

Student Responsibilities and Conduct

Background

The Board endorses a set of desirable personal and interpersonal character traits that incorporate universal values common to all religions and ethnic-cultural groups, including respect, integrity, empathy, compassion, independence, cooperation, responsibility and self-control.

Students are expected to learn, practice and develop such personal and interpersonal character traits and to contribute to the development of welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments. Students are further expected to respect diversity and refrain from demonstrating any form of discrimination as set out in the Alberta Human Rights Act, including gender identity and gender expression as set out in the Alberta Bill of Rights. Students are to foster a sense of belonging amongst all students.

Within the aforementioned context, students are expected to pursue academic and place based studies to maximize their individual potential in becoming self-reliant, responsive and contributing members of society.

The Education Act; Section 31 states:

A student, as a partner in education, has the responsibility to::

- a) attend school regularly and punctually;
- b) be ready to learn and actively engage in and diligently pursue the student's education;
- c) ensure that the student's conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging;
- d) respect the rights of others in the school;
- e) refrain from, report and not tolerate 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;
- f) comply with the rules of the school and the policies of the board;
- g) co-operate with everyone authorized by the board to provide education programs and other services;
- h) be accountable to the student's teachers and other school staff for the student's conduct; and
- i) positively contribute to the student's school and community.

Gwynne Valley Rural Academy (GVRA) will attempt to promote a problem solving approach when dealing with discipline. Discipline is a learning process that should be more educational than punitive. We believe that in order for education to succeed, our students must learn to behave in a respectful manner.

At GVRA, students and staff are encouraged to behave in a safe and caring manner.

- Attentive Listening
- Participation
- Positive Interactions
- Mutual Respect

These guiding principles are expected to be followed in all areas of the Academy and during all times that students are under GVRA supervision. This also includes field trips, special events at

the school, extra-curricular activities, and while riding the school bus. When the agreements are followed the result is a safe and caring environment for everyone.

Procedure

1. Application

- 1.1 When confronted with exceptional circumstances, the Principal will determine what actions will be taken, what assistance to call in and what resources to utilize.
- 1.2 The length and number of steps may vary depending on the severity of the offence and/or the age of the student involved. The severity of the offence may indicate that some steps are omitted.
- 1.3 Corporal punishment will not be allowed in GVRA as part of any student conduct plan or as a consequence for any student behaviour.
- 1.4 Development of standards of student behaviour and conduct is a dynamic process subject to continuous review.

2. Discipline Cycle

An incident report will be recorded when a student is not following the Academy behavioral expectations. Students will advance through a progression of consequences with each incident.

NOTE: Students may be suspended immediately depending on the severity of the incident.

Process/Consequences

Depending on the severity and frequency of the offense and age of the student, the following steps/consequences *may* be implemented:

- Reminder of Academy rules;
- Apology to affected parties;
- Short term removal of privileges;
- Phone call home;
- Assignment of a student to an alternate supervised location (Parents may be contacted dependent on severity);
- Out of Academy suspension by the Principal (Parents will be contacted);
- Parent/Academy meeting before student can return to the Academy;
- Interventions such as positive behaviour supports, community conferencing or other forms of restorative justice;
- Replacement of or payment for damage to school property;
- Recommendation for expulsion by the Principal to the Superintendent.

3. Minor Offenses

Minor offenses are dealt with by all GVRA staff. All staff will ensure that the Academy and classroom behavioural expectations are followed and that students are given appropriate consequences.

Minor offences are defined as: inappropriate activities for the time and place.

These may include, but are not limited to:

- Behaviours that are unsafe;
- Distracting the learning of others.

4. **Major Offenses**

Major offenses are behaviors that demonstrate intent to harm or significantly distract learning. These behaviors require immediate action to protect the safety of others. Major offenses will be reported to the principal and dealt with immediately. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Open opposition to authority;
- Inappropriate language (cursing);
- Destroying or damaging property;
- Cheating / plagiarizing;
- Leaving GVRA grounds without permission;
- Excessive rough housing.

5. **Student Discipline and Extra-Curricular Activities**

Students, who after further review of their discipline file, may also be suspended from the following: classroom parties, extra-curricular activities, intramurals, special day events, field trips, and receiving Academy awards.

6. **Zero Tolerance Offenses**

Zero tolerance offenses are behaviours that are excessive, malicious, or violent and demonstrate deliberate disregard for property, rights, education and safety of others.

These behaviours will be reported immediately to the principal and dealt with at the administrative level.

These may include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal abuse to staff;
- Any form of sexism or racism;
- Fighting at school or uttering the threat of fighting at school;
- Theft;
- Intentionally injuring another person;
- Bullying other students
e.g. malicious teasing, making rude comments about other people or their families, invasion of privacy, threatening another student.

When necessary, in-school suspensions are preferred, but if the safety of others is at risk, students will serve an out-of-school suspension. Parents will be notified by phone and in writing if their child is being suspended.

In situations where a student's behaviour has not shown improvement or has regressed, it is essential that all caregivers (parents, guardians, and GVRA staff) be involved in implementing proactive problem solving strategies to ensure a successful educational experience of that student.

Reference: Section 31 Education Act
Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
Alberta Human Rights Act