



EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Student Rights and Responsibilities 2018-2019

Esther Starkman School

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Our Commitment to High Quality Learning Environments

At Edmonton Public Schools, we are deeply committed to the success and well-being of our students. Each student is entitled to a welcoming, inclusive, safe and healthy learning environment that supports high-quality learning, respects diversity, and nurtures a sense of belonging and a positive sense of self.

As a District, we have established clear behaviour expectations for all students, from Kindergarten to Grade 12. The expectations are outlined in the District's Student Behaviour and Conduct Policy which was developed in consultation with students, parents, staff and community members. The policy outlines the rights and responsibilities of students, our expectations for student conduct, and the potential responses when students demonstrate unacceptable behaviour.

Parental involvement in public education plays a vital role in promoting positive student behaviour. We are pleased that our ongoing partnership with families continues to make a difference for our schools and students.

By working together, we will ensure our students learn the importance of good character and conduct, and our schools will remain safe and secure places to learn and thrive.



Michelle Draper
Board Chair

Student Success and Safety—Our Highest Priorities

It is our shared responsibility to ensure that each student can learn and realize their potential within a safe and caring learning environment. In addition to teaching the necessary learning outcomes, our schools are places where students can develop the character and skills needed to become responsible, respectful, compassionate and successful citizens.

School staff use Board Policy [HG.BP—Student Behaviour and Conduct](#) as the basis for creating this **Student Rights and Responsibilities** document. This document is designed to communicate expectations, and balances the overarching rights and responsibilities that are communicated in our policy with the unique context of each school. The expectations and processes outlined in this document are implemented by principals in collaboration with school staff, parents and local communities.

Ensuring each student can thrive in a safe, productive and welcoming learning environment is essential to our work in improving student achievement and high school completion rates. By working together to promote positive attitudes and responsible, respectful behaviour in our schools, we believe students will receive the greatest benefit during their educational journey.



Darrel Robertson
Superintendent of Schools

Supporting Student Success

Members of the Edmonton Public Schools community, including students, parents, staff and Trustees, have a shared responsibility to help students be successful in school. Safety and well-being is fundamental to our students thriving as learners, and experiencing success and fulfillment both at school and in their lives. This *Student Rights and Responsibilities* document has been created to communicate clear expectations for how our students are expected to behave in order to ensure they become the best students and citizens they can be.

Parents support their child's success and positive behaviour by:

- taking an active role in their child's personal and academic success
- reviewing expectations outlined in this document with their child
- helping them to attend school regularly and to develop the skills required to meet the school's expectations
- encouraging and modelling collaborative, positive and respectful relationships with others in the school community
- working collaboratively with the school to resolve student conduct issues
- reporting to the school any circumstances which may impact student safety

Students are responsible for their behaviour and effort, and are expected to:

- contribute to the development of a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment
- learn, practice and demonstrate positive personal and interpersonal skills and attributes
- use their abilities and talents to gain maximum learning benefit from their school experience
- attend school regularly and punctually
- be responsible for behaviour which impacts others in the school, whether or not the behaviour occurs within the school building or during the school day or by electronic means

School staff will help your child succeed by:

- providing a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging
- ensuring that students and parents understand the school's expectations for student behaviour
- establishing supports and processes at the school to proactively guide positive student behaviour
- helping students develop and practice the skills and attributes to meet these expectations
- working with students, parents and other school staff to address behaviour concerns, including implementing appropriate responses to inappropriate student behaviour

To support a shared understanding of the language and intent of this document, refer to the [glossary](#) for a definition of terms.

Our Belief and Commitment

At Esther Starkman we believe:

Mission:

It is the mission of Esther Starkman School to ensure high levels of learning for all students

Shared Belief:

To accomplish this mission, all students should feel that Esther Starkman School is a safe and caring environment that promotes tolerance, dignity and belonging amongst its students, staff and greater community. Students must be provided with opportunities to develop the skills and attitudes necessary to meet the challenges of the future and become responsible and productive citizens. Behavior that disrupts or detracts from the learning climate of the school is unacceptable and infringes upon the rights of others. To ensure a positive climate that promotes student learning exists, the behavioural policy outlined in this document will be used as a guide to responding to student conduct and behaviour.

Rights and Responsibilities

Our school District recognizes the following fundamental rights and responsibilities:

All students have the right to be treated with dignity, respect and fairness by other staff and students.

All members of the Edmonton Public Schools community, including students, parents, staff and Trustees have a role and a shared responsibility to create and support welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments.

Students and parents have a right to be informed about District and school expectations for student behaviour. To support this right, all schools' Student Rights and Responsibilities documents will be posted on SchoolZone and on school websites.

All members of our school community are expected to respect diversity and refrain from demonstrating any form of discrimination on the basis of race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status or sexual orientation.

These rights and responsibilities are communicated in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *School Act* and are reinforced in District policies and regulations including [AE.BP—Welcoming, Inclusive, Safe and Healthy Learning and Working Environments](#), [HG.BP—Student Behaviour and Conduct](#), [HG.AR—Student Behaviour and Conduct](#), and [HFA.AR—Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity](#) which are available to the public.

STUDENT CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES	
1. I have a right to an education.	<i>It is my responsibility to listen, to learn, to practice, to complete school assignments, and to graciously accept remedial assistance when necessary. I will not disturb, disrupt, or interfere with the instruction of my teachers and/or the learning of fellow classmates.</i>
2. I have a right to happiness and to be treated with dignity and respect in the school.	<i>It is my responsibility to treat others with honor and polite consideration. I will not laugh at, tease, or put down other students, staff, or adults.</i>
3. I have a right to hear and be heard in this school.	<i>It is my responsibility to help maintain a calm, peaceful, and quiet school. I will not interrupt, shout, or make loud noises when others are speaking.</i>
4. I have a right to be safe and secure in this school.	<i>It is my responsibility not to threaten, push, pinch, hit, kick, spit at, or hurt the bones, skin, or feelings of others.</i>
5. I have a right to free expression in learning about myself and others.	<i>It is my responsibility to learn about myself and others in this school. I am free to express my feelings and opinions as long as I am not rude, or disrespectful, or disturb the order of the school and/or personal and public property.</i>
6. I have a right to be myself in this school.	<i>It is my responsibility to respect others as individuals and not to treat them unfairly because of a handicap, or of their weight, height, gender, age, color, or because they think and act differently than I do.</i>
7. I have a right to privacy and to my own personal space.	<i>It is my responsibility to respect the personal property of others and to accept their right to privacy.</i>
8. I have a right to assistance and support in learning self-control.	<i>It is my responsibility to practice self-control and ask for assistance when necessary. I will expect to be corrected when I abuse the rights of others, as they shall be corrected if my rights are abused. No one will silently stand by and witness the violation of personal rights. I can expect that all these rights will be mine as long as I am fulfilling all my responsibilities.</i>

Student Behaviour Expectations

To ensure that Esther Starkman is a positive learning environment for everyone, all students are expected to comply with expectations set by our school District, as well as school rules which are in place for the benefit of all members of our school community.

Through Board Policy HG.BP—Student Behaviour and Conduct, the Board expects that students behave in accordance with Section 12 of the *School Act*. Section 12 states that students will conduct themselves so as to reasonably comply with the following Code of Conduct:

- be diligent in pursuing the student's studies;
- attend school regularly and punctually;
- co-operate fully with everyone authorized by the Board to provide education programs and other services;
- comply with rules of the school;
- account to the student's teachers for the student's conduct;
- respect the rights of others;
- ensure the student's conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging;
- 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; and
- positively contribute to the student's school and community.

Furthermore, students are expected to:

- resolve conflict or seek assistance to resolve conflict in a peaceful, safe, and non-threatening manner that is conducive to learning and growth. Strategies for addressing conflict between students may include counselling, mediation, or forms of restorative practice;
- use school and personal technology appropriately and ethically; and
- ensure that they conduct themselves with academic integrity and refrain from and report all incidents of academic misconduct including, but not limited to, cheating and plagiarizing.

Student Behaviour Expectations at Esther Starkman School:

RESPECTING SCHOOL PROPERTY

We are expected to treat all school property (walls, desks, lockers, etc.) with dignity, care, and respect.

4. Clean footwear must be worn in the school at all times, especially when entering from outside.
5. Keep school desks and lockers clean inside and out and in good operating condition.
6. Students shall not add graffiti to lockers, desks, walls, etc.
7. Use of a school locker is a privilege, not a right. Desks and lockers are the property of the school and therefore subject to inspection without prior notice as determined necessary by the school administration.
8. Keep hallways and school grounds free from litter.
9. Eat lunch in the supervised lunch areas.

10. Report any vandalism or damage of school property to the school office or classroom teacher immediately upon discovery.
11. Use school and recreational equipment appropriately.

LEARNING TONE/ATTITUDE/RESPECT

When students enter the building they should demonstrate a sense of decorum. They are expected to avoid the use of profane language and inappropriate gestures. Refrain from shouting, running, and roughhousing. Skateboards, in-line skates, scooters, and shoes with wheels are to remain in lockers or be placed in a designated area during school hours.

CELL PHONE POLICY

At Esther Starkman, students are allowed to bring their personal cellphones to school but are required to only use them at appropriate times. The following guidelines will outline what is considered appropriate use.

- All cell phones must be put away at the start of each class.
- Cell phones are not the primary technology source for student learning. Students may bring their own laptop/chromebook or sign one out from school.
- Headphones are only to be used when they are required for learning an assigned outcome; e.g. watching a video in class. Headphones are not to be used to listen to music during class time.
- Cell phones may be used between classes and during lunch time for personal use.
- During class time students and parents are asked to direct communication through the office. Students will come to the office to contact parents and parents will contact students through the office staff.
- Students who are using cell phones in an inappropriate manner will have their phone removed by the classroom teacher. The phone will be brought to the office and returned to the student at the end of the school day.
- Students who repeatedly violate the cell phone policy will be asked by the administration to leave their phones at home.

OBEYING THE LAW

Esther Starkman School students are expected to behave in law-abiding ways, police advice/involvement will be sought as required.

Contraband items such as cigarettes, matches, pornographic materials, knives of any type, firearms, alcohol, illegal drugs and paraphernalia, and syringes are not permitted on school property. This, of course, is not an exhaustive list. It is only meant to serve as an example.

Student Dress Code

At Edmonton Public Schools, students are expected to dress in a manner that reflects a positive sense of self within a welcoming, inclusive, safe and healthy learning environment. School expectations for student attire take into account a student's right to fairness, dignity and respect and will not discriminate against students based on race, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, socio-economic status, or body type.

Dress code expectations will be implemented in a manner that empowers students to make decisions that promote a positive sense of self and contribute to a respectful learning environment.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE OF STUDENTS

Students are asked to wear clothing that is appropriate for the school's learning environment.

In keeping with accepted norms of decency and good taste, the following guidelines will apply:

- no offensive language, pictures or insinuations on clothing
- clean and neat attire appropriate for a place of work
- as a general guideline, all underclothing must be covered
- hats and outdoor jackets are outside wear (except religious headwear) and are not to be worn in the building.

Regular Attendance—It's the Law

Regular attendance is strongly linked to student academic success and a student's sense of belonging at school. The *School Act* reminds parents and students that students are expected to attend school and be punctual every day. Students are only considered to be excused from attending school if they must be away due to:

- sickness or other unavoidable cause
- the day being recognized as a religious holiday by the religious denomination that the child belongs to
- suspension or expulsion
- an exemption from compulsory attendance granted by the Board for a defined period of time

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Parents are responsible to ensure that their children regularly attend school. At Esther Starkman we know that students with high absenteeism (more than 5 days per year) often experience difficulty keeping up with their studies. As a result the staff and administration will exercise all avenues available to ensure the regular attendance of students. This will include referrals to the Attendance Board when necessary!

1. For students, attendance at school should be regarded as their job. At Esther Starkman School, we expect that students will:
 - be at school
 - be on time
 - be prepared for each class with all materials required and with all assignments completed
 - be positive contributors to Esther Starkman School
2. Parents are requested to call the school if their child is going to be absent from class. Otherwise, parents will receive a telephone callout to inform them that their child is absent. We appreciate your cooperation in helping us ensure the safety of your child. All morning absences should be reported before 9:00 a.m. and all afternoon absences reported before 12:15 pm for Elementary and 1:00 pm for Junior High.
3. When you know in advance that your child will be absent from school, parents are requested to send an explanatory note or email to the office (estherstarkman@epsb.ca) giving the date and reason for the absence. Under the School Act, the only reasons that are accepted as “Excused Absences” are:
 - Illness
 - Bereavement
 - Religious Reasons
 - Field trip
 - School suspension/Expulsion
4. Extended Vacations are not deemed an acceptable reason for absence and as such parents are strongly discouraged from planning extended vacations during the school year. Extended absences from school often impact a student’s ability to demonstrate proficiency on curricular outcomes. Please note it is not the responsibility of the Esther Starkman Staff to provide programming to your child before they leave. Students will be responsible to work with their classroom teachers to make up missed work upon their return. Failure to do so may greatly impact their achievement.
5. Elementary students are expected to be IN THEIR HOMEROOM CLASS AND SEATED IN THEIR DESKS at 8:25 a.m. and 12:10 p.m. Junior High students are expected to be IN THEIR HOMEROOM CLASS AND SEATED IN THEIR DESKS at 8:25 a.m. and 12:52 p.m. Students not in class at those times will be counted as late.
6. Students who are tardy to class MUST provide the receiving teacher with an acceptable reason; including a signed note from the teacher that detained them if that is the reason they are late.

7. There is a 3-minute break between Junior High classes which is provided so that students may use the washroom and drinking fountain if necessary. Students must not interrupt the learning environment during class to take care of these requirements.
8. Sign-out: Students who leave the school during the school day for appointment or illness must:
 - bring a note from home or have their parents call the school
 - inform the classroom teacher of their departure
 - register in the Sign-Out book at the office (grades 3-9 only)
 - Parents of K-2 students must come into the office to sign out their children

Students will not be sent home without prior knowledge of the parent or guardian. It is important for every student to know that once they have registered, they may not leave the school building without first signing out at the office. Students are expected to leave the school promptly at dismissal time unless involved in a supervised activity and report home or to a location determined by their parent/guardian. Since we are responsible for your child, we must know where they are at all times.

Unacceptable Behaviour

Any behaviour which disrupts the educational atmosphere of the school or which interferes with the rights of others to learn, to be respected or to feel safe is unacceptable. Edmonton Public Schools' policy on student behaviour and conduct outlines the following:

Students are accountable for their behaviour whether or not it occurs on school property or within the school day. When behaviour that occurs off school property, or outside of regular school hours, threatens the safety or well-being of individuals within the school community or disrupts the learning environment, school administrators may apply consequences for the behaviour.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour include, but are not limited to:

1. behaviours that interfere with the learning of others and/or the school environment
2. behaviours that create unsafe conditions
3. acts of bullying, harassment, threats, or intimidations whether it be in person, indirectly, or by electronic means
4. physical violence
5. retribution against any person who has intervened to prevent or report bullying or any other incident or safety concern
6. possession, use or distribution of substances restricted by federal, provincial, municipal, District or school authorities
7. any illegal activity such as:
 - a. possession, use or distribution of illegal substances
 - b. possession of a weapon or use of a weapon (or replica) to threaten, intimidate or harm others
 - c. possession, use, display, or distribution of offensive messages, videos or images
 - d. theft or possession of stolen property
8. any breach of rules and expectations established by District administrative regulations or a school-based code of conduct
9. failure to comply with Section 12 of the *School Act*.

Bullying and Conflict

Bullying is defined in 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. Bullying also includes the distribution of an intimate image of another person knowing that the person depicted in the image did not consent to the distribution, or being reckless as to whether or not that person consented to the distribution.

Bullying can take different forms:

- physical (e.g., pushing, hitting)
- verbal (e.g., name-calling, threats)
- social (e.g., exclusion, rumours)
- electronic (e.g., using technology to harass or threaten)

Conflict occurs when there is a breakdown in relationships between individuals that results from a disagreement or misunderstanding. While conflicts may require adult intervention, they are considered to be a natural part of how students learn to navigate relationships.

All students are expected to 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. Students are also expected to resolve conflict or seek assistance to resolve conflict in a peaceful, safe, and non-threatening manner that is conducive to learning and growth. School staff can help address conflict between students using strategies that may include counselling, mediation, consequences and/or forms of restorative practice.

School Responses to Unacceptable Behaviour

If students fail to meet classroom, school or District expectations, a range of responses or consequences may be put in place to address unacceptable behaviour. Edmonton Public Schools' policy outlines the following:

Unacceptable behaviour may be grounds for disciplinary action which provides the student with an opportunity for critical learning and reflection in the areas of personal accountability and responsibility, the development of empathy, as well as communication, conflict resolution, and social skills development.

The specific circumstances of the situation and of the student are taken into account when determining appropriate responses to unacceptable behaviour.

When a student engages in unacceptable behaviour, consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- temporary assignment of a student to an alternate supervised area within the school
- temporary assignment of a student to an alternate learning location
- short term removal of privileges
- interventions such as positive behaviour supports, contracts, counselling, restorative practices
- replacement or reimbursement for loss of or damage to property
- in-school or out-of-school suspension
- referral to Attendance Board
- recommendation for expulsion

Students are expected to cooperate with investigations by school administration. When contemplating and conducting a reasonable search of student property (including electronic devices), school administration must balance a student's reduced expectation of privacy in relation to school matters, with the need to provide a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging for students and staff.

At Esther Starkman School, we are committed to ensuring that our school is a safe and productive learning environment. Where necessary, interventions or disciplinary action may be used to address unacceptable behaviour by students.

ESTHER STARKMAN POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR PLAN

Minor Classroom Infractions

Minor infractions will be dealt with immediately by staff in classrooms, hallways, and while supervising.

Major Classroom Infractions

Anything that significantly interferes with instruction or the learning environment is considered a major offence. Examples are continuous disruptive behavior, chronic tardiness, and/or absence and open defiance.

MAJOR SCHOOL OFFENCES INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

- repeated use of profane language or gestures
- threatening behavior or language in person or through the internet
- use of violence or physical abuse
- possession/use of a weapon
- possession or use of drugs or alcohol
- willful destruction of property
- sexual harassment
- racial slurs
- discrimination in the form of sexual harassment based on gender, racial/religious, physical/mental slurs
- open opposition to authority
- dishonesty (cheating, lying)
- deliberate continuous inappropriate behavior
- smoking on school board property or in close proximity
- false activation of a fire alarm

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING MAJOR OFFENCES

When sending a student to the office for disciplinary intervention, the staff member will record the student's specific behavior in the school's student information system. Students will be referred to the school administration for resolution of the incident.

1. DEFINITION OF POSSIBLE DISCIPLINARY INTERVENTIONS

Teacher/Student Conference

The teacher will talk to the student and they will mutually agree upon a resolution to the problem. The teacher may ask that the student sign a statement of expected student behavior. The teacher will record the incident in the notes section of the school's student information system.

Teacher/Student/Parent Conference

The teacher, student, and parent(s) mutually agree upon and may sign a statement of acceptable student behavior in a formal conference. A copy of the statement is maintained in the teacher's file. The teacher will record a summary of the meeting in the notes section of the school's student information system.

Class Exclusion

The student will be sent out to an alternate classroom for one period. The teacher will, at his/her earliest convenience, discuss the behavioral infraction with the student. They will mutually agree upon expected future

behavior. The teacher will record the incident in the notes section of PowerSchool. **Students will be required by teachers to make up missed instructional time [one hour maximum].**

In-School Suspension [I.S.S.]

The student remains in school. All privileges are suspended. Classes are not attended [one to five days].

While on an I.S.S., the student will be provided with materials and assignments, and will be responsible for the completion of these assignments. If the student disrupts during I.S.S., they will be given one warning. Should another disruption occur, the student will phone their parent/guardian to be picked up at school. If the parent/guardian is unable to pick up their son/daughter, they will arrange for an emergency person to do so. An out-of-school suspension may be initiated at this point. A record of the incident and student plan of action will be maintained in the notes section of PowerSchool.

Out-of-School Suspension

Out of school suspension is a formal disciplinary action for dealing with extremely disruptive and/or dangerous student behavior. It involves short-term exclusion of a student from class, from riding on a school bus and from attending school, up to a maximum of five school days. The student may be considered as trespassing if present on school grounds during the period of the suspension. Parents may be required to meet with administration before the student is allowed to return to school.

Community Service

Students may be assigned to clean up areas of the school as a method of “giving back” to the Esther Starkman School Community. Community Service may be assigned as an alternative to In-School Suspensions or other more serious disciplinary interventions. When assigned Community Service, students are expected to complete the assigned work to a high standard. Failure to complete community service work will result in an additional consequence.

Police Notification/Arrest

An incident report is filed with the Police Department. The incident and action is recorded and filed. Police make determination as to whether charges and/or arrest are warranted. The principal or designate has the discretion whether to sign a complaint for offenses that do not warrant arrest. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of the incident and the action.

Expulsion

Expulsion is an action that can be taken only by the Superintendent or Board of Trustees. A student may be expelled from one or more specific schools or all schools in the District for a specified period of time or indefinitely.

Edmonton Public Schools is helping to shape the future in every one of our classrooms. We're focused on ensuring each student learns to their full potential and develops the ability, passion and imagination to pursue their dreams and contribute to their community.

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