

Policy Section	CODE OF CONDUCT	Policy Statement Approved by the Board	Aug. 8, 2023
Policy Title	SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY POLICY	Creation Date	Aug 3, 2023
Policy Number	CC1505	Last Revision Date	Aug. 10, 2023
Program Reference	WESE External Programs: Nursery, Parent and Child & Home Arts Enrichment WISE School Program		

SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY POLICY

1. PURPOSE

To articulate the WESE Board’s (the Board) commitment to support all sexual and gender minority students, staff, and families.

To reflect the Board’s mandated responsibility and expectation for providing a welcoming, inclusive, safe, and healthy learning and working environment throughout WESE and WISE.

2. POLICY

The Board is committed to establishing and maintaining a safe, inclusive, equitable, and welcoming learning and teaching environment for all members of the school community. This includes those students, staff, and families who identify, or are perceived as, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, queer, or questioning their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. The Board expects all members of our diverse community to be welcomed, respected, accepted, and supported in our school.

All members of the school community 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*, and the *Education Act*. These rights shall be supported and enforced so that all members of the school community may work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and appreciation for individual differences. The Board will not tolerate harassment, bullying, intimidation, or discrimination on the basis of a person’s actual, or perceived, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

The Board affirms the rights, as provided for in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, of each staff member employed by the Board and each student enrolled in a school operated by the Board. Staff members employed by the Board, and students enrolled in the WISE or WESE programs operated by the Board, will not be discriminated against as provided for in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* or the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

The Board will follow the guidelines set forth by **AWSNA's Statement of Equality**. This statement was made to unequivocally clarify the intents of Rudolf Steiner's pedagogical theories and work and to explicitly reject allegations that Waldorf schools in any way espouse discriminatory views. An adapted translation of parts (as authorized by the European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education -ECSWE), states that:

“...discriminatory tendencies are not tolerated in Waldorf schools or Waldorf teacher training institutes. The Waldorf school movement explicitly rejects any attempt to misappropriate Waldorf pedagogy or Rudolf Steiner's work.

...Waldorf schools pursue their pedagogical tasks out of the spirit of human rights, thereby contributing to building a society founded upon mutual respect, tolerance and cooperation between all human beings. Waldorf schools do not select, stratify or discriminate amongst their pupils, but consider all human beings to be free and equal in dignity and rights, independent of ethnicity, national or social origin, gender, language, religion, and political or other convictions.”

The Board believes that all sexual and gender minority students, staff, and families have the right to:

- be treated fairly, equitably, and with dignity and respect;
- have their confidentiality protected and respected;
- self-identification and determination;
- freedom of conscience, expression, and association;
- be fully included and represented in an inclusive, positive, and respectful manner by all school personnel;
- have equitable access to the same supports, services, and protections provided to heterosexual and/or cisgender students and families;
- have avenues of recourse (without fear of reprisal) available to them when they are victims of harassment, prejudice, discrimination, intimidation, bullying, and/or violence; and
- have their unique identities, families, cultures, and communities included, valued, and respected within all aspects of the school environment.

The Board is committed to implementing measures that will:

- define appropriate expectations, behaviours, language, and actions in order to prevent discrimination, prejudice, and harassment through greater awareness of, and

responsiveness to, their harmful effects.

- ensure that all such discriminatory behaviours and complaints will be taken seriously, documented, and dealt with expeditiously and effectively through consistently applied policies and procedures.

The Board will comply with policy and legislative requirements established by the Minister.

3. RESPONSIBILITY

a. BOARD

The Waldorf Education Society of Edmonton (“Board”) has the responsibility to ensure that every student enrolled in the **Waldorf Independent School of Edmonton** (“School”) and each staff member employed by the Board is provided with an environment that is actively anti-discriminatory, and adheres to the **Association of Waldorf Schools of North America’s** (“AWSNA”) overarching principles of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

The Board engages in employment practices which:

- are free of bias resulting from any prejudice, including prejudice related to sexual orientation and gender identity; and
- ensure equal opportunity for employment and advancement.

b. BOARD AND ADMINISTRATION

The Board, along with the Administration, openly condemns all or any practice of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, class, ability, gender identity, religion, and sexual orientation in the School. The Board, with Administration, will work to ensure that the School’s practices represent Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

The Board, along with the Administration, fosters and encourages educational and social policies that strengthen the diversity of race, class, ethnicity, ability, gender identity, religion, and sexual orientation.

The Board, along with the Administration, is committed to implementing measures that support the development, implementation, and evaluation of educational strategies, professional development opportunities, and administrative guidelines to ensure that sexual and gender minorities and their families are welcomed and treated with respect and dignity in all aspects of the school community.

c. PRINCIPAL

i. Establishment of a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment

The Principal shall:

- provide a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging;
- ensure all aspects of this policy are clearly communicated to all staff, students, and families;

- ensure awareness and adherence to all policies with respect to diversity, equity, human rights, sexual orientation, gender identity, discrimination, prejudice, and harassment;
- ensure staff know their professional responsibility to identify discriminatory attitudes and behaviours, and create caring, respectful, and safe learning environments;
- ensure staff address and provide appropriate remedial consequences for all interactions involving the use of comments, behaviours, and actions which display homophobia, transphobia, and/or sexism, whether they occur in person or in digital form;
- ensure discriminatory behaviours and complaints will be taken seriously, are documented, and dealt with expeditiously;
- ensure staff utilize language, educational resources, and approaches that are inclusive, age-appropriate, and respectful of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions;
- provide inclusive and respectful services and supports to sexual and gender minority students and families;
- ensure staff work proactively to eliminate systemic inequities and barriers to learning for sexual and gender minority students and families;
- ensure staff will not refer students to programs or services that attempt to change or repair a student's sexual orientation or gender identity; and
- ensure all staff recognize the confidentiality of the sexual orientation and gender identity of all students and protect them from unwanted disclosure of such information.

ii. Student Code of Conduct

The Principal shall:

- ensure the school's *Student Code of Conduct* document contains a statement of purpose that provides a rationale for the code of conduct, with a focus on welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments;
- ensure the school's *Student Code of Conduct* document contains one or more statements about what is acceptable behaviour and what is unacceptable behaviour, whether or not it occurs within the school building, during the school day or by electronic means;
- ensure the *Student Code of Conduct* document contains one or more statements about the consequences of unacceptable behaviour, which must take account of the student's age, maturity and individual circumstances, and which must ensure that support is provided for students who are impacted by inappropriate behaviour, as well as for students who engage in inappropriate behaviour;
- on request, provide a copy of the *Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy*, the *Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Guidelines*, or the

Student Code of Conduct document to an individual.

iii. Disclosure of personal information

The Principal shall ensure the *Personal Information Protection Act* governs the disclosure of personal information by the School Authority.

d. STAFF

All staff share the responsibility for creating and maintaining a work environment that is free of discrimination and harassment. Complaints of discrimination and harassment based on sexual orientation and gender identity shall be promptly investigated following the complaints procedure described in the WISE employee handbook and resolved.

4. PROCEDURE

Any instance of discrimination will not be tolerated, and any such instances perpetrated by School students, staff, or Board members will be brought to the appropriate disciplinary channel according to the School's disciplinary procedures. (See Policies CC1501, DSE1101, DSE1102, and EP1102)

REFERENCE

The Welcoming Caring Respectful and Safe Teaching and Learning Policy, CC1501
Anti-Racism and Anti-Discrimination Policy CC1503
Child Discipline and Preventative Child Management Policy DSE1101
Student Suspension and Expulsion Policy DSE1102
WESE/WISE Teacher Growth, Supervision & Evaluation Policy EP1102
WISE Vision, Mission, Values
WESE/WISE Employee Handbook
WISE Parent Handbook
WISE Student Code of Conduct
WISE SOGI Guidelines
Alberta Teacher Code of Conduct
Teaching Quality Standard
Leadership Quality Standard
Education Act, Sections 2, 16, 33(1)(d), 33(2), 35.1
Private Schools Regulation Section 13(4)
Personal Information Protection Act
Alberta Human Rights Act
Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms
Association of Waldorf Schools of North America
European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education
United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child