

Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning Environment

PAES Board Policy



Purpose

Consistent with its mission and vision, the Progressive Academy Education Society is committed to creating a safe, caring, respectful, inclusive, equitable, and welcoming learning environment for all members of our community. Our school's environment shall be one that recognizes and respects diversity, provides equity of learning opportunity for all students, respects human rights, and fosters a sense of belonging of all students within a respectful school community.

Rationale

School Vision

A vibrant society shaped by individual excellence.

Mission Statement

To provide a student-focused program that cultivates a passion for learning and critical thinking.

Foundational Beliefs/Philosophy

We believe that to be effective we must work with the nature, interests and talents of each of our students.

We value individuality and diversity and celebrate the richness that this bring to our programs.

We believe that parents are the primary educators of their children. The student, the parents and the school staff must all be able to work collaboratively in the student's best interest.

We believe that to achieve educational success our programs must include family values, traditions, and diverse cultural understandings.

Definitions

Diversity includes, but is not limited to, diversity with respect to race, religious belief, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, family status or sexual orientation, political affiliation, or economic status.

Expectations

PART I

All members of Progressive Academy's community have the right to learn and work in an environment that respects and supports their individuality and their opinions and considerations about life.

All members of our community also have a responsibility to help create a community within which individuality is welcomed and in which opinions can be freely expressed in a manner respectful of all.

This policy recognizes that the right to learn and work in an environment free of discrimination, prejudice, and harassment is essential to achieving individual excellence.

The Progressive Academy Education Society is committed to create an environment that respects all of its member and the diversity of their individuality and opinions. It does so by:

- Creating a culture of acceptance and belonging for all children and their parents/guardians
- Working with the nature, interests and talents of each of our students.
- Assisting students to discover their goals, take responsibility for their growth and to gain the skills needed to guide themselves toward their goals.
- Encouraging students to take the initiative to create clubs and initiate extracurricular activities that develop and express their diverse natures, interests and talents by providing support from staff who will works with students to achieve their goals. To be clear, students will be permitted to make clubs of their choice and name them as they wish, including but not limited to the names GSAs and QSAs. As clubs are considered student lead and not teacher lead, parents will not be notified about student’s participation in clubs by the school. Any notification about club activities will be limited to the names of the clubs, their purpose and their activities.
- With regard to GSAs and QSAs(or other name as chosen): the Principal will take the roll of support for GSAs or QSAs immediately upon request from students seeking to create a GSA or QSA club. The Principal will then assign this responsibility to another faculty member.
- Maintaining high standards for student achievement
- Including diverse family values, traditions, and cultural understandings in our school programs.
- Encouraging thoughtful consideration and critical thinking in the development of opinions.
- Encouraging respectful dialogue to encourage understanding of diverse cultures and opinions.
- Seeking collaboration through understanding and negotiation rather than authoritarian compliance.
- Celebrating the diversity in our community.
- Committing to meet the needs of the diverse student, family and staff population.
- Providing a wide range of options in programs to accommodate the different needs and interests of our students.
- Providing a continuum of supports to achieve student success.
- Including parents as the primary educators of their children and working collaboratively with families in the student’s best interest.
- Providing ongoing parental support and educational workshops/events to facilitate understanding and collaboration.
- Maintaining high standards of responsiveness, open communication and accountability
- Utilizing effective instructional practices and specialized supports based the learning needs of each individual student
- Providing staff with continuing opportunities for professional learning to be effective in meeting individual needs.
- Implementing effective programs that assist all members of our community to help create safe, caring, respectful, inclusive, equitable and welcoming learning environment.
- Developing partnerships with community and global organization that will assist in bringing about our vision.

PART II

The Progressive Academy Education Society believes that all students have the right to:

- be treated fairly, equitably, and with dignity and respect;
- have matters of confidentiality dealt with in a respectful and careful manner;
- freedom of conscience, expression, and association;

- be welcomed in a positive, and respectful manner by all school personnel;
- have access to appropriate supports, services, and protections
- have avenues of recourse without fear of reprisal available to them when they are victims of harassment, intimidation, bullying, and/or violence;

PART III

The Progressive Academy Education Society is committed to implementing measures that will:

- Define expectations with regard to behaviour, language, and action in order to promote a culture of respect and prevent discrimination, prejudice, and harassment.
 - establish the defined expectations in the form of a code of conduct for students
 - distinguish between conflict and bullying in the code of conduct
 - make the code of conduct available to all community members
 - implement the code of conduct by focusing on ability to resolve conflict and the requirement for respectful conflict resolution
 - review the code of conduct and its implementation yearly and adjust as needed to create a culture of respect
- Ensure that all discriminatory behaviours and complaints are taken seriously, documented, and dealt with expeditiously and effectively through consistently applied school policy and procedures.
- Develop, implement, and evaluate inclusive educational strategies, professional development opportunities, and administrative guidelines to ensure that all minorities are treated with respect and dignity in all aspects of the school community in a manner consistent with the school's mission and vision.
- Ensure that when a student requests assistance, support, and/or accommodation, their request is heard and the school, through the principal, will respond in a caring, respectful and timely manner.

PART IV

When implementing this policy, the Progressive Academy Education Society will act reasonably in the best interests of the student.

- Progressive Academy's teachers and staff may encourage discussion about doctrines and ethical beliefs from diverse perspectives, accepting everyone's diversity.
- Progressive Academy's teachers and staff will encourage students to explore their own and their family's values, cultural expectations and beliefs.
- Progressive Academy's teachers and staff will encourage respectful dialogue concerning different beliefs and practices and ensure the classroom dialogue proceeds in accordance with respect, tolerance and understanding for all.

Accountability

The Executive Director and Principal of Progressive Academy are responsible for implementing the Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning Environment Board Policy and creating any School Policies and procedures needed for implementation.

The Progressive Academy confirms that the Minister of Education can initiate an investigation or inquiry if any section, including Section 16.1, 20 and 50.1 of the School Act, are not complied with.

References

School Act

The *Alberta Human Rights Act*, as amended March 10, 2015, which includes the right not to be discriminated against by reason of race, national origin, colour, religion or gender identity or gender expression.

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Article 5 of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990)*

Alberta Education Program of Studies

Setting the Direction Framework, June 2009

Setting the Direction Framework: Government of Alberta Response, June 2010

Setting the Direction: Moving Toward an Inclusive Education System in Alberta, revised November 2010

RESPONSIBLE FOR:		<i>Executive Director</i>		
APPLIES TO:		<i>School Community</i>		
REFERENCE DOCUMENTS: AB ED Funding Manual				
VERSION	DATE	WRITTEN BY	APPROVED BY	CHANGES
1.0.0	March 22, 2016	C-Anne Robertson	Board of Directors	Amended December 20, 2017 to reflect wording required by new legislation.