



Almadina Language Charter Academy Policy Manual

POLICY # 14

WELCOMING, CARING, RESPECTFUL, SAFE

Students are better able to achieve success and a positive sense of self when schools are inclusive, welcoming, caring, respectful and safe. Such environments support students in building healthy relationships with others, value diversity and demonstrate respect, empathy, and compassion. At Almadina, we believe a safe, caring, respectful environment is key to a healthy learning and working environment.

Inclusion and a sense of belonging for all students – those from difficult backgrounds, those with learning challenges, those who excel academically or on the sports field, those of minority colour, race, sexual orientation or religious beliefs, those who are large or small, those who are absolutely “average” – stems from creating an environment in which we focus on all the ways in which we have the same right to learn, not on the things that make us different from each other, and the same responsibility to treat others as we want others to treat us.

Each student and staff member within the Almadina Language Charter Academy has the right to learn and work in an environment that promotes dignity, respect and equality of opportunity. The Charter Board is committed to providing a welcoming, caring, respectful, safe and healthy learning and working environment that respects diversity, nurtures a sense of belonging, a positive sense of self, and promotes well-being in all its aspects.

The Charter Board is further obligated to protect all students and staff from bullying, harassment, discrimination, and violence during school-related activities. Bullying is defined as *repeated and hostile or demeaning behavior by an individual in the school community where the behavior is intended to cause harm, fear or distress to one or more other individuals in the school community, including psychological harm or harm to an individual's reputation.*

All those involved with the Almadina Language Charter Academy, including Directors, employees, students, parents, volunteers, contractors, and visitors must share in the responsibility for eliminating bullying, discrimination, harassment, and violence. The Charter Board prohibits bullying, harassment, discriminatory and violent behaviours and expects allegations of such behaviours to be investigated in a timely and respectful manner.

One key outcome of our vision is that all students will possess a strong connection to the Almadina Language Charter Academy as a welcoming, caring, respectful, safe place focused on their individualized success.

SPECIFICALLY

1. The Charter Board affirm the rights, as provided for in the Alberta Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, of each staff member and each student enrolled in a school operated by ALCA.
2. The Charter Board also affirms that no employee or student will be discriminated against as provided for in the Alberta Human Rights Act or the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
3. The Charter Board acknowledges its responsibility to ensure welcoming, caring, respectful, safe and healthy learning and working environments for all students and staff. It further recognizes the importance of students' emotional, social, intellectual and physical wellness to their success in school, and in support of a safe, caring environment expects students to adhere to the Student Code of Conduct – AP102.
4. The Charter Board also acknowledges its responsibility in the use of personal information. That is, in accordance with FOIP (Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act) legislation 39 (4) A public body may use personal information only to the extent necessary to enable the public body to carry out its purpose in a reasonable manner.
5. The Charter Board expects all Directors, employees, students, parents, volunteers, visitors, and contractors to embrace and support this policy. This policy covers behavior not only on school property, but also at any school-related functions and applies whether contact is face- to-face, by phone, fax, e-mail, internet, social media sites, or any other means of communication. Threatening, harassing, intimidating, assaulting or bullying, in any way, any person within the school community, including aggressive behaviours such as hate messaging through websites created in the student's home or in other off-campus settings, is strictly prohibited.
6. The Charter Board expects all members of the school community to report to a responsible adult, in a timely manner, all incidents of bullying, threats, harassment, discrimination, violence or intimidation regardless of the identity of the alleged harasser or offender.
7. The Charter Board will hear unresolved student or staff complaints of bullying, discrimination or harassment.
8. Staff who engage in a single egregious or repeated behavior which is consistent with the definition of bullying or discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action. The consequences for bullying or discrimination on prohibited grounds may include any and all legal recourse including termination of employment.
9. Students who engage in a single egregious or repeated behavior which is consistent with the definition of bullying or discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action that considers the student's age, maturity, and individual circumstances. The goal in responding

to such behavior is “to discipline or to teach” the student so that undesirable behavior is replaced with desirable behavior arising from the development of empathy and compassion toward others. Disciplinary action will focus first on mentoring, restorative processes, and support to change the unacceptable behavior. Reasonable efforts to stop the undesirable behaviors of bullying others may include suspension or expulsion.

10. Students who experience bullying, harassment or discrimination will be supported through various means such as mentoring, restorative processes, and counselling.

Legal Reference: School Act Section 12, 16.1, 18, 20, 24, 45.1, 50, 60, 61
Alberta Human Rights Act
An Act to Amend the Alberta Bill of Rights to Protect our Children (formerly Bill 10-June 2015)
Teaching Profession Act
Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Cross Reference: FOIP (Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act) legislation 39 (4)

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Due for Review: