, intimidating or aggressive behaviour, including verbal, electronic or physical threats;
 - c. Discrimination, including treating any individual or group of individuals in an unfair way, with reference to items in Paragraph 6.a.;
 - d. Harassment (verbal, non-verbal, cyber, sexual or otherwise), that demeans, humiliates or embarrasses or otherwise harms another person such that a reasonable person should know the conduct is unwelcome or inappropriate;
 - e. Bullying, as set out in the commonly accepted definition by the Canadian Psychological Association is a form of aggressive behavior in which someone intentionally and repeatedly causes another person injury or discomfort. Bullying can take the form of physical contact, words, or subtler actions, including cyber-bullying, that consists of aggressive or negative behavior targeted at an individual or a group of individuals, such that the behavior would reasonably be expected to create fear in, or result in harm to, the targeted individual or group of individuals; or
 - f. Social alienation is defined as people who are bullied and people who are bullying others and includes spreading rumors, publicly humiliating, gossiping, social exclusion and ethnic slurs.
9. This policy should be read in conjunction with Policy 14: Health & Safety, Appendix 15 Risk Tolerance Statement, the CFIS Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Conduct and the CFIS Student Code of Conduct.
10. CFIS will take steps to foster mutual respect in accordance with this policy.

POLICY VIOLATIONS

11. If a person has been subject to, or becomes aware of, a violation of this policy, they are encouraged, in a timely and appropriate manner, to do the following:
 - a. Where reasonable to do so, inform the party in violation of this policy to cease such behaviour;
 - b. Record the incident, including date, time, location, circumstances and any possible witnesses to the behaviour; and

- c. Report the matter in accordance with the then-current CFIS Administrative Procedures or CFIS Student Code of Conduct, as applicable, or in circumstances where neither of such procedures or code of conduct are applicable, in writing to the Head of School, or their designee.
12. Subject to the then-current CFIS Administrative Procedures, the then-current CFIS Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Conduct and the then-current CFIS Student Code of Conduct, if applicable in respect of the violation or perceived violation of this policy, upon becoming notified, in writing, in accordance with this policy, of a violation or perceived violation of this policy, the Head of School, or their designee, will take reasonable steps to discuss the complaint with the complainant and party in violation or perceived violation of this policy and shall, where circumstances reasonably permit, attempt to address the matter informally.
13. In the event that the matter is unable to be resolved informally and/or, after considering the nature and/or seriousness of the violation or perceived violation of this policy, the intentions of the parties involved, the impact of the violation or perceived violation on the CFIS community and prior violations by the applicable party of this policy, the Head of School or their designee, reasonably determines that a further investigation and formal resolution of the matter is required, CFIS, at the direction of the Head of School or their designee, shall take further investigative steps, in accordance with this policy and other applicable CFIS policies, to determine the relevant facts in respect of the alleged violation of this policy, including, formally interviewing both the complainant and party in violation or perceived violation of this policy, as well as any other individuals who may be able to provide relevant information in respect of the matter.
14. If an investigation concludes that a violation of this policy has occurred, the Head of School shall, acting reasonably, determine the appropriate action to be taken by CFIS in respect of the party in violation of this policy, which may include sanctioning the party in violation of this policy with a warning and/or the imposition of restrictions on such party's access to CFIS, CFIS events, CFIS extra-curricular activities, in whole or in part, for such period of time that the Head of School may consider appropriate.

The Board is available at any stage of an investigation to support and advise the Head of School.

For greater clarity, the Head of School is authorized to impose such sanctions pursuant to this policy to any member of the CFIS community, including students, employees, parents, volunteers, alumni and guests. The Head of School may, additionally or in the alternative, take such other action, in accordance with CFIS policies, as may be considered reasonable or necessary in the circumstances.

15. In all circumstances, CFIS shall:
 - a. Maintain any notice of violation and other information collected in respect of any allegations under this policy on a strictly confidential basis;
 - b. Ensure that all correspondence and interaction, of any nature, formal or informal, with the complainant, party in violation or perceived violation of this policy, and

- any other relevant parties, are conducted confidentially, fairly, expeditiously, and in all respects in accordance with this policy; and
- c. Ensure that all allegations are addressed:
 - i. fairly and objectively;
 - ii. as discreetly as circumstances reasonably permit;
 - iii. where information pertaining to any allegation is referred to or disseminated, the status of the allegations as allegations only will be articulated; and
 - iv. in all instances, in accordance with all applicable laws.
16. Each of the complainant and the party in violation or perceived violation of this policy shall have the right to be, and stay, informed of the nature, status and extent of the investigations undertaken pursuant to the foregoing procedures, unless there are legal grounds not to do so. All parties that are interviewed, formally or informally, in accordance with such procedures shall have the ability to have another person present at all interviews conducted under this policy. If a party elects a professional advisor or representative present, it should be made clear that the interview with the individual is a fact finding procedure and that they are only entitled to act as a supportive observer. Participants and their professional advisor or representative in this process are entitled only to their own or their client's personal information and not to the personal information of other participants.
 17. In the event that a party in violation of this policy wishes to appeal a sanction imposed under this policy such party shall notify the Board in writing of such appeal and such appeal shall be addressed by the Board or a Board committee or designee thereof in such manner as determined by the Board in its sole discretion in accordance with this policy.
 18. CFIS will not tolerate frivolous or vexatious complaints. If it is determined as a result of an investigation that a complaint under this policy was made maliciously with intent to harm or made in bad faith, CFIS may take formal action against the complainant in accordance with this policy or otherwise in accordance with CFIS policies and/or applicable laws.
 19. The Head of School will provide a report to the Board of all moderate, major or high health, safety and security incidents under this policy as defined in Appendix 15 Risk Tolerance Statement and may, at their discretion, seek the input of the Board in respect of any sanctions or actions that the Head of School may impose or take in respect of a violation of this policy, prior to the implementation thereof.
 20. Notwithstanding anything else contained herein, if a reasonable person would determine that a direct conflict of interest will exist or would reasonably be perceived to exist with the Head of School, or their designee, carrying out their respective duties under this policy in respect of a complaint, the Head of School, complainant or party in violation or perceived violation of this policy shall immediately inform the Chair of the Board (the "Chair") and, in the event the Chair so determines, all matters that are otherwise prescribed under this policy to be conducted by the Head of School, or their designee, shall be conducted by the Board or a Board committee or designee thereof, in such manner as reasonably determined by the Board in its sole discretion in accordance with this policy.

Approved by CFIS Society Board:	2013-03-13
Amended by CFIS Society Board:	2015-06-17
Re-Amended by CFIS Society Board:	2016-01-20
Re-Amended by CFIS Society Board:	2017-06-21
Re-Amended by CFIS Society Board:	2018-07-18; effective 2018-06-30; title of policy amended by Administration on 2018-08-31 to ensure compliance with Alberta Education requirements
Re-Amended by CFIS Society Board:	2021-04-22
Reference(s):	CFIS Administrative Procedures Manual, Policy 14 Health & Safety, Policy 18 Risk Management, Appendix 15 Risk Tolerance Statement, <i>Education Act</i> (Alberta), <i>Government Organization Act</i> (Alberta), <i>Human Rights Act</i> (Alberta), <i>Personal Information Protection Act</i> (Alberta), Alberta Occupational Health & Safety Act, Alberta Occupational Health & Safety Regulation, Alberta Occupational Health & Safety Code and the <i>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms</i> , Canadian Psychological Association “Psychology Works” Fact Sheet: Bullying among Children and Youth (February 2021).
Targeted Review Date:	April 2022