




SAFE SCHOOLS
building positive
places to learn—
together



Building great places
to learn and work

As a parent, nothing is more important than your child's safety and well-being. At the Peel District School Board, that's our priority, too. We're committed to providing a healthy, supportive learning and working environment for our students and staff. We know that students achieve their best when they feel safe, nurtured, welcomed, engaged, respected and included.

Years of research have shown that students are more successful at school and in life when they learn positive values from an early age. We work with parents and the community to help students develop social skills and appropriate behaviours as they learn and grow.

We help students to become responsible, respectful members of society by:

- > setting high expectations
- > reinforcing positive attitudes and behaviour
- > promoting safety, healthy choices and respect for others
- > encouraging student participation and leadership
- > fostering parent and community involvement

Keeping our schools safe
is a shared responsibility



Peel schools are among the safest places in our communities—and, together, we share responsibility for keeping our schools safe. When staff, students and parents work together, we can make a powerful difference.

The school's responsibility:

- > provide a safe, nurturing, engaging, welcoming, respectful and inclusive school climate
- > teach positive behaviour and good citizenship
- > teach respect for self and others
- > provide tools to resolve conflicts constructively and respectfully
- > encourage healthy, inclusive relationships
- > apply consequences for inappropriate behaviour
- > support victims of inappropriate behaviour
- > communicate openly and honestly

The student's responsibility:

- > attend classes punctually and regularly
- > treat others with respect and dignity
- > exercise self-control and self-discipline
- > take responsibility for his own actions
- > practice honesty and integrity
- > resolve conflict in a constructive and respectful way
- > respect school and community property
- > tell an adult if you or someone is being bullied

The parent's responsibility:

- > understand and support the school, Peel board and provincial codes of conduct
- > communicate regularly with the school
- > help your child follow school rules
- > be actively involved in your child's learning and progress
- > model and reinforce positive behaviour at home
- > monitor your child's Internet use
- > report any serious incidents to the school and to the police

A focus on safety



The Peel board's Safe Schools policy is based on the Education Act and the Ontario Code of Conduct. The policy is available from the school or on the Peel board website at www.peelschools.org. Each school also develops its own Code of Conduct, based on provincial and Peel board policies. Copies of the school Code of Conduct are available from the school.

Progressive discipline

We know that each student is a unique individual and that every situation has a set of special circumstances. However, there are clear, fair consequences for behaviour that is contrary to the Safe Schools policy and the school Code of Conduct.

Progressive discipline is an approach that makes use of a continuum of interventions, supports and consequences, building upon strategies that promote positive behaviours. The range of interventions, supports, and consequences used will be clear and developmentally appropriate, and will include learning opportunities for students in order to reinforce positive behaviours and help students succeed. For students with special education and/or disability related needs, interventions, supports and consequences will be consistent with the expectations in the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and/or her demonstrated abilities.

Students who behave inappropriately will face a range of progressive discipline interventions and consequences that may include, but are not limited to: oral reminders, contact with parents, withdrawal of privileges, referral to counselling, suspension and/or expulsion. All factors that may have affected the student's behaviour will be considered before progressive discipline is applied.

What is a suspension?

All suspensions range between one and 20 school days. Suspensions between six and 20 school days are referred to as long-term suspensions. During a suspension, students are not permitted to ride the bus to school, enter the school building or come onto school property for any reason for the duration of the suspension. In addition, the student may not attend any school-related activities, functions or events, even if he was expected to participate in these activities.

What is an expulsion?

Unlike suspensions that last for a specific period of time, expulsions don't have a time limit. Expulsions may apply to only the student's current school or to all Peel board schools. If a student is expelled from only her school, she will not be permitted on school property or school buses, and will not be able to participate in any school-related activities. If the Discipline Committee issues an expulsion from all Peel board schools, the student may only attend the board's Fresh Start program for expelled students. Expelled students will not be permitted on any other school property, and will not be able to participate in any activities that are connected to any other schools in the Peel board.

Programs for students who are suspended or expelled

The board is committed to providing suspended and expelled students with an opportunity to continue their education by providing an educational program and support to help students meet their learning goals.

Elementary students will be supported in continuing to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills outlined in the Ontario curriculum. Secondary students will be supported in continuing to earn credits towards their Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

Students who are suspended between six and 20 school days will be offered the board's Fresh Start program. While these students attend Fresh Start, they will continue with the work that is provided by the home school classroom teachers.

Expelled students will be offered the board's Fresh Start program for expelled students. Once a student chooses to attend a program for expelled students, Fresh Start teachers take over the student's educational programming.

Standards of behaviour

These policies and codes of conduct set clear standards of behaviour that apply to all members of the school community, including staff, students, parents, volunteers and visitors, whether they are on school property, on school buses, at school-authorized events or activities or in any other situation that may have an impact on school climate.

We expect students to respect their school Code of Conduct and to take responsibility for their own actions. We will not allow harassment, bullying, swearing, theft, verbal, physical or sexual abuse, gang-related activities, intimidation, alcohol or

drugs, weapons, plagiarism, unethical use of technology, any form of discrimination or violence, or any other inappropriate behaviour.

Bullying and weapons

Bullying is defined by the Ministry of Education as “a form of repeated, persistent, aggressive behaviour that is 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 real or perceived power imbalance.”

We believe that no one deserves to be bullied and bullying is not acceptable. We teach students strategies to identify, deal with and stop bullying behaviour. Any form of bullying needs to be reported to the school immediately.

Possessing or displaying a weapon of any kind, or any object that could be used to threaten or inflict bodily harm, will not be condoned. A weapon includes, but is not limited to, firearms, replicas, knives, pepper spray or other gases or devices designed to injure, incapacitate or immobilize.

Working together

We work with community partners to provide programs and support to students. Police, emergency services, health agencies, Children’s Aid and many other agencies play a vital role in keeping our schools healthy and safe.

Together with Peel Regional Police, Ontario Provincial Police (Caledon) and the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board, we have a protocol that gives schools guidelines for reporting serious incidents to the police. The protocol emphasizes the rights of students, staff and the community to learn and work in a safe environment.

Working together



Find out more

After reading this brochure, you may want to:

- > request a copy of the Peel board's Safe Schools policy
- > learn more about the provincial code of conduct
- > review the school's Code of Conduct

You can get this information by:

- > talking to your child's school
- > visiting the board's website at **www.peelschools.org**
- > going to the Ministry of Education website at **www.edu.gov.on.ca** for the Ontario Code of Conduct or provincial curriculum documents for each grade
- > calling the Peel board at **905-890-1010** (or **1-800-668-1146**) ext. **2640**