

Revised October 4, 2018

**Welcoming Caring Respectful and Safe Teaching
and Learning Environment Policy Regulation**

Who we are:

We are an independent, Interdenominational school that declares the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all areas of our school and community. We believe and openly declare that our world belongs to God; we are His servants within His creation. We are all made in the likeness of Christ and we find our identity in Christ. We have Alberta Certified Teachers who teach Alberta Curriculum from a Christ-centered perspective.

Lacombe Christian School Vision Statement

"To the glory of God, by His grace, and on the foundation of His Word, Lacombe Christian School strives to nurture and educate children to be Spirit-filled disciples of Christ and responsible, discerning citizens in society."

Statement of Purpose

God has commanded parents to instruct students in the way that He wants them to go (Proverbs 22:6). Since God reveals Himself in the Bible and in all of Creation, it becomes the task of the Christian school to integrate these two revelations of God's will into a meaningful unity.

As image-bearers of God, we have been created religious beings. Learning is centered around religious values. Only in a Christian school are we privileged to teach the special revelation found in the Bible.

This is our God-given responsibility. The education offered at this school will help raise the signposts of God's Kingdom in this world and equip service to God and neighbour, as Christ expects from each of us.

Statement of Philosophical Foundation

The Word of God:

We believe the Bible, as the infallible Word of God, is the Truth, by which the Holy Spirit enlightens our understanding of God, ourselves and the world. It is the inspired authority which should direct and govern all our activities, including the education of our children.

Educational Freedom:

Christian education given in accordance with legitimate standards and provisions should receive full recognition and freedom within society.

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The Christian School:

The purpose of the Christian school is to help educate children for a life of obedience to their calling in this world as image-bearers of God. This calling is to know God's Word and His creation, to consecrate the whole of human life to God, to love each other, and to be faithful stewards in their God-given cultural task.

Parents:

The responsibility for the direction of education rests primarily upon the parents to whom children are entrusted by God. Since the Bible teaches that all of life is subject to God's rule (Philippians 2:9-13, Deuteronomy 11:18-21) and that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge (Proverbs 1:7), Christian parents should continually strive to provide for their children scripturally based teaching at home, at church, and at school.

Teachers:

In addition to maintaining the highest academic standards possible, the teacher, as a believer, must reflect at all times by word and example the love of Christ, and the honour of God.

Students:

Children are a heritage of the Lord (Psalm 127:3) and should be brought up in the fear and admonition of the Lord (Proverbs 22:6). Students, having a variety of abilities, but being born in sin, are in need of guidance and instruction, so that they may be allowed to develop their bodies, minds and spirits to the glory of God. Their total potential and uniqueness should be taken into account when they are taught in a Christ-centred manner.

Statement of Parent's Faith and/or Values Commitment Contingent Upon Enrollment of His/Her Child in the School

Aim and Purpose of Lacombe Christian School

1. To have our children taught in a school that acknowledges the rule of God in all areas of life including education and the fields of knowledge.
2. To prepare the student as an image-bearer of God for meaningful participation in society.
3. To make the student see their life-task in the context of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.
4. To show the student the way to total commitment and surrender to Christ.

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5. To guide the student in understanding the radical consequences of such a commitment, affecting all areas and relationships of life.
6. To work (complement/partner) with the home and church in bringing up the children entrusted to us.

Legislative Contexts

School Act, especially Sections 2, 3, and 16.1

Alberta Human Rights Act;

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; and,

Article 5 of the United Nations Convention on the rights of the Child (1990)

PART I

Consistent with its mission and vision, the Lacombe Christian School Board is committed to a safe, caring, respectful, inclusive, equitable, and welcoming learning and teaching environment for all students and staff. This environment shall be one that recognizes and respects student diversity, equity of learning opportunity for all students, respect for human rights, and that fosters a sense of belonging of all students within a respectful school community.

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Lacombe Christian School Board affirms the rights of students and staff members to not be discriminated against as provided for in the Alberta Human Rights Act to the extent applicable and subject to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the nature and character of Lacombe Christian School as a private, voluntary religious association.

See e.g. H.S. v. The Private Academy, 2017 HRT0 791; Caldwell et al. v. Stuart et al., <1984> 2 S.C.R. 603; Loyola High School v. Quebec (Attorney General), 2015 SCC 12.

1. The *School Act* also provides as a fundamental right the "right of parents to make informed decisions respecting the education of their children".

PART II

The Lacombe Christian School Board supports the ongoing growth of inclusive communities by involving our parents, staff, students, and school community in a wide range of opportunities to learn about, support and be part of the diversity that reflects our society. In this way the school can focus on building true inclusion and support for its students.

This policy does not define one set of human needs as greater than another. This school policy supports and respects the individuality of all students and aims to create a positive and supportive environment focused on providing the best possible learning opportunity for each student.

The Lacombe Christian School Board believes that all students have the right to:

1. be treated fairly, equitably, and with dignity and respect;
2. be welcomed in a positive, and respectful manner by all school personnel;
3. have access to appropriate supports, services, and protections
4. have avenues of recourse (without fear of reprisal) available to them when they are victims of harassment, intimidation, bullying, and/or violence.

PART III

Purpose: The Lacombe Christian School Board is committed to providing students and staff with a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment. LCS is committed to implementing measures that will:

1. Define appropriate expectations, behaviors, language, and actions in order to prevent

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discrimination, prejudice, and harassment through greater awareness of, and responsiveness to, their harmful effects.

2. Ensure that all such discriminatory behaviors and complaints will be taken seriously, documented, and dealt with expeditiously and effectively through consistently applied policy and procedures.
3. Develop, implement, and evaluate inclusive educational strategies, professional development opportunities, and administrative guidelines to ensure that all students are treated with respect and dignity in all aspects of the school community in a manner consistent with the school's mission and vision.
4. Enforce the following Student Code of Conduct:

Students shall conduct themselves so as to reasonably comply with the following:

- i. be diligent in pursuing their studies;
- ii. attend school regularly and punctually;
- iii. cooperate fully with everyone authorized by the board to provide education programs and other services;
- iv. comply with school rules;
- v. be accountable to their teachers for their conduct;
- vi. respect the rights of others;
- vii. ensure that they contribute positively to the environment and culture of the School;
- viii. refrain from, report and not tolerate bullying or bullying behaviour directed to others in the school, whether or not it occurs within the school building, during the school day, or by electronic means)

a) Activities that may constitute a violation of this Code of Conduct include, but are not limited to, bullying whether in person during the school day or by electronic means, physical harm or assault upon others, harassment, hazing, gang activities, weapons in school, drug and alcohol use, and improper conduct on busses or on field trips.

b) Unacceptable behaviour may be grounds for disciplinary action, and provides the student with an opportunity for critical learning and reflection in the areas of personal accountability and responsibility, the development of empathy, as well as communication, conflict resolution, and social skills development.

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- c) In the assessment of the potential consequences of unacceptable behaviour, the School shall also consider a student's age, maturity, individual circumstances, and frequency of the misconduct. In addition, the specific circumstances of the situation and of the student must be taken into account when determining appropriate responses to unacceptable behaviour.
- d) The School must ensure that support is provided for students who are impacted by inappropriate behaviour, as well as for students who engage in inappropriate behaviour.
- e) This Code of Conduct shall be made publicly available on the School website and shall be provided to all staff, students, and parents.
- f) This Code of Conduct shall be reviewed each school year.

PART IV

The Lacombe Christian School Board will promote a welcoming, caring and respectful, safe learning environment that respects diversity, and fosters a sense of belonging.

When a student request for assistance, support, and/or an accommodation is received, the school, through the principal, will respond in a caring, respectful and timely manner.

Principal Responsibility in accordance with section 16.1 (1) of the School Act

If one or more students attending a school operated by the Board request a staff member employed by the Board for support to establish a voluntary student organization, or lead to an activity (collectively the "Requested Activity") intended to promote a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging, the principal of the School shall: In addition to the other duties set out in this Policy, ensure that the Requested Activity promotes at the School a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging.

Board Responsibility in relation to Student Organizations at the School under s. 16.1 of the School Act

In accordance with section 45.1 (4)(b) of the *School Act* which legislatively mandates the Board to include the text of section 16.1 (1), (3) (3.1) (4) and (6)" of the *School Act* in this Policy, if one or more students attending the School request a staff member employed by the Board for support to establish a voluntary student organization, or lead to an activity intended to promote a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging, the principal of the School shall:

- a) Immediately grant permission for the establishment of the student organization or the holding of the activity at the school.

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- b) Subject to the next section below, within a reasonable time from the date that the principal receives the request designate a staff member to serve as the staff liaison to facilitate the establishment, and the ongoing operation, of the student organization or to assist in organizing the activity.

The students may select a respectful and inclusive name for the organization or activity.

The principal is responsible for ensuring that notification, if any, respecting a voluntary student organization or an activity referred to in section 16.1 (1) is limited to the fact of the establishment of the organization or the holding of the activity, and is otherwise consistent with the usual practices relating to notifications of other student organizations and activities. In accordance with the *School Act*, the principal may disclose personal information only if it is authorized to do so under legislation that governs such disclosure, which, depending on the circumstances, may include the *Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA)*, the *School Act*, the *Children First Act*, and the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act*.

The following general norms will govern all types of student groups and activities:

- a) They shall be conducted in a manner that reflects a desire to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with our God (Micah 6:8)
- b) They shall support the mission, vision, and core values of the school.
- c) Activities and clubs must be facilitated by a designated staff member, who is supporting the group and ensuring that content, resources, and materials reflect the defined norms, and are appropriate for use. Activities could include:
 - i) Sponsoring activities throughout the year to address issues such as bullying awareness, social justice issues, or activities to encourage positive school spirit.
- d) When addressing matters of human rights, principal, teachers, and other staff will act reasonably in the best interests of the student.
- e) In keeping with the established jurisprudence, the school, the principal, teachers, and other staff are free to act and communicate the school's animating faith and/or values in a respectful manner. Where required, the School's teachers may identify the School community's animating beliefs and or values, and beliefs, and why the School community follows those beliefs and/or values.

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All student organizations and activities approved by the school will support the mission, vision and core values of the school and will seek to strengthen every aspect of the school's faith perspective. Staff facilitators of student organizations will integrate prayer, scripture, and faith/value based teaching into discussions and activities as appropriate. All student organizations and activities will be permeated in a manner consistent with the vision, mission, and programming of the school.

PART V

When implementing the policy (Parts I to IV), The Lacombe Christian School Board will act reasonably in the best interests of the student in keeping with the guidelines outlined by the Supreme Court of Canada. Consistent with the Court's guidelines, the school, the principal, teachers and other staff are free to act and communicate the school's animating faith and/or values in a respectful manner:

- The School's teachers and staff may describe and explain the school's faith and/or value community beliefs, doctrines and ethical beliefs from the faith/perspective, and need not be required to adopt a neutral position.
- The School's teachers and staff must describe and explain the ethical beliefs and doctrines of other faith/value communities and other members of Alberta's pluralistic society in a respectful manner.
- The School's teachers and staff must maintain a respectful tone of debate - both by conveying their own contributions in a respectful way, and by ensuring the classroom dialogue proceeds in accordance with respect, tolerance and understanding for those with different beliefs and practices.
- Where the context of the classroom discussion requires it, the School's teachers may identify the School community's animating beliefs and/or values beliefs, why the school community follow those beliefs and/or values, and the ways in which another specific ethical or doctrinal proposition does not accord with those beliefs, be it in the context of a particular different religion or an ethical position considered in the abstract.
- Respect, tolerance, and understanding are all properly required, and the highlighting of differences must not give rise to denigration or derision.

Attachments to the Policy

LCS Community Standards Policy