

## Watson Lake Secondary School Conduct Policy

### **Introduction**

The Code of Conduct for WLSS is based on the concepts of self-respect and the respect of the rights of others. Students are expected to show respect for themselves at all times. The policies are intended to create a safe, positive learning atmosphere, protect school property and enable the staff to do their best for their students. Every student has the right to an education without interference and every student has the responsibility not to interfere with the education of others. Students are expected to: work to the best of their abilities, to attend regularly, and to complete all assignments as directed.

### **The Code:**

Our goal is to develop students who are responsible, well-mannered, sensitive to the needs of others, self-disciplined, and proud of their accomplishments.

To demonstrate this behaviour the students are expected to:

- a. be courteous, respectful and responsible, and treat others as you would like to be treated
- b. be punctual and prepared, have all your work completed and submitted on time and bring everything you will need to each class
- c. conduct yourself in such a way as to bring respect and honour to yourself, your family and the school at all times
- d. dress in a manner which reflects your personal taste, but does not interfere with acceptable norms within the school
- e. finish your work, plan ahead and do your genuine best
- f. participate in extra curricular activities, develop a sense of fair play and learn to co-operate with fellow students and staff
- g. help others and seek help when needed
- h. show your concern for the environment, by using the garbage and recycling containers provided to keep our environment neat and clean.

### **Inappropriate Student Behaviour**

Generally, when a student's inappropriate behaviour interferes with the rights of other students in the class, or interferes with the instructional process, the following progression applies. In a case where the situation is deemed serious enough, the Principal will be involved immediately.

1. The teacher deals with the student by:
  - a. discussing the problem privately with the student. This would be an informal interview with the objective of establishing a basic understanding of the problem and helping the student in formulating a plan of action to prevent further occurrences.
  - b. contacting the home. A parent or guardian is contacted by the teacher to discuss specific concerns about the student's behaviour. The parent is informed of the actions taken to date, or of the present problem. The purpose of this conference is to share information and ideas to determine present and future actions necessary to address the problem raised.

- c. involving a youth counsellor. The teacher may refer the student to community resource personnel for a conference or series of conferences with the specific goal of developing a plan for changing inappropriate behaviour or attitudes that are a concern to the teacher or other students.

When the teacher believes that another kind of intervention is necessary, the student may be referred to the principal. The principal deals with the student by:

- a. determining in an interview with the student whether the student is capable of providing a satisfactory solution to the problem
- b. attempting to reason a solution in a formal interview with the student and parent. If necessary, the teacher and resource personal will be involved
- c. soliciting parent help for the student where a student refuses to participate in the solution of the problem. This generally involves a dismissal or suspension from the school.

**Dismissal:** Under the authority of The Yukon Education Act, a student may be dismissed from school for a period not exceeding two school days. The parents or guardians will be notified of the dismissal. Prior to being reinstated to regular classes a conference will be held with the student, parents and school principal. A dismissal from school is not subject to appeal.

**Suspension:** Under The Yukon Education act, a principal may suspend a student for a maximum of 10 days for any breach by the student of the duties specified in the Act. It is possible for the administration to recommend to School Council that a student be suspended for a period longer than 10 days. Any suspension can be appealed by a parent and/or the suspended student, under the guidelines set out in The Yukon Education Act.

**Expulsion** - In extreme cases, the principal may recommend to school council that a student be removed from school for the balance of the school term. In such cases, the student and the parents will be provided the opportunity to appear before school council in order to defend his/her case. The most fundamental expectation of students at WLSS is that they respect themselves, fellow students, staff and visitors to the school. We expect all members of our community to behave in a mature, responsible, and reasonable manner at all times.

The Watson Lake Secondary School Conduct Policy applies to incidents on school campus, and on school buses. This policy applies to incidents, which start on school campus and are completed off school campus. In addition, acts which occur completely off campus, but have direct and immediate effect either on the welfare or safety of students, may fall under the School Conduct Policy.

### **Harassment**

Harassment is a form of discrimination. Harassment is prohibited by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and by human rights legislation in every province and territory in Canada.

Watson Lake Secondary School is committed to an environment free of harassment on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation or disability. Types of behaviour which constitute harassment include but are not limited to:

- a. written or verbal abuse, threats and/or intimidation
- b. displaying visual material which is offensive or age-inappropriate
- c. unwelcome remarks, jokes, comments, innuendoes or vulgar language including swearing
- d. condescending or patronizing behaviour which undermines self-esteem or adversely affects the working or learning environment
- e. unwanted physical contact
- f. bullying, which may include inappropriate behaviours from the above list.

Acts of harassment/bullying will be dealt with by the principal and may result in suspension or dismissal.

### **Threats**

Threats that pose imminent physical injury to an individual or group will not be treated as a prank. They will be taken seriously and dealt with seriously. The consequence for such an event would be a suspension from school. The principal may contact the RCMP should it be needed.

### **Fighting**

Fighting is defined as any physical act of striking, kicking, shoving, pushing or any other physical violence being used against another person.

A significant concern in altercations between/among students, is the bystander, who verbally or physically encourages fighting. These students will be considered active participants and may be suspended.

Students are encouraged to seek staff help in preventing or stopping a fight. Counsellors, teachers, administrators and other staff are available to help students resolve difficulties in ways other than fighting. When two or more students are involved in physical altercations, all parties will be suspended.

Self-defense can be claimed only when the student claiming it uses the minimum force necessary to escape injury. Active participation in a fight will result in suspension, even if the second party can be demonstrated to have started the fight.

### **Drugs and Alcohol**

The actual or attempted sale, use of, or possession of intoxication liquor, illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia while under the jurisdiction of the school shall be subject to suspension or expulsion under the terms outlined in the Yukon Education Act. Students are subject to arrest for any drug/alcohol-related activities. Disciplinary action shall be taken by the school administration, regardless of whether or not criminal charges or prosecution result.

### **Obscenity/Profanity**

Students are to use discretion in their choice of language. Profane and/or obscene language and/or gestures will not be tolerated. Obscenities include spoken or written profanities, obscene or sexual messages. If

profanity is used, disciplinary action will be taken. Profanity directed at a staff member will result in suspension in accordance with section 41 of the Education Act.

### **Refusal to Identify Self**

All students and guests in our school building, on school buses, school grounds or at school-sponsored events must, upon request by school staff identify themselves. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action.

### **Tampering with Fire Alarm**

Activating or tampering with a fire alarm is a **Criminal Code Offence** and will result in strong disciplinary action including a report to the R.C.M.P. and school suspension or expulsion.

### **Trespassing**

A student who has been dismissed, suspended, or removed from the school roll is considered to be trespassing if he/she enters or remains on school property without permission. If after an official warning this behaviour persists, the situation will be referred to the police and charges will be laid under the Territorial School Trespass Act. Under the act, 2. (1) "no person shall trespass on the premises of a school ... with respect to which he has had notice by an authorized person not to trespass".

### **Vandalism**

Vandalism is defined as removing, misusing, destroying, defacing, or mutilating objects or materials belonging to the school, school personnel, or other persons. In all instances, the parents/guardians will be notified, and the student made liable for damages unless other arrangements are made and agreed to by both parties. Depending on the severity of the vandalism, the following sanctions may result:

- a. notification of parents
- b. possible police involvement
- c. suspensions and/or expulsions as provided for under section 41 of the Yukon Education Act.

### **Excessive Displays of Affection**

Excessive displays of affection, are not acceptable forms of public behaviour within a school environment. Please demonstrate discretion and self-control while on campus and during school related off-campus activities.

### **Disruptive/Disobedience**

Disruptive behaviour is student conduct which interferes with the educational process or with school-sponsored activities and will not be tolerated. Examples of disruptive behaviour include but not limited to, horseplay, insubordinately talking out, moving around the classroom without permission, profanity, uncomplimentary gestures or threatening behaviour, non-compliance with school/class rules, and refusing to acknowledge a teacher's direction.

**Attendance**

The Yukon Education Act states that students must attend school from age six years eight months until age sixteen years. It comes as no surprise that there is a strong correlation between attendance and the success rate of students in school. In addition to the obvious need to be in attendance to receive proper instruction, regular attendance is a good indicator of a student's commitment to learning. Parents/guardians can do much to reinforce the value of education through their actions and by their words.

**Senior High School Attendance Policy**

Regular attendance in school and in the work place is the foundation for life-long success. Educational research has clearly shown a link between high levels of attendance and success. With this belief in mind, we have adopted a high school attendance policy, with the approval of School Council, which began in the 2004 - 2005 school year. This policy is part of our School Plan.

With this policy in mind, high school students are reminded that notification to the home takes place at the 4, 8 and 12 day level in a subject area. At the 14 day level, in any semester, a senior high student will face a school dismissal and may only return to class if:

- a. a "plan for change" has been presented to School Council
  - b. School Council accepts the plan and notifies the school to this effect.
- At the beginning of each semester, a student starts fresh with no carryover from the previous semester.

**Notification of Absence**

When a student is absent from school, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to notify the school of the absence. This can be done in one of three ways:

- a) Notify the office prior to the absence with a note or phone call;
- b) Telephone the school the day of the absence; or
- c) Bring a note on the first day a student returns. A medical certificate may be required.

**Signing in and Out**

Because of safety regulations, all students must obtain permission to leave the school during school hours and must sign in and out.

**Smoking**

Smoking or the use of chewing tobacco is prohibited on school property.

**Dress Code**

Students are expected to dress within the bounds of good taste. A public school reserves the right to establish a dress standard that is reasonable for all concerned.

**Cell Phone Pager Policy**

WLSS wishes to maintain the privacy of each student and staff member as well as to reduce distractions/disturbances in our learning environment. As a consequence, cell phones or pager possession by students is prohibited on school premises. Cell phones/pagers found on premises will be turned in to the office and may be picked up by parents/guardians at the end of the school week.

### **Audio Devices Policy**

Given the proliferation of audio devices and the disruptions they present to the learning environment, all personal audio devices must be kept in lockers. Listening devices found in classrooms will be turned in to the office and available to students at the end of the school week.

### **Student Request for Leave of Absence**

When a student is going to be absent from school for a period of two or more days, the parent or guardian must notify the school. This will allow teachers time to organize school work that the student can work on during his/her absence.

### **Policy for Tests and Examinations**

#### Tests

If a student is absent on the day of a test, he or she must return to school with a valid excuse signed by a parent/guardian. The student is expected to write the test within two school days of his or her return. If the student's absence is unexcused, or if the test is not made up within two school days, a mark of zero will be recorded for the test.

#### Examinations

Students in all grades write examinations at appropriate times in the school year and generally at the end of each semester. The only reason accepted for absence from exams are: verified medical reasons, humanitarian grounds, or prior approval by the school for cause, eg. mandatory court appearance.