

**Policy 9.01**

**Category: Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe School**

**Framework for Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe School Environment**

**BACKGROUND**

The *School Act, Section 45.1 (including Section 16.1)* states that School Authorities must establish, implement, and maintain a policy respecting its obligation under subsection (1) to provide each enrolled student and every employed staff member with a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that includes the establishment a code of conduct for students that addresses bullying behaviours.

Alberta Education's Inclusive Education Policy Framework outlines six policy directions. They are designed to help bring a shared vision of inclusive education to life in Alberta. Inclusion is a way of thinking and acting that demonstrates universal acceptance of, and belonging for, all children and students. School authorities must ensure that all children and students (Kindergarten to Grade 12), regardless of race, religious belief, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, family status or sexual orientation, or any other factor(s), have access to meaningful and relevant learning experiences that include appropriate instructional supports. Students, parents and school authorities have responsibilities for ensuring welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments that respect diversity and nurture a sense of belonging and a positive sense of self.

The CAPE charter states that the CAPE Public Charter School provides a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and teaching environment for all students, parents, employees, volunteers, and contract operators. It also speaks to a community of learners that encompasses the school, parents, and community and supports each student's efforts in a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment.

In an effort to establish and maintain a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment for all, the CAPE Charter Board has developed policies to address physical, mental, emotional, and social health and wellness of stakeholders. Furthermore, the CAPE Charter Board has established Codes of Conduct for each of its stakeholder groups, including students.

**POLICY STATEMENT**

1. The CAPE Charter Board aims to provide welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment in which all stakeholders can pursue life-long learning as part of a community of learners.

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2. The CAPE Charter Board believes in universal acceptance of, and belonging for, all stakeholders including children and students, staff, parents, and community.
3. The CAPE Charter Board believes that all children and students, regardless of race, religious belief, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, family status or sexual orientation, or any other factor(s), must have access to meaningful and relevant learning experiences within a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe school environment.
4. The CAPE Charter Board believes that each member of the CAPE collaborative instructional team, parent and staff member employed by the CAPE charter board deserves an environment that is welcoming, caring, respectful and safe.
5. The CAPE Charter Board affirms the rights, as provided for in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, of each staff member employed by the board and each student enrolled in a school operated by the board.
6. Each staff members employed by the CAPE Charter Board, each child/student enrolled in the school, each parent/guardian and each member of the CAPE community of learners will not be discriminated against as provided for in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* or the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

**DEFINITIONS**

6. **Inclusion** - a way of thinking and acting that demonstrates universal acceptance of, and belonging for, all children and students.
7. **Meaningful** - having a serious, important, or useful quality or purpose.
8. **Relevant** - closely connected or appropriate to what is being done or considered.
9. **Welcoming** - a kindly greeting or reception, as to one whose arrival gives pleasure.
10. **Caring** - displaying kindness and concern for others.
11. **Respectful** - showing politeness or deference, showing respect (a feeling or understanding that someone or something is important, serious, and should be treated in an appropriate way).
12. **Safe** - protected from or not exposed to danger or risk; not likely to be harmed or lost.
13. **Discrimination** - the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people or things, for example on the grounds of race, age, or sex.

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14. **Diversity** - the *Alberta Human Rights Act* speaks to the diverse racial and cultural composition of Alberta society and the range of human differences such as race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religious beliefs, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, physical disability, mental disability, marital status, family status, source of income, and sexual orientation.
15. **Equality** - the current term for 'Equal Opportunities' and is based on the legal obligation to comply with anti-discrimination legislation. Equality protects people from being discriminated against on the grounds of group membership i.e. sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion, belief, or age.

**GUIDELINES:**

16. Policies must recognize the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all persons as per the *Alberta Human Rights Act*, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and the *Canadian Human Rights Act*.
17. Policies must address the physical, mental, emotional and social well-being of children and students enrolled in a school operated by the board, staff employed by the board, parents and community.
18. The superintendent is to develop, or cause to be developed, administrative procedures in support of board policies.
19. The superintendent shall ensure that board policies are easily available to all stakeholders via the school website or any other means.
20. The principal is to ensure that staff, students and parents within the CAPE school community are aware of the board policies.

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**References:**

*School Act*

*Protection of Students with Life-Threatening Allergies Act*

*Guide to Education*

*Inclusive Education Policy Framework*

*Canadian Human Rights Act*

*Alberta Human Rights Act*

*Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*

*CAPE charter (2015)*

*Policy 9.02 School-Sponsored Initiatives*

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*Policy 9.03 Pandemic Planning*

*Policy 9.04 Critical Incident Intervention/Prevention*

*Policy 9.05 Workplace Discrimination, Violence, Harassment and Abuse*

*Policy 9.06 Child Abuse*

*Policy 9.07 Bullying*

*Policy 9.08 Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA)*

*Policy 9.09 Sexual Orientation, Gender Identities and Gender Expressions*

*Policy 9.10 Health and Safety of Students and Staff*

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