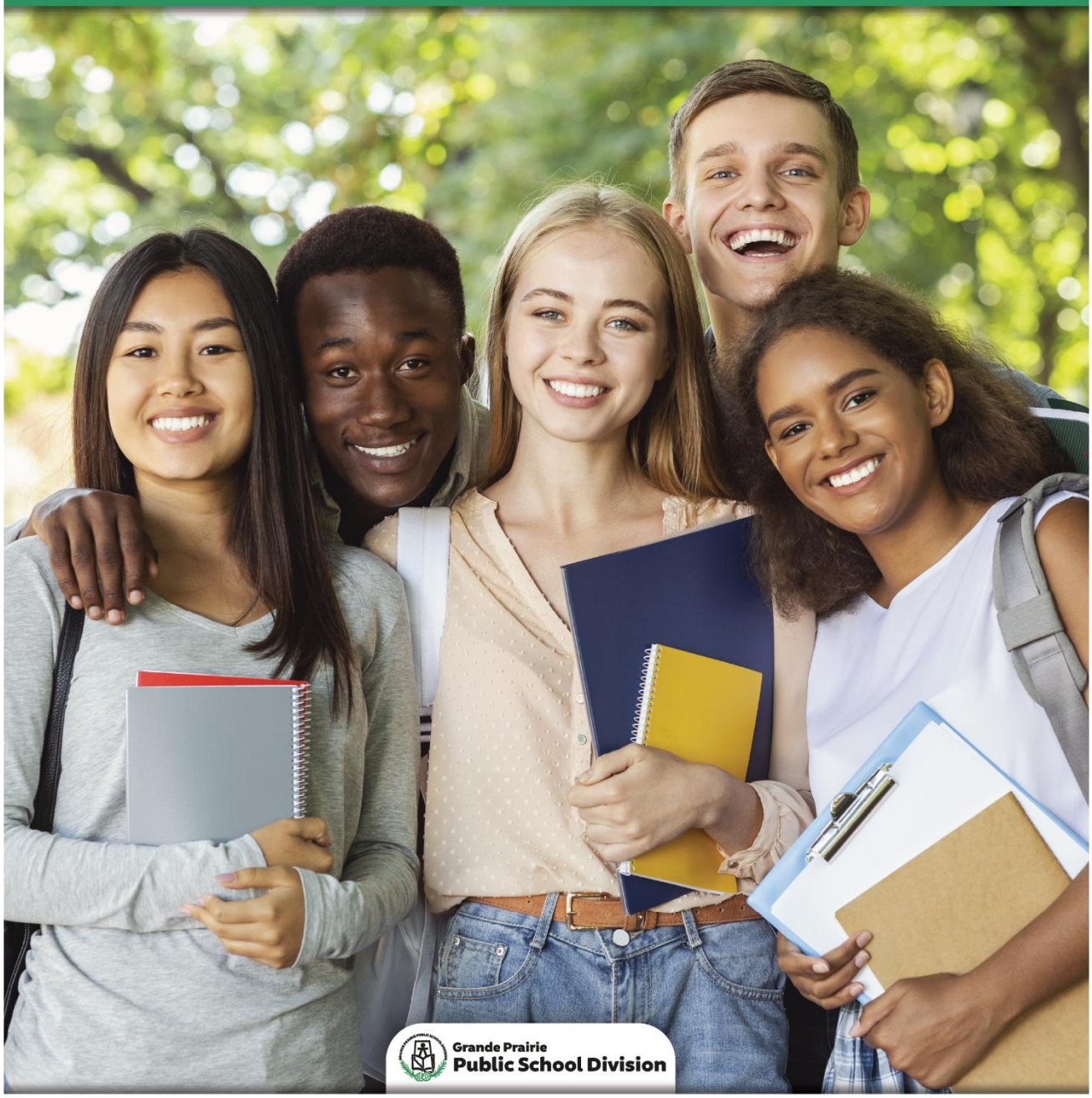
Student Code of Conduct



https://www.gppsd.ab.ca/**parents**

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Guiding Principles/ Statement of Purpose

The Grande Prairie Public School Division is committed to welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environments that respect diversity and foster a sense of belonging.

This Student Code of Conduct has been developed to support students, teachers, administrators, and parents in the successful day-to-day development and maintenance of relationships which foster and support learning. A welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment is physically, emotionally, and psychologically safe for all members of the school community. It is an environment wherein everyone is accorded respect and dignity with equity of opportunity and access to programs, services, and resources that are critical to support all members of the school community in realizing their full potential. Welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environments support the necessary conditions for everyone's success.

Drawing upon the Education Act (2019), Alberta Human Rights Act of Alberta (2000) , GPPSD Board Policy, and GPPSD Administrative Procedures is a guide for all members of the Division community.

The GPPSD Student Code of Conduct is established as per Section 33(3) of the Education Act (2019) and is to be made publicly available, through electronic means, to all students, staff, and parents of the Grande Prairie Public School Division and is to be reviewed annually.

Our Division Universal Guiding Principles guide the Code of Conduct.

- **Is it good for students?**
- **Will it help build trust and good relationships?**
- **Will it help us improve?**
- **Is it a responsible thing to do?**
- **Are we being open, honest, and ethical**

Positive Behaviour Supports

A school-wide approach to positive behavior supports (PBS) effectively promotes a safe, orderly, and predictable environment for learning and teaching. This approach creates a positive school culture that students, parents and staff perceive as welcoming, caring, respectful and safe. Strategies to promote a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe environment will be promoted throughout the entire school. See Alberta Education Website: Safe Caring Schools, Whole School Approach.

Discrimination and Harassment

Discrimination and harassment occurs when a person is subjected to unwelcome verbal or physical conduct because of race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical or mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status or sexual orientation. Alberta human rights law prohibits discrimination and harassment based on these grounds.

School and Classroom Climate

All members of the GPPSD community play a role in the development of a school and classroom climate that is conducive to a safe and caring learning environment. Behaviors, whether or not they occur within the school building, during the school day or by electronic means, which are injurious to the physical or mental well-being of others may be viewed as counter to the objectives of the Student Code of Conduct.

While the GPPSD Student Code of Conduct, Administrative Procedure (AP) 359 - Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning Environments, and AP 350 - Student Code of Conduct supports a framework for decision making, they do not replace the flexibility each staff member has in judging each situation based on the circumstances and contextual factors involved. Staff members should always consider age, maturity and individual circumstances of students, when support students in challenging situations.

Acceptable and Unacceptable Behaviours

Students demonstrate **acceptable** behavior when they:

- attend school regularly and punctually,
- are ready to learn and actively engage in and diligently pursue the student's education,
- 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, respect the rights of others in the school,
- 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,
- comply with the rules of the school and the policies of the board,
- co-operate with everyone authorized by the board to provide education programs and other services,
- be accountable to the student's teachers and other school staff for the student's conduct, and
- positively contribute to the student's school and community.

Students demonstrate **unacceptable** conduct when they engage in:

- threats,
- conduct which endangers others,
- encouraging conduct which endangers or may endanger others,
- encouraging unacceptable conduct,
- use or display of improper, obscene or abusive language,
- distribution or display of offensive messages or pictures,
- theft, including identity theft,
- assault,
- willful damage to school or others' property,
- use, possession of, distribution of, or active contact with, or collection of money for illicit drugs, alcohol, or inhalants in school, on school board property or in the context of any school-related activity,

- use, possession, or active contact with, a weapon on a student's person, in a student's locker or desk, on school board property, or in a vehicle on school board property used by a student or occupied by a student as a passenger,
- attending school or any school-related activity under the influence of illicit drugs, alcohol or inhalants,
- personal or sexual harassment,
- hazing, initiation activities; the formation of gangs or secret organizations,
- extortion,
- disruptive behaviour, willful disobedience or defiance of authority,
- interfering with the orderly conduct of classes or the school,
- tampering with fire alarms and safety equipment,
- criminal activity,
- contravention of the school's code of conduct,
- bullying including cyber-bullying,
- contributing to the unacceptable behavior of others through by-stander activities.

Minor Misbehaviour: are infrequent; yet from time to time impede the orderly operation of the classroom and/or school while not threatening the safety or well-being of other students or staff.

Examples of, but not limited to:

- Late for class
- Inappropriate remarks
- Apathy
- Pushing/shoving/arguing
- Violation of classroom-based expectations
- Failure to bring required resources to class
- Minor class disruptions
- Infrequent Truancy
- Incidental profanity
- Dress code violations

Disruptive Behaviour: those that occur more frequently than minor misbehaviours or are sufficiently serious to pose a more persistent threat to the integrity of the learning environment of the school, but not serious enough to endanger the wellbeing of others or to damage school property. While these behaviours may be managed by the classroom teacher initially, they may become chronic or serious enough that administrator intervention is required.

Examples of, but not limited to:

- Chronic minor offences
- Offensive/obscene language
- Defiance
- Cheating/Plagiarism
- Truancy/Skipping/poor attendance
- Pety theft
- Disrespect

Severely Disruptive Behaviour: those that are serious enough to significantly or persistently disrupt the education of others, endanger the safety and security of others, or significant damage to school property. Administrator intervention is required at this level.

Examples of, but not limited to:

- Disruptions to operations/safety
- Illegal Activity
- Sexual Misconduct
- Alcohol/Drugs
- Theft
- Repeated or significant vandalism
- Bullying
- Chronic absenteeism
- Physical violence
- Verbal/non-verbal abuse
- Personal harassment
- Weapons
- Racial/Gender/Religious misconduct

Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA)

The primary purpose of the VTRA protocol is to provide an established and practiced approach to assessing students who may be on a pathway towards violence and provide multi-disciplinary interventions that decrease the risk, prevent injury, and support students in receiving the help necessary to address the issues leading to high-risk activities. Grounded in a multi-disciplinary approach, the intent of the VRTA protocol is to create and maintain a system where all members of our school families and the wider community are safe. The protocol is intended to be inclusionary, meaning that students demonstrating worrisome or threat making behaviours are supported through multi-agency interventions. The intent of the protocol is not to exclude students from the system. Support documents for VTRA concerns are available on the internal portal under 'Collaboration' and 'School Level Administration'. The Director of Student Services or designate is responsible for supporting schools in VTRA matters.

Behaviour Outside of School

Students are accountable for activities which impact the opportunity for others to learn, whether or not these activities occur within the school building, during the school day or by electronic means. Behaviours, by students, which impact the physical, emotional, or social well-being of other students, regardless of place or time, will be addressed by the school, under this Student Code of Conduct.

Principles Regarding Discipline

The Division adopts the following principles regarding discipline measures:

- Support should be provided to students who are impacted by inappropriate behaviour as well as for students who engage in inappropriate behaviour.
- Discipline should foster mutual respect, teach social responsibility and encourage an understanding of personal responsibility among students.
- Appropriate student conduct will be established largely through the use of effective student management strategies within a Positive Behaviours Support framework and the development of welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments in

classrooms and schools.

- Preventive discipline measures are the most effective. Early intervention to resolve discipline concerns is desirable.
- Implementing and maintaining the student code of conduct within the classroom is the responsibility of the teacher.
  - The use of school-based resource teams is recommended where appropriate.
  - Involvement of Division resource personnel and community agencies is encouraged.
  - Student behaviour that does not comply with the school code of conduct should be dealt with promptly.
  - Disciplinary measures should be implemented in a fair manner. To ensure that disciplinary measures are fair, decisions regarding the use of specific disciplinary measures should take into account the nature of the behaviour, the effect of the behaviour upon others, previous conduct of the student, the age, maturity and individual circumstances of the student and other relevant factors.

Failure to meet the expectations for behaviour and conduct shall result in some or all of the following consequences:

- Problem solving, monitoring or reviewing behaviour expectation with student and reprimand;
- Temporary removal of privileges;
- Detention of student;
- Temporary exclusion of student from class;
- Parental involvement;
- Behaviour contract with student;
- In-school suspension;
- Restitution for property damage to an individual or board;
- Attendance improvement plan;
- Out-of-school suspension;
- Involvement of police;
- Reassignment of educational location; and
- Expulsion from a school or all Division schools.

Common Areas of Concern/ Administrative

Procedures Attendance (AP 330)

Regular attendance at school is critical to student success. The expectation of the Education Act (2019) is that students have "the responsibility to attend school regularly and punctually" (Section 31(a). Section 7 (4) outlines the list of reasons by which a student may be excused from attending class or school. Section 11 (1) of the Alberta Human Rights Act of Alberta (2000) provides additional reasons a student may, with written notice, be excused from a specific class for a specific period of time, however in the absence of reasons outlined in the Education Act (2019) Sections 7(4) and 7(5) and Alberta Human Rights Act of Alberta (2000) Sec 11 (1) students shall make every effort to be at school with the appropriate materials ready to learn every day.

Expectations for Attendance

- Students will attend school every day, every class, on time and properly prepared to learn.
- Students who are unable to attend school are excused in a timely and appropriate manner by their parent or guardian or, where age appropriate, by the student. Excused absences shall be in accordance with those outlined in Section 7(4) of the Education Act (2019) and Section 11 (1) of the Alberta Human Rights Act of Alberta (2000).
- Every effort will be made by students and parents/guardians to ensure that the school is appropriately informed of the absence on or before the day of absence.

Addressing Attendance Concerns

- Schools must develop attendance processes that are consistent with AP 330
- School-based and Division-based supports need to be considered when addressing attendance concerns in terms of supporting improved attendance. Sections 7-9 of the Education Act 2019 address attendance and enforcing attendance concerns.
- Attendance milestones are established in Section 6 of AP 330

Further Detail in AP 330 - Student Attendance

Dress Code (AP 350.1)

Different forms of dress are appropriate in different situations. Dress of students should contribute to a school atmosphere conducive to learning. The Division encourages students to maintain high standards of dress, grooming and appearance that comply with the dress code of the school that their child attends. School administration is expected to work with students, staff and parent councils to develop a Student Dress Code that reflects the values of the school community based on input from the constituent groups. Parents and students carry the responsibility for adhering to the dress code.

Addressing Dress Code Concerns

- Students in contravention of the dress code will be given opportunities to change into clothing that meets school requirements in a way that maintains their dignity.
- Schools will work with students and their families to understand appropriate standards of dress in schools.
- Continual contravention of the school dress code will be addressed through AP 350 and the school's progressive discipline practices.

Further Detail in AP 350.1 – Student Dress Code

Illegal Substances (AP 354)

The Grande Prairie Public School Division is committed to providing a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment for all students that is drug, cannabis and alcohol free. This policy applies to school sites and school sponsored events including field trips. This policy distinguishes between distributing/selling, possessing, and being under the influence. Where laws are broken, the RCMP will be involved.

- Students found distributing, selling, possessing or under the influence of drugs, cannabis or alcohol while on or near school premises or while participating in a school sponsored activity **will** be suspended.
- Students in the company of students found to be distributing, selling, possessing or under the influence of drugs, cannabis or alcohol while on or near school premises or while participating in a school sponsored activity **may** be suspended.
- Students who have been suspended are required to meet with school administration to have conditions of re-instatement clarified. Conditions may include limitations on school mobility, participation in extra-curricular activities, searches of personal items and property, modified schedule, requirements around counseling etc.

Addressing Substance Use

1. Under the influence of drugs, cannabis or alcohol: Students **will** be suspended for a minimum of 3 days and require a re-instatement meeting with school administration and parents.
2. Possessing drugs, cannabis or alcohol: Students **will** be suspended for 5 days and require a re- instatement meeting with school administration and parents.
3. Distribution/selling drugs, cannabis or alcohol: Students **will** be suspended for 5 days with a recommendation to our Central Office for expulsion.
4. Paraphernalia: Students in possession of paraphernalia related to the use of drugs, cannabis or alcohol, including vapourizers regardless of their intended use, will be suspended.

Further Detail in AP 354 – Student Substance Use

Smoking and Tobacco Products (AP 358)

Consistent with the law, all GPPSD schools are smoke and tobacco free. The use of tobacco products is prohibited on school property. This includes conventional tobacco products such as cigarettes and cigars and extends to the use of chewing tobacco. Please be advised vapourizers and other drug paraphernalia are included in AP 354- Student Substance Use and it is those consequences which will apply.

Addressing Smoking/Tobacco Concerns

Students who smoke or use tobacco products on or near school property will be subject to the following:

1. First Offense: Warning
2. Second Offense**:** One day suspension
3. Continued infractions will be addressed through AP 350 and the school's progressive discipline practices.

Further Detail in AP 358 – Smoking and Tobacco Products

Student Code of Conduct (AP 350)

Discipline is an essential part of a positive school climate. Discipline sets consistent, firm and reasonable limits to behaviour in line with student and group needs. A positive school climate creates an environment in which each student is free to learn to the best of his or her ability and contributes to the prevention and reduction of misbehaviours in school.

Addressing Behaviour Concerns

- School administration establishes discipline expectations within the school that reflect a Positive Behaviour Supports framework, the Division's administrative procedures and the spirit of this document.
- A case management approach will be used to support persistent behavioural or discipline issues including collaboration with Division support services as appropriate
- Collaboration with parents is expected when behaviour and discipline concerns occur
- Guidelines for suspensions and expulsions are outlined in Sections 36 and 37 of the **Education Act (2019)** and AP 350

Further Detail in AP 350 – Student Code of Conduct

Welcoming, Caring, Respectful, and Safe Learning Environments (AP 359) and Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (AP 359.1)

AP 359 and AP 359.1 are supported by Board Policy 20 and provide for welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments for all learners, including sexual and gender minority students. These policies define discrimination and harassment and provide methods to eliminate instances of discrimination and harassment in our schools and other sites.

Further Detail in AP 359 – Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning Environments and AP 359.1 – Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

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Bullying Behaviours

Bullying is not a normal part of life or growing up and can have a life-long negative impact on a student's emotional and physical well-being. Bullying or discrimination and harassment are not a normal part of a child's school experience and should never be marginalized as experiences that "will make a child 'stronger'" or better prepared for adult life. The Grande Prairie Public School Division is committed to welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environments that respect diversity and promote acceptance of differences. There is no place for bullying or bullying-like behaviours which impact the opportunity for others to learn whether or not these activities occur within the school building, during the school day or by electronic means. Collaboration between staff, parents, and students is key in helping achieve the Division's goal of welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments.

Instances of perceived bullying are often very complex. It is important to develop a common understanding of *what is bullying* and *what is not bullying*.

What is bullying?

Bullying: A conscious, willful, deliberate, repeated and hostile activity marked by an imbalance of power, intent to harm and/or threat of aggression. It can occur within a peer group or between groups. It can occur at school and in extracurricular settings. It often includes a combination of forms of bullying. These forms of bullying include:

> **Verbal**: name calling, sarcasm, teasing, spreading rumours, threatening, or making discriminatory or harassing statement.
>
> **Social**: mobbing, scapegoating, excluding others from a group, humiliating others, gestures or graffiti intended to put others down. It is malicious and repetitive in nature. A sub-set of Social Bullying is '**Relational Aggression'**, which is similar to social bullying except that it exists within established peer groups and involves individuals who identify as 'friends'.
>
> **Physical**: hitting, poking, pinching, chasing, shoving, coercing, destroying, unwanted sexual touching.
>
> **Cyberbullying**: using the internet or messaging to intimidate, put down or spread rumours about someone. 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.

Intimidation: Intentional behavior which knowingly or should be reasonably known to cause fear of injury or harm. There is 'intent' with the exercising of intimidation. This may be direct or subtle, physical or verbal, private or public. Fear of injury or harm, both physical and emotional, impacts a person's social, emotional, and physical well-being.

Discrimination and Harassment: Discrimination and harassment occurs when a person is subjected to unwelcome verbal or physical conduct because of race, religious beliefs, colour,

gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical or mental disability, age, ancestry, marital status, socio-economic status, source of income, family status or sexual orientation. Alberta Human Rights law prohibits discrimination and harassment based on these grounds.

Sexual Harassment: Occurs when remarks, gestures or actions/ activities are sexual in nature and may be of verbal, social, physical, or cyber bullying. It includes behaviours that are not welcomed or asked for.

Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation: Discrimination and harassment of people based on their gender identity or sexual orientation may occur in the form of verbal, social, physical, or cyber bullying.

What is not bullying?

In order to be considered 'bullying', an action has to be willful, repeated, and meet the criteria established above. In the absence of the criteria above, instances may more appropriately be recognized as inappropriate behaviours and dealt with in accordance to classroom, school, and Division discipline practices. It is important to distinguish between 'inappropriate behaviours' and 'bullying behaviours'. When actions that are not actual instances of bullying get labeled as bullying, it minimizes the seriousness of actual instances of bullying.

Taking immediate action on instances of inappropriate behavior is necessary. It is possible for inappropriate behaviour to become a case of bullying in a short amount of time. Diligent preventative work in this area will result in less instances of bullying in our schools.

Addressing Bullying Behaviours

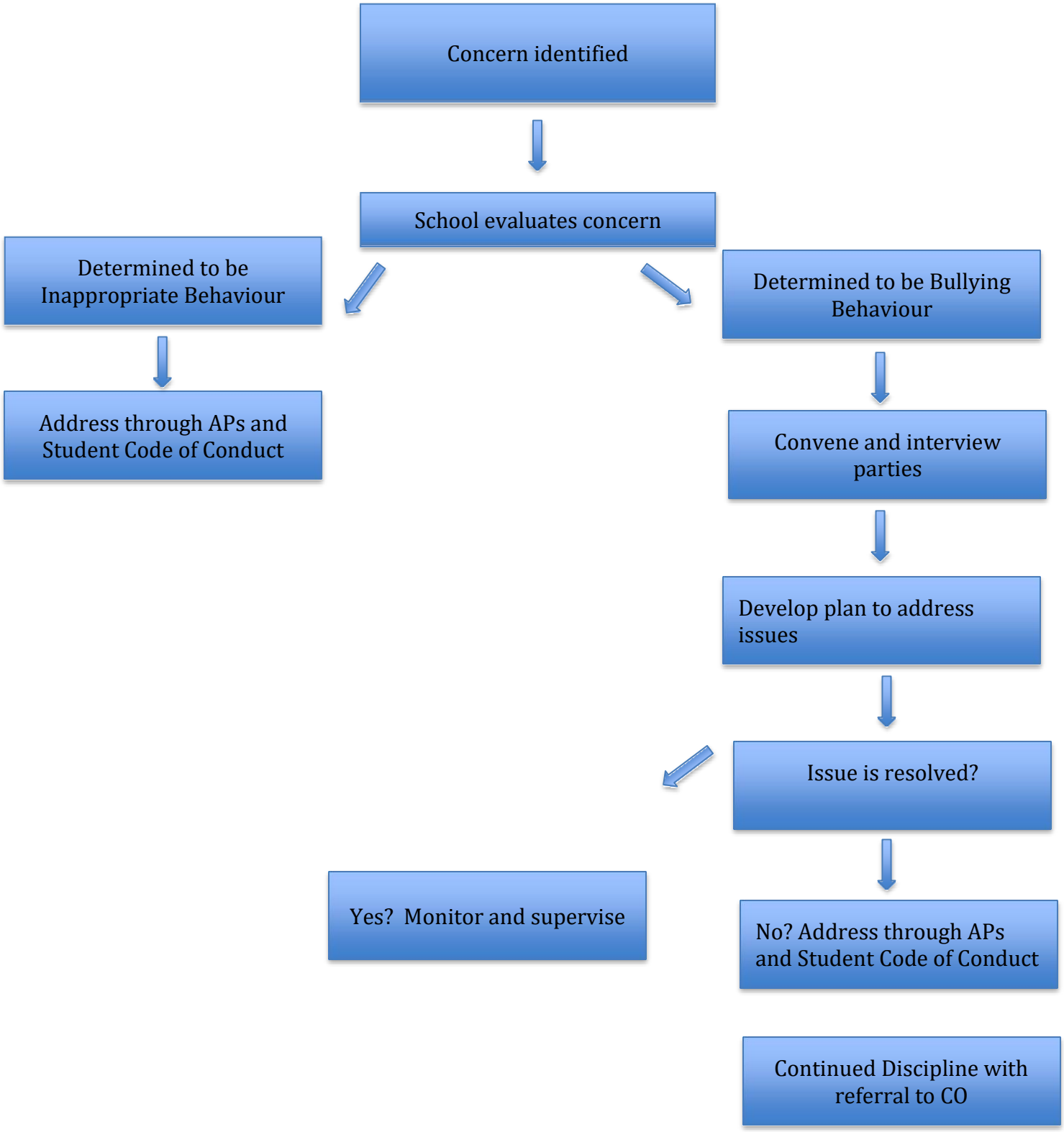
As noted, instances of bullying can be complex. Consequently, the response to bullying can also be complex. The following provisions will be followed when dealing with bullying or the perception of bullying.

1. It is expected that all students, school/Division staff, and visitors will treat each other with dignity and respect as per Board Policy and Administrative Procedures.
2. Any actions or perceptions of bullying will be addressed by the school.
    a. Respective teachers will deal with initial cases of bullying and inappropriate behaviours through tier one classroom supports. Issues are reported to school administration and documented in PowerSchool.
    b. Unresolved issues become the domain of school administration
    c. Staff will determine if the complaint is either 'bullying behavior' or 'inappropriate behaviours'
    d. Staff, in collaboration with administration, will convene the necessary parties to resolve the complaint. This may include the family members of the parties or other students
    e. Where issues are resolved, staff will actively monitor the situation
    f. Where issues are not resolved, behaviours will be addressed through AP 350 – Student Code of Conduct and possibly AP 363 – Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA), and AP 171 - Student Harassment and Discrimination.
    g. Bystanders will be recognized as participants in the situations and will be addressed through school discipline practices
    h. Supports will be developed for the victim of bullying as well as the accused bully, including coaching on language to use in future situations and other peer supports

i. The school may facilitate parental involvement on either side of the issue to resolve ongoing concerns as appropriate
j. Where issues continue to not be resolved cases will be referred to the Assistant Superintendent of Student Services or designate (as Division Discipline Officer) through the Division's approach to suspensions and expulsions AP 355 Suspension and Expulsion.

Appendix A

Addressing Bullying Behaviour Flow Chart



Appendix B
Link Page for Supporting Documents

Alberta Education Act 2019 - LINK

Alberta Human Rights Act 2000 - LINK

Board Policy 20 – Respectful Working and Learning Environments - LINK

Administrative Procedure 171 – Student Harassment and Discrimination - LINK

Administrative Procedure 330 – Student Attendance - LINK

Administrative Procedure 350 - Student Code of Conduct - LINK

Administrative Procedure 350.1 – Student Dress Code - LINK

Administrative Procedure 354 – Student Substance Abuse - LINK

Administrative Procedure 355 – Suspensions and Expulsions - LINK

Administrative Procedure 358 – Smoking and Tobacco Products - LINK

Administrative Procedure 359 – Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning Environments - LINK

Administrative Procedure 359.1 – Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity - LINK

AP 363 – Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) - LINK