

Student Policies

8. Safe, Caring, Welcoming and Respectful Environment

Foothills Academy Society is committed to providing a safe, caring, respectful, equitable, and welcoming learning and working environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging. We wish to foster positive attitudes and behaviours that meet the individual needs of students, develop self-esteem and create a school community which is safe, caring, welcoming and respectful.

Foothills Academy will establish a code of conduct in order to communicate school expectations concerning student conduct, and the possible consequence of serious or repeated misconduct.

The Board of Governors will co-operate with the efforts made by government and community agencies to address societal conditions which impact the safety and security of schools.

All students and staff have the right to learn and work in an environment free of discrimination, prejudice, and harassment. This right is guaranteed under:

- The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms;
- The Alberta Human Rights Act, including the right not to be discriminated against by reason of race, national origin, colour, religion, or gender identity or gender expression; and
- The School Act, which ensures that students and staff have a safe, caring, welcoming and respectful learning environment fostering belonging and respect for diversity.

Students are bound by the school code of conduct, which must be reviewed annually and is communicated to staff, students, parents and stakeholders.

Foothills Academy will not tolerate harassment, bullying, intimidation, or discrimination directed toward any student, family member of a student or staff member of Foothills Academy, including any discrimination on the basis of a person's actual or perceived differences, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. All staff, students, parents, volunteers, governors and stakeholders share responsibility for upholding the rights of all, and will be expected to embrace this policy.

All Students have the right to:

- Be treated fairly, equitably, with dignity and respect.
- Have their confidentiality protected and respected, by maintaining school records in a way that respects privacy and confidentiality. Preferred names can be used on report cards and IPPs, but only legal names can be used on SIS and PASI systems.
- Respect for their choices related to self-identification and determination.
- Freedom of conscience, expression and association.
- A dress code that is respectful and inclusive of the gender identities and gender expressions of all members of the school community.
- Minimal exposure to gender-segregated activities.
- Be fully included and represented in an inclusive, positive, and respectful manner by all school personnel.

- Have access to supports that respond to a student’s individual needs.
- Have avenues of recourse (without fear or reprisal) available to them when they are victims of harassment, prejudice, discrimination, intimidation, bullying and/or violence.
- Meaningful, safe and equitable learning experiences in curricular and extra-curricular activities that include appropriate instructional supports and are welcoming and inclusive, regardless of gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation or any other factor.
- Safe access to washroom and change-room facilities, and safety in all other places within the school property, through appropriate supervision and monitoring of the school and grounds.
- Work with staff who have the skills, knowledge and capacity to understand and support diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions.
- A whole-school approach to promotion of healthy relationships and prevention and response to bullying behaviour.
- Have access to a staff person at any reasonable time to discuss needs, interests and concerns.
- Be identified upon request by alternate pronouns, such as “ze”, “zir”, “hir”, “they”, or “them”, or with the prefix “Mx”.
- Contribute to the welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and which nurtures a sense of belonging, and positive sense of self; as per section 12(g) of the School Act.
- Be part of a school community which ensures all families and stakeholders are welcomed and supported as valued members of the school community.
- Establish a voluntary student organization with the assistance of a designated staff member, to promote a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects a sense of diversity and fosters a sense of belonging, as per S. 16.1 of the School Act.

16.1(1) If one or more students attending a school operated by a board requests a staff member employed by the board for support to establish a voluntary student organization, or to lead an activity intended to promote a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging, the principal of the school shall

(a) immediately grant permission for the establishment of the student organization or the holding of the activity at the school, and

(b) subject to subsection (4), within a reasonable time from the date that the principal receives the request designate a staff member to serve as the staff liaison to facilitate the establishment, and the ongoing operation, of the student organization or to assist in organizing the activity.

(3) The students may select a respectful and inclusive name for the organization or activity, including the name “gay-straight alliance” or “queer-straight alliance”, after consulting with the principal.

(3.1) For greater certainty, the principal shall not prohibit or discourage students from choosing a name that includes “gay-straight alliance” or “queer-straight alliance”.

(4) The principal shall immediately inform the board and the Minister if no staff member is available to serve as a staff liaison referred to in subsection (1), and if so

informed, the Minister shall appoint a responsible adult to work with the requesting students in organizing the activity or to facilitate the establishment, and the ongoing operation, of the student organization at the school.

- (6) The principal is responsible for ensuring that notification, if any, respecting a voluntary student organization or an activity referred to in subsection (1) is limited to the fact of the establishment of the organization or the holding of the activity.
- The Program Co-ordinator(s) are responsible for ensuring that any notification respecting the student organization or activity referred to in section 16.1(1) of the School Act is limited to the fact of the establishment of the organization or the holding of the activity, and is otherwise consistent with the usual practices relating to notifications of other student organizations and activities.

Alberta Government (2016). Guidelines for best practices. Creating learning environment that respect diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions. Retrieved from <https://education.alberta.ca/media/1626737/91383-attachment-1-guidelines-final.pdf>

Province of Alberta (2015). School Act. Revised statutes of Alberta 2000 Chapter S-3. Alberta Queen's Printer, Edmonton.

The disclosure of personal information by Foothills Academy Society is governed by, and in accordance with the Personal Information Protection Act.

Student Code of Conduct

In keeping with the values of Foothills Academy Society to ensure that all students and staff are provided with a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment, it is expected that students shall:

- Treat all other students with respect.
- Treat the staff, volunteers, stakeholders and the facility with respect.
- Show respect for authority, property and differences in ethnicity, race, religion, gender, gender expression, gender identity and sexual orientation.
- Be punctual, and prepared for daily lessons and procedures.
- Contribute to being a part of the positive, welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment; reporting any incidents of harassment, bullying, discrimination or violence during or outside of school related activities.
- Respect diversity and refrain from demonstrating any form of discrimination.
- Be positive members of the Foothills Academy community, making appropriate use of school supports to gain maximum learning potential, both academically and socially, from the program.
- Recognize the zero tolerance policy regarding use and/or possession of drugs and associated paraphernalia; it is an expellable offence.
- Act in a safe, mature manner in school and on the school bus.
- Comply with the rules of the school.
- Refrain from by-standing or participating in, and shall report immediately to a staff member, any witnessed bullying or bullying behaviour directed towards students or

staff of the school, whether during school hours or not, in the school building or premises or not, or by any electronic means.

- Follow safety procedures as outlined by school staff, administration, bus drivers and other stakeholders.
- Treat Foothills Academy as though it were their own home and will respect all school property.
- Be prohibited from engaging in unacceptable behaviours such as bullying, defined by the School Act as, “repeated and hostile or demeaning behaviour by an individual in the school community where the behaviour is intended to cause harm, fear or distress to one or more other individuals in the school community, including psychological harm or harm to an individual’s reputation.” Such behaviour is unacceptable whether or not it occurs within the school building, during the school day or by electronic means.
- Be prohibited from engaging in other unacceptable behaviours including: theft, intimidation, harassment, discrimination, criminal activity, endangering selves or others, encouraging unacceptable conduct, cyber bullying, being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, use of improper or abusive language, physical altercations interfering with the orderly conduct of classes and other wilful disobedience or defiance. Such behaviour is unacceptable whether or not it occurs within the school building, during the school day or by electronic means.
- Support members of the Foothills Academy community who are in need of assistance.
- Abide by the student code of conduct and the school expectations as laid out in the school handbook.
- Sign the behaviour, conduct and expectations contract for student, and abide by the contract.

Where the code of conduct is breached, the responses may be as follows:

- Consequences of unacceptable behaviour will take into account the student’s age, maturity and individual circumstances, and ensure that support is provided for students who are impacted by inappropriate behaviour, as well as for students who engage in inappropriate behaviour.
- Teacher, assistant or staff member can conference with the student and parents to remedy the situation. Detentions, timeouts, regulation breaks or late-shows can be provided or given.
- Student can be timed out from the lesson, and must resolve the matter with the teacher before re-entry into the class. Detentions or late-shows can be given.
- Student can meet with Program Co-ordinator(s), once all options have been exhausted by the teacher. Program Co-ordinator(s) can liaise with student, parents and teacher to remedy the situation, whilst imposing consequences such as detentions, late shows or suspension (in school suspension, or out of school suspension).
- Student can meet with the Program Co-ordinator(s) and expulsion can be recommended. Parents are able to appeal to Executive Director(s) and then the Board of Governors. Reference Suspension and Expulsion (19).
- The Police will be involved to deal with students who have broken the law.

Province of Alberta (2015). School Act. Revised statutes of Alberta 2000 Chapter S-3. Alberta Queen's Printer, Edmonton.

A. Communication of Code of Conduct

- Staff will all uniformly apply the policy so it isn't undermined and is consistent.
- The policy will be clearly communicated to staff by administration.
- The policy will be clearly communicated to all students by staff.
- The policy will be clearly communicated to all parents via the parent handbook.
- Follow through will be consistent and consequences will be fair.