

EDMONTON ACADEMY

RESPECTFUL WORKING ENVIRONMENTS

POLICY

Edmonton Academy is committed to providing and promoting respectful and responsible behavior in secure and supportive work environments to ensure the physical safety and well-being of all individuals. Edmonton Academy promotes an atmosphere of trust and respect. It is the responsibility of Board members, staff members, parents, volunteers and contract workers to contribute to creating a positive work environment.

Edmonton Academy is obligated to protect all their employees from harassment, discrimination, and personal harassment/bullying, during school work, and school related activities. Edmonton Academy prohibits harassment, personal harassment/bullying and discrimination and expects the reporting of allegations of harassment, personal harassment/bullying or discrimination to be investigated in a timely and respectful manner. Appropriate action will be taken against those whose behavior contravenes this policy.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. All Board members, staff members, parents, volunteers and contract workers share a responsibility for creating and maintaining a learning and work environment that is free of harassment.
2. Senior Administration is responsible for creating, supporting and maintaining a positive work and learning environment. This means, but is not limited to, being informed themselves and informing the staff and other related parties about the content of this Policy and supporting an awareness of harassment in general.
3. The Director of Education/Principal or Designate is responsible for ensuring the implementation of and compliance with the policy and administrative regulation. The Director of Education/Principal or Designate:
 - Receives and responds to inquires about discrimination and harassment.

- Provides information about process including, if appropriate, strategies to resolve complaints informally.
- Receives formal complaints.
- Reviews formal complaints to assess adequacy of information and secures additional information if needed.
- Determines if the matter has been previously investigated and dismissed, and if this is the case, advise the complainant that the matter is considered closed.
- Channels complaints that do not fit the definition of harassment into other processes, e.g. conflict resolution, employee assistance, informal mediation or legal action.
- Advises the complainant of the next steps in the process.
- May arrange for an external investigator when the complaint cannot be dealt with through informal processes.

PROCEDURE

1. **Reporting an Incident of Harassment, Discrimination, and Personal Harassment/Bullying**

- 1.1 When an incident occurs staff shall immediately inform the Director of Education/Principal or Designate. Where the Director of Education/Principal is the Respondent, the Board of Directors shall be alerted.
- 1.2 Work place abuse or allegations related to a member of staff, parent, volunteer or contract workers shall be reported, investigated, managed and communicated in accordance with the processes set out in this procedure. The potential Complainant may choose to communicate dissatisfaction to the Respondent in writing rather than communicating verbally. Notwithstanding Edmonton Academy may receive and investigate reports of alleged work place abuse or harassment made against a member of staff and may impose a consequence or remedy, as appropriate, and in accordance with the provisions of the regulations.
- 1.3 Reasonable efforts shall be made to maintain the confidentiality of allegations of abuse or harassment made pursuant to this policy except where disclosure is required:
 - a) to protect the safety of an individual; or
 - b) by law; or
 - c) to comply with professional reporting obligation

1.4 Reports of work place abuse or harassment shall be made in good faith. False reports may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or contract. Reprisals against staff who report work place abuse or harassment shall be investigated by Director of Education/Principal or Designate and may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or contract.

2. Investigating an Incident of Abuse or Harassment

2.1 When an incident of work place abuse or harassment is reported, the Director of Education/Principal or Designate shall follow the work place abuse procedure.

2.2 A suspected incident of work place abuse or harassment may be reviewed or investigated in absence of a reported allegation.

2.3 Failure by the Director of Education/Principal or Designate to follow up a work place abuse or harassment allegation shall be investigated by the Board of Directors.

2.4 Edmonton Academy shall cooperate with investigations and mediations conducted by external agencies to the extent required by law.

3. Communicating the Findings of an Investigation

Communication of the findings to the parties involved in the allegation shall be in accordance with the processes outlined in the procedure, Edmonton Academy Policies and applicable legislation.

4. Post-Investigation Actions

Edmonton Academy shall initiate follow-up action, as appropriate, up to and including termination of employment or contract. External organizations, including law enforcements may be notified.

Edmonton Academy Director of Education/Principal and/or Designate will:

- inform and educate all parties about the Respectful Working Environments Policy and associated policies and regulations;
- be proactive in preventing harassment, personal harassment/bullying, or discrimination;
- assist parties in resolving issues in the early stages; and
- advise parties of the process regarding complaints under this policy.

In the case of alleged harassment, personal harassment/bullying of an employee by a parent or other community member, the parties are to attempt to reach resolution through the usual channels of discussion, clarification and negotiation. If this is not successful, a variety of options may be considered by the Director of Education/Principal, or designate, including but not limited to:

- communicating in person, in writing or other to further investigate and attempt to reach resolution;
- restricting access to school property and/or advising the individual to cease and desist certain actions;
- taking legal action including a report to the police.

It is the responsibility of Board members, staff members, parents, volunteers and contract workers to contribute to creating a positive work environment.

DEFINITIONS:

1. **Respect** means to demonstrate regard for the rights of others.
2. **Work Place Abuse includes:**
 - 2.1 **Discrimination** means refusing to provide an opportunity or benefit with respect to access to any term or condition of employment because of race, religious beliefs, gender, physical

disability, sexual orientation, mental disability, marital status, family status, age, ancestry, place of origin, or source of income.

The behavior giving rise to a complaint of discrimination need not be intentional in order to be considered discrimination.

With regard to employment, the above does not apply to a bona fide occupation requirement.

- 2.2. **Harassment** occurs when an individual is subjected to unwelcome verbal or physical conduct because of race, religious beliefs, gender, physical disability, mental disability, marital status, family status, source of income, age, ancestry, color, place of origin, or sexual orientation.

Examples of harassment which will not be tolerated at Edmonton Academy include: verbal or physical abuse, threats, derogatory remarks, jokes, innuendo or taunts which allude to any of the above categories. Edmonton Academy also will not tolerate the display of pornographic, racist or offensive signs or images, practical jokes that result in awkwardness or embarrassment, whether indirect or explicit.

- 2.3. **Sexual Harassment** is unwelcome behavior that is sexual in nature. Unwanted sexual advances, unwanted requests for sexual acts, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- i. Such conduct undermines another individual's personal dignity by causing embarrassment, discomfort, humiliation or offence; or
- ii. Such conduct interferes with an individual's work performance or learning opportunities by creating an intimidating or hostile work or learning environment; or
- iii. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or of educational services, or

- iv. Submission to or rejection of such conduct affects decisions regarding that individual's employment or educational advancement including matters such as promotion, salary, benefits, job security, grades or employment references.

Sexual harassment includes such things as unwanted touching (e.g. pinching, patting, rubbing), leering, sexist or dirty jokes, the display of sexually suggestive materials, derogatory or degrading comments, sexually suggestive gestures, and unwelcome propositions, innuendos, demands or inquiries of a sexual nature.

- 2.4. **Personal Harassment/Bullying** is the hurtful mistreatment of people by yelling or ridiculing, undermining an individual or groups with vindictive or humiliating words or acts, including malicious exclusion, and any acts of intimidation including stalking.
- 2.5 **Verbal Abuse** means swearing, insults, or condescending language
3. **Complainant** means the individual who makes a complaint.
4. **Respondent** means the individual who the complainant alleges has engaged in Prohibited Behavior.
5. **Prohibited Behavior** means discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment or personal harassment/bullying.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:

Student/Parent Handbook

IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW DATES

This policy will be reviewed on a five-year cycle to ensure that it meets the mission statement of Edmonton Academy and regulations that may be set in law. Beginning with the 2013/14 school year, will be added to the *Student/Parent Handbook) and Staff Handbook*.

POLICY NAME: EDMONTON ACADEMY RESPECTFUL WORKING ENVIRONMENTS

Implement/Review Date: December 1, 2012

Next Review Date: December 1, 2017