



STUDENT ESSENTIAL AGREEMENTS

Our purpose is to empower heads, hands and hearts to make a difference in the world. We want to ensure students have a strong connection to school and experience it as a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe place that focuses on their individual success.

Student Essential Agreements establish and maintain an appropriate balance between individual and collective rights, freedoms, and responsibilities in the school community. It will be reviewed annually and publicly available on the school's website.

Student Essential Agreements establishes expectations, interventions and possible consequences for student behaviour. Students are held accountable for unexpected school behaviour that occurs both inside and outside of the school building or school day, if it negatively affects a member of the school or interferes with the school environment. Behavior may include use of electronic means (e.g. social media). Consequences of unexpected behaviour considers the student's age, maturity and/ or individual circumstances. Support will be provided for any students who are impacted by inappropriate behaviour as well as for students who engage in inappropriate behaviour. Although Essential Agreements address possible consequences, the primary focus is to help students learn how to address issues of dispute, develop empathy and become nurturing citizens both within and outside of the school community.

MEADOW RIDGE is committed to promoting a safe learning and working culture where everyone **BELONGS**. All those involved with the school including staff, students, parents, volunteers, and community members share in the responsibility for eliminating bullying, discrimination, harassment, and violence. Investigation of allegations of such behaviours will be conducted in a timely and respectful manner.

MEADOW RIDGE has a responsibility to ensure students and staff to do their **BEST**. We provide inclusive and equitable learning experiences that engage students to achieve their full potential in an increasingly interdependent world.

MEADOW RIDGE works with families and community partners to ensure we leave things **BETTER** than the way we found them. We provide welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments that respect diversity, foster a sense of belonging and promote student and community wellbeing.

Students

Students are unique, valued and contributing members of our school community who have a responsibility to respect the rights and dignity of others. They are expected to be actively involved in their academic learning and social growth. They are responsible for their behaviour while at school, school sponsored activities, and when engaging in other non-school activities that influence safety of others in school. While school faculty does not control what students do outside of school, there may be consequences or interventions for inappropriate behaviour when it has a detrimental impact on the school environment.

In accordance with the *School Act* students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the Student Essential Agreements (Code of Conduct) developed by school leadership, staff, students and community.

<http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/s03.pdf>

Acceptable behaviour for students includes (but is not limited to):

- Refraining from, reporting and discouraging 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.
- Informing a trusted adult in a timely manner about incidents of bullying, harassment, intimidation or other safety concerns in the school.
- Demonstrating behaviours that positively contribute to and honour the school and community.
- Following school expectations on any school-based activity or event outside of school and/or school hours including on school transportation.

Consequences consider the student's age, maturity, frequency and individual circumstances rather than a "zero tolerance" or a "one size fits all" approach. The specific circumstances of the situation and of the student must be taken into account when determining appropriate consequences; for example, consideration of needs including physical, behavioural, communicational, cognitive, mental health, trauma, as well as student's age, history, past interventions trialed, and accommodations/supports must be considered.

Unacceptable behaviour includes (but is not limited to):

- Behaviours that interfere with the learning of others and/or the school environment or that create unsafe conditions
- Acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation/discrimination
- Acts of violence, physical aggression or threatening behavior
- Retribution against any person in the school who has intervened to prevent or report bullying, harassment, or stop an incident that might cause harm to others
- Illegal activity such as: possession or use of weapons; possession or use of alcohol, drugs or other forms of intoxicants on school property or at any other school related function (i.e. grad, field trips)
- Theft or damage of property

Meadow Ridge uses a Progressive Discipline Continuum (see below) that includes mentoring, restorative processes, student advisories, peer support networks, regular check-ins with teachers or schools counsellors, counselling, time-out, suspension and/or expulsion. Support will be provided to students impacted by inappropriate behaviour and to those students who engage in inappropriate behaviour.

Progressive Discipline			
Universal	Targeted		Individualized
	Classroom Based	School Based	
Restorative practices (6 principles)	Review of expectations	Restorative practices (mini-conference)	Restorative practices (formal conference)
SWPBS (10 principles)	Assignment that requires reflection and involves a learning component.	Collaborative problem solving	Individualized counseling
PBS (10 principles)		Creating a plan for restitution	Support requested from Behaviour Learning Strategist
Visible school code of conduct	Restorative practices (classroom circles)	Loss of privileges/detention	Mentorship
Character Education		SEL Skills Curriculum: Small group	Involvement of outside agencies (ie. police, mental health services)
Trauma informed practice	Consultation with parents		Referral to 180
SEL Skills Curriculum			"Considering Suspension Guidelines" considered prior to suspension
Teach digital citizenship			

Faculty

Under the leadership of the Principal, faculty is responsible for:

- Establishing a positive school climate in which structure, support and encouragement is provided to assist the student in understanding the importance of education, developing a sense of self-discipline, and encompassing civil responsibility to the school and community
- Encouraging and reinforcing appropriate behaviour thus increasing social emotional competencies including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making
- Using proactive and preventative approaches to reduce the occurrence of unacceptable behaviour and maintain environments that are welcoming, caring, respectful and safe and are conducive to teaching and learning
- Responding to unacceptable behaviour, giving first consideration to the safety and security of students, staff, and other members of the school community when addressing a concern
- Ensuring students are provided with a safe environment with trusted adults who foster positive relationships

Student conduct is a joint effort between students, faculty, and parents based on mutual respect. On-going and timely communication will occur between staff and parents to encourage and provide the opportunity for active and constructive parental involvement in the education of their children.

Parents /Care Givers

Parents/care givers are partners in respect to children's education. They have a responsibility to take an active role in their child's educational success and support their child in fulfilling their responsibilities as students. Parent conduct should contribute to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment.

Meadow Ridge believes the role of the parent with respect to education includes:

- Encouraging, fostering and advancing collaborative, positive and respectful relationships with teachers, principals other school staff and professionals providing supports and services in the school
- Ensuring that the child attends regularly and is punctual
- Being aware of, and support, the behavioral expectations from the Student Essential Agreements
- Communicating and collaborating with school faculty about any concerns regarding Student Essential Agreements

Definitions

Respect: To show regard or consideration for others.

Harassment: Any behavior that in effect or intent disparages, humiliates, or harms another person or class of persons. It is behaviour that denies dignity and respect, and is demeaning and/or humiliating to another person or class of persons. Harassment may include, but is not limited to, references related to age, national or ethnic origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, race and/or sources of income or family status. Sexual harassment is any unwelcome behavior that is sexual in nature. Such behavior may directly or indirectly affect or threaten to affect in an adverse manner a student's well-being and/or learning environment. The behavior does not need to be intended as harassing to be considered as personal harassment. It is sufficient that one knows, or ought reasonably to know, that his/her behaviour is offensive and unwelcome. Harassment is not a relationship of mutual consent. It is any action including, but not limited to verbal, physical, written and cyber messaging that is unwelcome or intimidating and denies individual dignity and respect.

Discrimination: The denial of individual rights and freedoms in a manner which contravenes the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and/or the *Alberta Human Rights Act (AHRA)*. Discrimination on the basis of race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status, creed, sexual orientation, and citizenship is prohibited.

Bullying: According to Alberta Education (2016) bullying is a repeated and hostile or demeaning behaviour intended to cause harm, fear or distress, including psychological harm or harm to a person's reputation. It often involves an imbalance of social or physical power.

Bullying behaviours are a form of aggression and can be:

- Physical – For example: poking, elbowing, hitting
- Verbal – For example: name calling, insults, racist, sexist or homophobic comments, put-downs or threats
- Social – For example: gossiping, spreading rumours, excluding someone from the group, isolating, ganging up
- Cyber – For example: social or verbal bullying through the use of email, text messages or social media.