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| <b>Section:</b> | <b>District Administration</b>                 |            |
| <b>Title:</b>   | <b>Safe, Caring, and Respectful Workplaces</b> | <b>5.0</b> |

**Purpose**

To outline the expectations for the conduct of employees and others in MPSD Workplaces.

**Policy**

Mission Public Schools will structure its workplaces to provide an orderly, safe, personally secure, and respectful environment that values and respects individual differences and does not undermine the dignity, self-esteem, or the respect of any employee, including elected officials.

Mission Public Schools expects all employees to show respect for others including respect for others’ rights, beliefs, ideas, and property.

Mission Public Schools will not condone or accept within its workplaces, any bullying or harassing conduct, cyberbullying, intimidation, threatening or violent behaviours, nor any acts of discrimination due to a persons’ race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, political affiliation, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or age, of that person or that group or class of persons, in accordance with the (BC) *Human Rights Code* and the *Workers Compensation Act*.

The expectations apply to all Mission Public School buildings, worksites, including areas like lunchrooms, grounds, vehicles, and all work-related activities, including activities that occur away from the workplace by way of social or electronic media.

**1. District Code of Conduct**

- 1.1. Mission Public Schools and Worksites are to be orderly, safe, personally secure, and respectful of all, enabling workplace excellence, personal growth, and responsible citizenship.
- 1.2. Mission Public Schools expects respectful and responsible behaviour that leads to a culture of non-violence, equity, inclusion, diversity, and respect, at all its worksites, on-line, and at all school district authorized events and activities, or at other events that will have an impact on the work environment.
- 1.3. All employees are expected to:
  - a) Comply with all applicable federal, provincial, and municipal laws, and district policies and procedures,
  - b) Value and encourage working environments that are inclusive and respectful of diverse individual, collective, social, and cultural needs of the school district,
  - c) Treat one another with dignity and respect,
  - d) Refrain from engaging in or encouraging acts of violence of any form,
  - e) Show care and regard for school property and the property of others, and
  - f) Take appropriate measures to help those in need.

- 1.4. Employees are not to engage in behaviour that constitutes bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation, lateral violence, threatening or violent behaviours, or discrimination as set out in the *BC Human Rights Code* including race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, political affiliation, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or age.

## 2. General Guidelines

- 2.1. The Board, management, and employees share the responsibility of maintaining safe, personally secure, and respectful workplaces that are free from bullying, harassment, or discrimination.
- 2.2. Consequences for unacceptable behaviour, and processes for investigating behaviour that is contrary to this policy, the *School Act*, and the *BC Human Rights Code* and the *Workers Compensation Act*, are to be set out in administrative procedures.
- 2.3. Administrative procedures, guidelines, and processes must be developed to support respectful workplaces, equity, diversity, and inclusion, and:
  - a) to address instances where employees are subjected to bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation, threatening or violent behaviours or discrimination, or
  - b) to address an identified poisoned work environment, or
  - c) to address instances where members of the public interacting with Mission Public Schools feel bullied, harassed, or discriminated against due to actions of its employees representing Mission Public Schools in an official capacity.
- 2.4. The process for investigating and addressing complaints must be done in a timely and confidential manner.
- 2.5. All employees are required to review this policy and related procedures annually.

## 3. Definitions

- 3.1. *Bullying, Harassment, Cyberbullying, Intimidation, and Discrimination* includes any inappropriate conduct, comment, or threat, by a person towards a worker, or others, that the person knew or reasonably ought to have known that would cause the worker, or others, to be humiliated or intimidated, or is unwelcome and would deny the worker, or others, individual dignity and/or respect. This includes any comment, conduct, or behaviours which serves no legitimate work-related purpose and has the effect of creating an intimidating, humiliating, hostile, violent, or offensive work environment. It also includes any comment or action that denies the other person individual dignity and/or respect that detrimentally affects workers, or others, with Mission Public Schools workplaces, or has adverse job-related consequences, such as job security or career advancement.
- 3.2. A *Poisoned Work Environment* is where there is a focused pattern of bullying, harassment, cyberbullying, intimidation, or discriminating behaviour, including a broad systemic problem that is tolerated, participated in, or condoned, and where management or others have taken no action to end the bullying, harassing or discriminatory behaviour.
- 3.3. *Discriminatory Grounds* are, in accordance with the *BC Human Rights Code*, grounds on which prescribed discriminatory actions cannot be based upon and includes: Race, Colour, Ancestry, Place of Origin, Political Belief, Religion, Marital Status, Family Status, Physical or Mental

Disability, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Age, Gender Identity or Expression, or a Criminal or summary conviction offence unrelated to employment or intended employment.

3.4. *Lateral Violence* is anger and rage directed towards members within a marginalised or oppressed community by members of the marginalised or oppressed community. It can manifest as bullying, gossiping, sabotaging, undermining, or excluding others in the same community or workplace, creating a toxic environment.

## 4. Examples

4.1. Safe, caring, and respectful workplaces are free of acts of:

- a. bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, threats, intimidation, verbal or written abuse, racism, homophobia, and other forms of discrimination of any kind, including but not limited to those listed in above or any other distinguishing characteristic, or if based on an association with an individual or group with any of aforementioned characteristics,
- b. any form of violence,
- c. theft, or
- d. vandalism.

4.2. Safe, caring, and respectful do not tolerate the presence of:

- a. intoxicating or banned substances,
- b. weapons (or replica weapons) and explosives, and
- c. intruders or trespassers.

4.3. General examples of conduct or comments that might constitute bullying, harassment or discrimination include verbal aggression or insult, calling someone derogatory names, harmful hazing or initiation practices, isolating employees, vandalizing personal belongings, inappropriate use of authority, and spreading malicious rumours.

4.4. Specific examples that constitute bullying, harassment, or discrimination

- a. Verbal abuse or threats, bullying, coercion, taunting.
- b. Unwanted physical contact such as touching, patting, pinching, punching, massaging.
- c. Sexual advances and or requests for sexual favours.
- d. Suggestive or offensive comments or gestures emphasizing sexuality, sexual identity or sexual orientation (including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning).
- e. Unwelcome, derogatory, or demeaning comments, innuendoes, jokes, name-calling, or slurs.
- f. Derogatory or demeaning posters, pictures, cartoons, graffiti, or drawings.
- g. Practical jokes which cause awkwardness or embarrassment.
- h. Malicious gestures or actions such as leering, staring, tripping.
- i. Any inappropriate comment or action based upon discriminatory grounds.
- j. Disciplinary action or discrimination based on a criminal or summary conviction offence that is unrelated to employment or intended employment.

4.5. Behaviours that may not constitute bullying, harassment, or discrimination:

- a. Consensual Banter or Relationships – Two or more people bantering back and forth is not harassment if **everyone** involved agrees. *However, if anyone feels uncomfortable with the behaviour and the behaviour continues even after that person has expressed their*

*discomfort, or if the others involved should have known the person was uncomfortable, then it is harassment.*

- b. Flirting with each other, or becoming involved in a romantic or sexual relationship, are not harassing each other if the relationship is consensual. *However, if one person changes their mind, and the other person persists in trying to continue the relationship, it is harassment.*
- c. Legitimate interventions – appropriate performance reviews, counseling, coaching and discipline are not considered bullying, harassment, or discrimination.

**Date of Original Board Approval:** Code of Conduct - February 2009 (Policy 19)  
Respectful Schools – February 2016 (Policy 25)  
Respectful Schools and Workplaces – September 2019

**Date Amended:** **September 17, 2019**  
**June 20, 2023**

*Legal Reference:* *Workers Compensation Act – Section 115, OHS Regulation*  
*Human Rights Code (RSBC 1996), Chapter 210*

*Cross Reference:* [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy](#)  
[Sexual Minority Policy](#)  
[Workplace Bullying, Harassment or Discrimination Complaint Procedure](#)