



## CODE OF CONDUCT 2013-2014



### OUR COMMITMENT

Peel Alternative School recognizes that students achieve their best when they feel safe, nurtured, welcomed, respected and included. We are committed to providing a healthy climate for learning and working to support student success. For learning to be successful, schools must be free of negative factors such as bullying, discrimination and other harmful behaviours including physical violence in any form.

In the Peel District School Board, we understand that equity and excellence go hand-in-hand. One of the core goals in our strategic plan, the *Report Card for Student Success*, is the following:

"Achieve equity for students and staff—we provide equity of access and opportunity for students and staff to learn, work and develop in an environment that is nurturing, engaging, respectful and inclusive."

One of the Peel Board's projects is the implementation of six core character attributes. The attributes are taught in school, but they are also the basis of the board's working relationships – they help to create a positive climate for learning and working.

We want our staff and students to be:

- **Caring** – showing compassion and kindness towards others
- **Cooperative** – working collaboratively with others for a common purpose
- **Honest** – being truthful, trustworthy and sincere in our speech and actions
- **Inclusive** – treating everyone fairly and equitably
- **Respectful** – treating others, ourselves and the environment with high regard and value
- **Responsible** – being accountable and reliable in our actions and commitments

We believe that parents, the school and community must all work together to help students learn to become responsible members of society, being sensitive to the diversity, cultures and special needs of individual students. We must clearly demonstrate respect for social justice and human rights and promote the values needed to develop responsible members of a democratic society.

The Code of Conduct for Peel Alternative School aligns with and supports Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, the Peel Board's Human Rights policy and the Equity and Inclusive Education policy.

### OUR CODE OF CONDUCT

The Peel Alternative School Code of Conduct applies to all members of the school community including students, parents, guardians, volunteers, visitors and school staff, whether they are on school property, on school buses, at school-authorized events or activities, or in any other situation that may impact the school climate.

All members of the school community have a responsibility to respect and honour the school Code of Conduct, to demonstrate age and developmentally appropriate social behaviour and to take responsibility for their own actions.

### OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

***All members of the school community are expected to:***

- demonstrate honesty and integrity

- treat one another with dignity, respect and fairness, regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnicity, creed, citizenship, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, ability, socioeconomic status, or any other attribute
- take appropriate action to help those in need, seeking assistance to resolve conflict constructively and respectfully
- show proper care and regard for school property and the property of others

***Parent and guardian responsibilities include:***

- taking an active role in their son/daughter's education by ensuring that he/she is prepared for learning, including punctual and regular attendance, promptly reporting authorized absences and late arrivals, and communicating regularly with the school
- reviewing the school Code of Conduct with their son/daughter and helping him/her follow school rules
- helping their child understand that it is not appropriate to tease or bully others
- monitoring their child's internet use and taking responsibility for his/her behaviour when accessing electronic resources from home

***Student responsibilities include:***

- demonstrating a commitment to learning through punctual and regular attendance, being prepared and ready to learn
- practising honesty and integrity including, but not limited to, not participating in or encouraging plagiarism, misrepresentation of original work, use of unauthorized aids, theft of evaluation instruments, or false representation of identity
- following school rules and taking responsibility for his/her own actions
- refraining from bringing anything to school, or using anything inappropriately, that may risk the safety of themselves or others
- showing proper care and regard for school and community property, as well as only visiting other schools for school-related and authorized activities

***Staff responsibilities include:***

- helping students achieve to the best of their ability, developing self-worth, and being responsible citizens
- maintaining order in the school and holding everyone to the highest standard of respectful and responsible behaviour
- communicating regularly and meaningfully with parents/guardians
- establishing a range of clear, fair and developmentally appropriate interventions, supports, direct skill instruction and consequences for unacceptable behaviour including but not limited to homophobia, gender-based violence, sexual harassment and inappropriate sexual behaviour
- responding to and reporting behaviours which may have a negative impact on school climate

**BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION**

We are teaching students to identify and deal with bullying behaviour and to stop this behaviour from happening.

Bullying is typically a form of repeated, persistent and aggressive behaviour directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear, distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance.

When someone experiences or observes bullying behaviour, he/she is expected to report it to a teacher, teaching assistant or school administrator immediately. Bullying behaviour will be dealt with using a progressive discipline approach.

## **PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE**

Peel Alternative School encourages, supports and recognizes acceptable behaviour in our students through a variety of positive practices. Progressive discipline is an approach that makes use of a continuum of interventions, supports and consequences, building upon strategies that promote positive behaviours.

We encourage students to take responsibility for their behaviour and to accept the consequences of their actions. A progressive discipline approach is used to deal with inappropriate behaviour. This may include: verbal reminders, review of expectations, contact with parent(s)/guardian(s), written reflections, volunteer services to the school community, conflict mediation and resolution, peer mentoring, referral for support services and/or an opportunity for restoration and repair.

We recognize that each student is a unique individual and that every situation that requires disciplinary action has its own set of extenuating circumstances. All factors that may have affected the student's behaviour will be considered before progressive discipline is applied. Students who behave inappropriately will receive an age and developmentally appropriate consequence. For a student with special education or disability-related needs, all progressive discipline approaches will be consistent with his/her Individual Education Plan and his/her demonstrated abilities.

### ***Suspension and expulsion***

Peel Alternative School also supports the use of suspension and expulsion for serious incidents as outlined in the Peel District School Board's Safe Schools Policy.

Before considering whether to impose a suspension or make a recommendation for an expulsion, a principal considers mitigating and other factors.

### **The behaviours for which a principal may consider suspending a student include:**

- swearing (written or verbal) at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority
- bullying, including cyber-bullying
- uttering a threat to inflict serious bodily harm on another person
- committing an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to school property
- possessing alcohol or restricted drugs
- being under the influence of alcohol
- committing any act, considered by the principal to:
  - have a negative impact on the moral tone of the school
  - have a negative impact on the physical or mental well-being of one or more school community members
  - be contrary to the school or Peel Board Code of Conduct

### **Incidents for which a principal will consider recommending to the Board's Discipline Committee that a student be expelled include:**

- physically assaulting another person causing bodily harm that requires medical treatment
- possessing a weapon or using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person
- trafficking in restricted drugs or weapons
- giving alcohol to a minor
- committing robbery
- committing sexual assault
- behaviour that:
  - is significantly detrimental to the school climate and/or to the physical or mental well-being of others
  - causes extensive damage to school property
  - causes his/her continued presence at the school to pose an unacceptable risk to other members of the school community

- is a pattern of behaviour so inappropriate that the student's continued presence is detrimental to the effective learning or working environment of others
- demonstrates a persistent resistance to changes in behaviour that would enable him/her to be successful
- is a serious violation of the school or Peel Board Code of Conduct

Students who are suspended or expelled will be given an opportunity to continue their education through educational programs offered by the school board.

## **DRUGS**

The school recognizes the benefits of a smoke-free environment for all persons. By law, smoking is not permitted at Peel Alternative School, on any other board property, on school buses or while attending any school-related event or activity. School property includes cars that are on school grounds and all lands to the edge of the sidewalk or street. The **no smoking** rule will be enforced within these areas.

Providing tobacco products to anyone under 19 years of age is illegal.

Alcohol and restricted drugs may be addictive and represent a health hazard. Possessing, using, trafficking in, or providing others with restricted drugs and/or alcohol will not be condoned at Peel Alternative School, on Peel Board property or at any school-related event or activity at any time. Drug-related paraphernalia that can be used for substance abuse are not permitted on school property.

## **WEAPONS**

Possessing or displaying weapons of any kind, real, toy or replica, and all other objects that could inflict or threaten bodily harm will not be accepted at Peel Alternative School, on any Peel Board property, or at any school-related event or activity at any time.

## **DRESS CODE**

The standards for school dress at Peel Alternative School are based on common sense and are intended to support the comfort, safety and modesty of all students. There is a strong relationship between neat, clean and appropriate clothing and a positive learning environment.

## **USE OF TECHNOLOGY**

Students will demonstrate appropriate online conduct and manners and refrain from improper/unethical use of technology, including computer hacking and cyber-bullying. The internet must not be used for any purpose that is contrary to the intent of the Peel Alternative School Code of Conduct. This applies to school, work and home internet use.

Cell phones may not be used for any communication or for taking photographs at school unless permission is granted by a school official.

Posting school-related photographs or images on the internet (including social network sites) without permission of a school official violates the Peel Alternative School's Code of Conduct.

## **COMPUTER USE**

It is your responsibility to use the school computers and related equipment in the manner outlined in the Computer Use Form that you must sign at the beginning of the school year and in accordance with guidelines posted in classrooms.

Expectations related to online behaviour are the same as they are for behaviour at school. Inappropriate use of the school computers and offensive language will not be tolerated.

**All forms of on-line violence, harassment, threats or bullying directed at students or school staff are strictly prohibited whether they are initiated on school, work or home computers.**

## **Learning & Instructional Technology Plan**

The Peel District School Board's Learning and Instructional Technology Plan will ensure Peel schools are increasingly connected and relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. By the end of the school year – 2012-13 – the board expects students in all Peel schools to be able to access educational resources online and engage in 21<sup>st</sup> Century through wireless networks.

With Wi-Fi installations beginning in July and continuing throughout the school year, schools will be at different stages of the Learning and Instructional Technology Plan this year. Some schools are currently using Wi-Fi technology to boost learning in the classroom.

As wireless becomes available in a school, students will begin to see teachers incorporate more digital resources into their lessons. Once online resources are able to be accessed wirelessly, students will be encouraged to *BYOD – bring your own device*. The plan will also improve equity of access to technology for all students through classroom technology in schools, and a process to ensure schools across the system have similar standards of technology so that no child feels excluded.

### **Digital Citizenship**

Students are going to live and work in a world where people use their devices 12/7 so they need to learn to use technology effectively and respectfully. Digital responsibility is an important part of what we help students learn in school, and appropriate use will continue to be an expectation in each school's Code of Conduct as it is now.

As we begin to move forward with the plan, principals, staff and School Council members will work together to develop school policies and practices that support the effective use of technology in the classroom.

Students will use technology for educational purposes only. By accessing the Internet while on Peel board property or by logging in with a board logon, students accept all terms and conditions of the Peel board network and Internet use, as well as Policy #78 – Appropriate Use of Technology.

Students will demonstrate appropriate online conduct and manners. Students must follow Peel board security procedures and use Peel board virus scanning software. Although Peel board uses a constant filter, students may encounter inappropriate material.

Students are also required to report any inappropriate use of email, data, or unauthorized technology or data to a teacher or administrator immediately. Information created on Peel board networks may be accessed and is subject to review. Personally owned devices used inappropriately to access/produce or share unlawful materials will result in full investigation and necessary action will be taken.

Users will refrain from improper/unethical use of technology, including computer hacking, cyber-bullying, and sending or receiving offensive pictures or materials. The Internet must not be used for any offensive purpose that violates the school's Code of Conduct or the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

### **Consequences**

All users are expected to comply with all federal and provincial laws and regulations – Ontario Human Rights Code, Criminal Code, Education Act and Copyright Act.

Students accept full responsibility for their use of technology. Any inappropriate use such as harassment, plagiarism, financial gain, accessing or vandalizing others users' information, providing access to other accounts or posting private information will result in loss of technology privileges and/or other consequences consistent with the school's Code of Conduct, progressive discipline and safe schools legislation. When appropriate, offences may be reported to the police.

## **Personal electronic devices (PEDs)**

To ensure students stay safe on the Internet, **students must never:**

- give out personal information such as their addresses, telephone number, age, school name or address
- agree to meet with someone they meet online
- respond in any form to messages which make them uncomfortable or are deemed inappropriate according to the school's Code of Conduct
- share their personal student network login and password with anyone other than a parent/guardian
- use other individual's accounts
- take and/or post photos, videos or images of an individual/group unless consent from the individual(s) (over 18) or parental consent (for those under the age of 18) has been obtained.

## **COMMUNICATION WITH ADULT STUDENTS ( age 18 or older)**

Please be advised that Peel District School Board staff, including teachers and administrators, will communicate with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of an adult student (age 18 or older) regarding educational matters unless and until that adult student provides direction in writing that all further communication by school staff regarding education matters must be with that student only. If you have any questions regarding this practice or if you wish to provide written direction to the school, please speak to your Vice-Principal or Principal.

## **BUS TRAVEL**

Students are expected to follow the standards of behaviour outlined in the Code of Conduct while they are on the school bus.

### ***Students are required to:***

- be at their bus stop at least five minutes before their pick-up time
- go directly to their seats and stay seated
- follow the bus driver's instructions and behave appropriately at all times

### ***Students may not:***

- consume food and drinks on the bus
- fight, swear or cause excessive noise on the bus
- engage in activities that may endanger the safety of themselves or others

## **PEEL ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

All members of the school community are entitled to personal dignity and the right to learn, work and contribute in an environment free from harassment.

It is your right as a Peel Board student to be treated with respect and to be provided with the best education the school can offer in a safe, orderly environment.

It is your responsibility to treat others with respect, to work to the best of your ability and to do all you can to ensure that the school is a safe and pleasant environment for all. Racial slurs or swearing in any language will not be tolerated.

Violence, harassment, verbal physical or sexual abuse, bullying, threatening, unethical use of technology, hate-related graffiti, gang-related activities, vandalism, intimidation, extortion and discrimination on the basis of race, faith, gender, economic status, ability, age, sexual orientation or any other attribute are not tolerated in Peel schools.

Any student who demonstrates behaviour inconsistent with Board policy or the Code of Conduct will face a range of consequences which may include loss of privileges, detention, community service, making restitution, suspension from school or full expulsion from school.

The Code of Conduct applies when visiting other school for authorized events and may be applied to any other incident connected to the school.