



STUDENT ESSENTIAL AGREEMENTS

Our purpose is to empower heads, hands and hearts to make a difference in the world – to engage with others, engage in thinking and engage in action. We want to ensure students have a strong connection to school and experience it as a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe place that focuses on their individual success.

Student Essential Agreements establish and maintain an appropriate balance between individual and collective rights, freedoms, and responsibilities in the school community. It is reviewed annually and publicly available on the school's website.

Student Essential Agreements establish expectations, interventions and possible interventions for student behaviour. Students are accountable for unexpected school behaviour that occurs both inside and outside of the school building and school day, if it negatively affects a member of the school or interferes with the school environment. Behaviour may include use of electronic means (e.g. social media). Interventions and consequences for unexpected behaviour considers student's age, maturity and/ or individual circumstances. Support will be provided for any students who are impacted by unexpected behaviour as well as for students who engage in unexpected behaviour. Although Essential Agreements address possible consequences, the primary focus is to help students learn how to address issues of dispute, develop empathy and become nurturing citizens both within and outside of the school community.

MEADOW RIDGE is committed to promoting a safe learning and working culture where everyone **BELONGS**. All those involved with the school including staff, students, parents, volunteers, and community members share in the responsibility for eliminating bullying, discrimination, harassment, and violence. Investigation of allegations of such behaviours will be conducted in a timely and respectful manner.

MEADOW RIDGE has a responsibility to ensure students and staff to do their **BEST**. We provide inclusive and appropriate learning opportunities that engage students to achieve their full potential in an increasingly interdependent world.

MEADOW RIDGE works with families and community partners to ensure we leave things **BETTER** than the way we found them. We provide welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments that respect diversity, foster a sense of belonging and promote student and community wellbeing.

Responsibilities of Students, Staff and Parents: The development of positive student behaviour is a shared responsibility between students, staff and parents (Education Act, June 2020).

Students have the responsibility to:

- Attend school regularly and punctually,
- Be 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 respect diversity and fosters a sense of belonging,
- Respect the rights of others in the school,
- Refrain from, report and not tolerate bullying or bullying behavior 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 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 are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the School Student Essential Agreements developed by school leadership, staff, students and community.

Examples of (but not limited to) acceptable behaviour for students include:

1.1 Be ready to learn, and actively engage in, and diligently pursue your education;

1.2 Attend school regularly and punctually

1.3 Cooperate with all school staff;

1.4 Know and comply with the expected behaviours of Meadow Ridge School

1.5 Respect yourself and the rights of others in the school by demonstrating appreciation of diversity of all school members regardless of their race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, gender identity, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status or sexual orientation of that person or class of persons;

1.6 Ensure your conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful inclusive and safe learning environment that fosters a sense of belonging of others in your school;

1.7 Refrain from, report and discourage 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;

1.8 Inform an adult you trust in a timely manner of incidents of bullying, harassment, intimidation or other safety concerns in the school;

1.9 Demonstrating behaviours that positively contribute to and honour the school and community. At Meadow Ridge we follow the 3 B's: helping others BELONG, doing our BEST and leaving things BETTER than the way we found them.

Consequences must consider the student's age, maturity, and individual circumstances rather than a "zero tolerance" approach to behaviour with a "one size fits all" approach to consequences, which is not consistent with the Education Act. The specific circumstances of the situation and of the student must be considered when determining appropriate consequences; for example, consideration of needs including physical, behavioural, communicational, cognitive, mental health, trauma, as well as student's age, history, past interventions trialed, and accommodations/supports must be considered.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour may include:

1.1 Behaviours that interfere with the learning of others and/or the school environment or that create unsafe conditions;

1.2 Acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation/discrimination;

1.3 Acts of violence, physical aggression or threatening behavior;

1.4 Retribution against any person in the school who has intervened to prevent or report bullying, harassment, or stop an incident that might cause harm to others;

1.5 Illegal activity such as: possession or use of weapons; possession or use of alcohol, drugs or other forms of intoxicants on school property or at any other school related function (i.e. graduation, field trips);

1.6 Theft or damage of property.

Dress Code:

Students are expected to be diligent and thoughtful in their efforts at being a learner and part of this is how students dress and behave. Students are required to follow standards of dress outlined in the Dress Code. Students will not be allowed to attend class if, in the professional judgment of an adult, they choose a style of dress that detracts from the learning environment. Students not meeting the Dress Code will have a choice in changing into more appropriate attire, changing into a gym strip, or returning home to change into more suitable clothing. The school administration is responsible for ensuring standards of dress and grooming in the Dress Code which will include:

- Appropriateness of attire for school
 - o Shirt/Top
 - o Bottoms: pants/sweatpants, shorts, skirts, dresses, leggings
 - o Footwear
 - o No underwear as outerwear or excess exposed skin
- Contributes to a safe, caring, respectful, and inclusive learning environment for oneself and others
 - o No clothing portraying violent images or language
 - o No images or languages depicting drugs or alcohol
 - o No hate speech, profanity, or pornography
 - o No images or language that creates a hostile or intimidating environment
- Does not portray discriminatory images, messaging, slogans in a manner which contravenes the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and/or the Alberta Human Rights Act
- Suitable for the learning activity
 - o physical education
- Safety requirements
 - o CTF/CTS programs
 - o Labs
 - o Protective clothing/footwear
- Weather conditions
 - o outdoor activities
 - o travel to and from school

Meadow Ridge School uses a Progressive Discipline Continuum as noted below including such evidence-based practices as mentoring, restorative processes, student advisories, peer support networks, regular check-ins with teachers or school counsellors, counselling, time-out, suspension and/or expulsion. Support will be provided to students impacted by inappropriate behaviour and to those students who engage in inappropriate behaviour. Meadow Ridge School also has students who participate in extracurricular activities that agree to our student in good standing commitments.

Parents have the responsibility to:

- o Act as the primary guide and decision-maker with respect to the child's education,
- o Take an active role in the child's educational success, including assisting the child in complying with section 31,
- o Ensure that the child attends school regularly and is punctual,
- o Ensure that the parent's conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment,
- o Co-operate and collaborate with school staff to support the delivery of supports and services to the child,
- o Encourage, foster and advance collaborative, positive and respectful relationships with teachers, principals, other school staff and professionals providing supports and services in the schools, and
- o Engage in the child's school community.

Faculty: Under the leadership of the Principal, faculty is responsible for:

- Establishing a positive school climate in which structure, support and encouragement is provided to assist the student in understanding the importance of education, developing a sense of self-discipline, and encompassing civil responsibility to the school and community
- Encouraging and reinforcing appropriate behaviour thus increasing social emotional competencies including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making
- Using proactive and preventative approaches to reduce the occurrence of unacceptable behaviour and maintain environments that are welcoming, caring, respectful and safe and are conducive to teaching and learning
- Responding to unacceptable behaviour, giving first consideration to the safety and security of students, staff, and other members of the school community when addressing a concern
- Ensuring students are provided with a safe environment with trusted adults who foster positive relationships

Meadow Ridge uses proactive and preventative approaches to reduce the occurrence of unacceptable behaviour and maintain environments that are welcoming, caring, respectful, safe and are conducive to teaching and learning. We also use a continuum of support which provides structures, supports and encouragement to assist students to understand the importance of education, and develops a sense of self-discipline and responsibility while making a positive contribution to society;

2.2 When responding to unacceptable behaviour, first consideration will be given to the safety and security of students, staff, and other members of the school community;

2.3 Students feel safe, important and trusted and have the opportunity to develop, assume and maintain responsibility and self-motivation;

2.4 There is a joint effort to learn and a feeling of mutual respect among staff, students and parents;

2.5 Appropriate behaviour is consistently encouraged and reinforced, thus increasing social emotional competencies including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making;

2.6 On-going and timely communication exists between staff and parents to encourage and provide the opportunity for active and constructive parental involvement in the education of their children.

Continuum of Supports:

A continuum of supports addresses how Meadow Ridge School supports students impacted by unexpected behavior and those students who engage in unexpected behavior. Support, not just punishment, is provided to those students that engage in unexpected behaviour as denoted by a Progressive Discipline Continuum using practices such as mentoring, restorative processes, student advisories, peer support networks, regular check-ins with teachers or school counsellors, counselling, time-out, suspension and/or expulsion. Although Student Essential Agreements (Code of Conduct) addresses issues such as consequences for unacceptable behaviour, its primary focus is to help students learn how to address issues of dispute, develop empathy and become positive citizens both within and outside of the school community.

Information on Universal strategies for Progressive Discipline:

https://education.alberta.ca/media/464618/supporting_positive_behavior_schoolwide.pdf

<https://www.alberta.ca/positive-behaviour-supports.aspx>