

# BOARD OF EDUCATION

## SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 35 (LANGLEY)

POLICY MANUAL

Policy No. 7200

**SUBJECT:** STUDENT ANTI-HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION POLICY Date 14 05 27

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The Board of Education recognizes that the School District is committed to providing an educational environment that is safe, welcoming, respectful, and affirming for all students, families and staff. The Board recognizes and values diversity within the community and all schools foster and promote inclusive and accepting cultures throughout the district.

For these reasons, the Board will strive to promote safe environments, free from fear, harassment and discrimination by engaging in proactive strategies, guidelines and education to ensure that all students, employees and families are equally welcomed and included in all aspects of education and school life and treated with respect and dignity.

The purpose of this policy is to define inappropriate behaviours and actions in order to prevent discrimination and harassment.

Any communication or behaviour (which may include but is not limited to assault, bullying or harassment) that deliberately degrades, denigrates, labels, stereotypes, incites hatred, prejudice, discrimination towards students on the basis of one's real or perceived sexual or gender orientation, appearance, capacity, disability, ethnicity, or religion, or for any other reason will not be tolerated. This also includes making gestures, publishing or displaying anything that would indicate an intention to discriminate against an individual or group, or expose them to contempt or ridicule.

The Board recognizes that students who are facing gender and sexual diversity issues (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning) face a unique set of challenges within our schools and communities. Individuals who are dealing with or those perceived to be dealing with issues of gender identity, gender expression, intersexuality or sexual orientation, as well as their families, are frequently the targets of homophobic, transphobic and/or heterosexist behaviours. This may have profound social consequences including discrimination, harassment, physical and sexual violence, social and emotional isolation, substance abuse, homelessness, school truancy and drop-out, self-harm and suicide.

The District and all schools shall specifically include the prohibition of any derogatory language and behavior in their Codes of Conduct. Behavioural expectations and Codes of Conduct shall be communicated and distributed to all students, staff, parents and guardians in written form at the beginning of each school year.

Each member of the school community should share the responsibility of modeling respectful conduct regardless of perceived differences and should refuse to tolerate any form of discrimination. All members of the community shall have the individual and collective responsibility to identify and act upon discriminatory attitudes and behaviours and strive to eliminate systemic inequities and barriers. Any staff member who

violates or does not follow this policy may also be subject to remedial or disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

All members of the school community, including students, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers and trustees are expected to uphold this policy in the interest of student safety and well-being.

The right to confidentiality will be respected in accordance with *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

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## Policy 7200 - Regulations

### Student Anti-Harassment and Discrimination Policy

The Langley School District Vision encompasses the principles of an inclusive and accepting culture where every child belongs and there is respect for diversity.

In order to attain this vision, all members of the school community are encouraged to model respectful and inclusive conduct and to refuse to tolerate any form of discrimination and/or harassment.

The Langley School District will promote practical strategies and guidelines to ensure that all students, staff and families feel welcomed and included in all aspects of education and school life and are treated with respect and dignity.

#### District, School, Staff & Student Responsibilities:

- a) The Board and District will provide opportunities for school communities to increase awareness of the impact of harassment and discrimination on individuals.
- b) The Board and District will provide opportunities for staff to increase their knowledge and skills in promoting respect for human rights, supporting diversity and addressing harassment and discrimination in schools.
- c) The District and all schools will include in Codes of Conduct specific statements that prohibit language or behavior that degrades or incites hatred, prejudice, discrimination or harassment towards any individual or group. Such language or behaviour will not be tolerated and may be subject to disciplinary action.
- d) The District will take action when there is evidence of or an actual complaint of discrimination and/or harassment.
- e) The District will establish and distribute guidelines for investigating and addressing incidents of harassment and/or discrimination.
- f) The District will build greater awareness of and responsiveness to the harmful effects of isolation resulting from homophobic and or transphobic discrimination.
- g) Schools will inform students on how and when to report incidents of harassment and/or discrimination.
- h) Schools will support formal and/or Informal Gay/Straight Alliance (GSAs) Groups in schools.
- i) Staff has an obligation to intervene in any interaction involving the use of harassing, discriminatory or homophobic statements, comments, and behaviours, regardless of the speaker's intentions and to convey that such comments are against policy and will not be tolerated. Education about the harmful impact of such language and behaviour will be emphasized and encouraged, alongside any discipline deemed necessary.

- j) Staff will support any student or groups of students that request help and support for any issues of harassment or discrimination.

Education and Awareness:

- a) The District will work continuously to educate all members of the school community (including students, staff, parents and guardians) to prevent discrimination based on any real or perceived differences.
- b) The District will support multicultural, anti-racist, anti-homophobic and human rights education infused into all curricula.
- c) Schools will support developmentally-appropriate activities and provide resources that promote knowledge and skills developing respect for, as well as eliminating racism, discrimination and homophobia, all people.
- d) Learning and library resources will affirm human diversity as a fundamental component in our society.