

Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Teaching and Learning Environment Statement

The following statement was voted and approved by the SDACC Board of Directors at their March 2016 meeting.

The conferences of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada are invited to implement the SDACC Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Teaching and Learning Environment Statement in their schools. Whether or not the conferences adopt this Statement or an amendment thereof, their education policies must be in accordance with the principles of ensuring a safe, caring, and respectful environment as set out in this Statement.

PART I

Consistent with its mission and vision, the Board is committed to a safe, inclusive, equitable, and welcoming learning and teaching environment for all students. All students have the right to learn and work in an environment free of prejudice, harassment and unlawful discrimination. This principle is found within the golden rule expressed by Jesus Christ: "Treat others the same way you want them to treat you." Luke 6:31.

PART II

The Board will not tolerate harassment, bullying, intimidation, or unlawful discrimination on the basis of a person's actual or perceived differences. The Board believes that all students have the right to:

- be treated fairly, equitably, and with dignity and respect, irrespective of their personal and family characteristics;
- have their privacy protected and respected (subject to applicable legal obligations to disclose);
- be fully included and represented in an inclusive, positive, and respectful manner by all school personnel;
- have equitable access to the same supports, services, and protections provided to all students and their families;
- have avenues of recourse (without fear of reprisal) available to them when they are victims of harassment, prejudice, discrimination, intimidation, bullying, or violence.

PART III

The Board is committed to implementing measures that will:

- Define appropriate expectations, behaviours, language, and actions in order to comply with applicable local laws to prevent prejudice, harassment and unlawful discrimination through greater awareness of, and responsiveness to, their harmful effects.
- Ensure that all complaints of prohibited behaviours will be taken seriously, documented, and dealt with expeditiously and effectively through consistently applied Statement and procedures.

- Improve students' understanding and respect of individuals and their families, who are from different cultures and communities from their own.
- Develop, implement, and evaluate educational strategies, professional development opportunities, and administrative guidelines to ensure that all students and their families, regardless of their beliefs and background, are treated with respect and dignity in all aspects of the school community in a manner consistent with the school's mission, vision and religious character.

PART IV

All Students may be invited to join a student human rights club established to be an organization through which students may participate in promoting all of the principles in this Statement and to oppose bullying in all of its forms. This club will be called the Human Rights Club and will conduct its affairs consistent with the school's other policies, mission, vision and Seventh-day Adventist beliefs and character.