

# CAPSTONE ENGINEERING ACADEMY

## WELCOMING, CARING, RESPECTFUL AND SAFE LEARNING AND WORK ENVIRONMENTS POLICY

Effective Date: July 2021

Capstone Engineering Academy (Capstone) is committed to creating welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and work environments that respect Diversity and foster a sense of belonging. Capstone also affirms the rights of each student and employee provided for in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

### Definitions

- a) **Bullying** - means the repeated and hostile or demeaning behaviour by an individual in the School Community or work environment where the behaviour 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.

Bullying can take different forms including:

- i. Physical – pushing, hitting;
- ii. Verbal – name calling, threats;
- iii. Social/Relational – exclusions, rumours; and/or
- iv. Cyber/Digital – using digital technology to harass, demean or threaten

- b) **Discrimination** - means an action or a decision that treats a person or a group of people negatively for reasons such as race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status or sexual orientation. These provisions are identified in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

- c) **Diversity** - means the full range of uniqueness within humanity. Dimensions of diversity include but are not limited to those identified in the Discrimination definition as well as the following:

- i. Cultural and linguistic diversity;
- ii. Family composition;
- iii. Gender identity/expression;
- iv. Sexual orientation;
- v. Language;
- vi. Physical attributes; and/or
- vii. Socio-economic status.

- d) **Harassment** - means any behaviour or pattern of repeated behaviour that disparages,

humiliates or harms another person, or denies an individual's dignity and respect and is demeaning or humiliating to another person.

- e) **School Community** - means the inclusion of individuals or groups engaging with schools in learning or support of student learning and Capstone.

## **General**

1. Capstone is committed to providing all students and staff with a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and work environment consistent with the *Education Act*, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and the *Alberta Human Rights Act*.
2. When engaged with Capstone, members of the community have a responsibility to promote and support a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and work environment that respects Diversity and fosters a sense of belonging and to follow Capstone's General Code of Conduct.
3. All students and parents have a responsibility to promote and support a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and work environment that respects Diversity and fosters a sense of belonging consistent with the *Education Act*. This includes following Capstone's Student and General Codes of Conduct and other relevant Policies and Procedures.
4. All staff have a responsibility to promote and support a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and work environment that respects Diversity and fosters a sense of belonging. This includes following Capstone's General Code of Conduct and other relevant Policies and Procedures.

## **Learning and Work Environment**

5. A welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and work environment is one that is physically, emotionally and psychological safe and is characterized by:
  - a) caring and empathy for all individuals and groups;
  - b) a feeling of belonging by all participants;
  - c) freedom from Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment;
  - d) an inviting space that is representative of those who participate;
  - e) respect for and participation in maintaining democratic values, rights and responsibilities;
  - f) respecting and embracing Diversity;
  - g) balancing individual concerns with the rights and needs of others;
  - h) development and maintenance of positive relationships with others in order to manage conflict and to reach consensus in the pursuit of common goals;
  - i) community, family, student and employee involvement;
  - j) appropriate modelling by staff, parents and students;
  - k) clear, consistent expectations for behaviour; and
  - l) consequences for misconduct, including suspension and expulsion, which are communicated to students, parents and staff.

## **Principals**

6. The Principal must model, foster and maintain a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects Diversity and fosters a sense of belonging for all members of the School Community through measures, which include:
  - a) support of student learning by:
    - i. developing positive student attitudes towards the school, the community, the global community and the environment;
    - ii. providing students with an environment and program which provides opportunities for and recognition of success and which fosters self- esteem, self-discipline and sense of responsibility;
    - iii. assisting students in developing skills to understand different approaches to solving problems and resolving conflicts; and
    - iv. assist students in developing skills to be positive members of the School Community; and
  - b) work with the staff and the School Community by:
    - i. developing the support of students, staff and parents for the conditions which characterize a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and work environment;
    - ii. making students, staff and parents participating in school-related activities aware of expectations for their conduct and the consequences established for misconduct; and
    - iii. advising parents of their responsibilities under section 32 of the *Education Act*.
7. The Principal of the school shall ensure:
  - a) all staff members are aware of their shared responsibility for creating and maintaining welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and work environment where the rights of students and staff are respected;
  - b) learning resources utilized in the school respect and reflect the Diversity within the community;
  - c) culturally based activities are tied to learning outcomes and respect the culture they are intended to represent; and
  - d) all members of the School Community are aware of the expectation to model welcoming, caring, respectful and safe behaviour.

## **Students**

8. All students are subject to the Student Code of Conduct.
9. All students share in the responsibility for maintaining a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment.
10. Consistent with the Student Code of Conduct, students may be held accountable for behaviour that impacts the school beyond the hours of school operation when their conduct detrimentally affects a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and work environment.

## **Parents**

11. As set out in section 32 of the *Education Act*, parents have a responsibility:
  - a) to ensure that the parent's conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring,

- respectful and safe learning environment;
- b) to cooperate and collaborate with school staff to support the delivery of supports and services to the child; and
- c) to encourage, foster and advance collaborative, positive and respectful relationships with teachers, principals, other school staff and professionals providing supports and services in the school.

## **Staff**

12. Staff have an obligation to support and model behaviour that contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and work environment that respects Diversity and fosters a sense of belonging.

## **Support for Student Organizations (e.g. Diversity Clubs, GSAs)**

13. As stated in section 35.1(1) of the *Education Act*, if one or more students attending Capstone request support from staff members to establish a voluntary student organization, or to lead an activity intended to promote a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects Diversity and fosters a sense of belonging, the Principal shall:
  - a) immediately grant permission for the establishment of the student organization or the holding of the activity at the school; and
  - b) 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.
14. The Principal shall immediately inform the board and the Minister if no staff member is available to serve as a staff liaison, and if so informed, the Minister shall appoint a responsible adult to work with the requesting students in organizing the activity or to facilitate the establishment, and the ongoing operation, of the student organization at the school.

## **Naming of Student Activities and Organizations**

15. The students may select a respectful and inclusive name for the organization or activity, including the name “gay-straight alliance” or “queer-straight alliance”, after consulting with the Principal.
16. For greater certainty, the Principal shall not prohibit or discourage students from choosing a name that includes “gay-straight alliance” or “queer-straight alliance”.

## **Capstone Staff Initiated Student Organizations or Activities**

17. A teacher, in consultation with the Principal, may initiate a student organization or activity intended to promote a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning

environment that respects Diversity and fosters a sense of belonging as described above.

### **Parent Notification**

18. The Principal is responsible for ensuring that notification, if any, respecting a voluntary student organization or activity referred to in this Policy is consistent with the *Education Act* and *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* governing disclosure of personal information and the usual practices relating to notifications of other student organizations and activities.
19. Principals are encouraged to consult with the Board for support regarding parent notification.
20. If student participation in an organization or activity includes an off-site activity, Off-site Activities Policy will apply and parents will be required to sign an Acknowledgement of Risk for the activity.

### **Compliance**

21. Employee conduct that fails to promote a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and work environment that is free from Discrimination, Harassment or Bullying will be subject to disciplinary action.
22. Student conduct that fails to promote a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that is free from Discrimination, Harassment or Bullying, will be subject to discipline and/or intervention in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy, which may include measures up to and including suspension or expulsion.
23. Parent and community member conduct that fails to promote a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment, free from Discrimination, Harassment or Bullying will not be tolerated and will be addressed by the Principal in accordance with Capstone Engineering Academy General Code of Conduct and the *Education Act*.