



<b>EDUCATION POLICY MANUAL</b>	
<b>Category:</b>	<b>STUDENTS</b>
<b>Policy:</b>	<b>507</b>
<b>Approved Date:</b>	<b>September 21, 2016</b>
<b>Revised Date:</b>	
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## **DISCRIMINATION PROTECTION Policy 507**

### **Rationale:**

Independent schools represent a wide range of philosophical, pedagogical, and faith-based perspectives. Schools are generally independently operated by an authority, registered as a Society, with the BC Registrar of Companies, and have a governance board consisting of individuals elected or appointed by the authority.

Each authorized independent school in British Columbia is required to abide by Schedule 1 of the *Independent School Act*. It states that there are basic requirements for independent schools requesting certification as Group 1, 2, 3 or 4 classifications. Article 1 states that:

Before issuing or renewing a certificate of group 1, group 2, group 3 or group 4 classification to an authority the inspector must be satisfied that

- a) no program is in existence or is proposed at the independent school that would, in theory or in practice, promote or foster doctrines of
  - i) racial or ethnic superiority or persecution
  - ii) religious intolerance or persecution
  - iii) social change through violent action, or
  - iv) sedition,
- b) the independent school facilities comply with the enactments of British Columbia and the municipality or regional district in which the facilities are located, and
- c) the authority complies with this *Act* and regulations.

In addition to abiding by Schedule 1 of the *Independent School Act*, it is important that independent schools ensure that students feel connected through the relationships that are created between students, staff, and parents that are part of the school community.

CISPG Schools will continuously develop strategies to make students feel valued, respected and connected within the school community. This will include the protection of the students' physical safety, social connectedness, inclusiveness as well as protection from all forms of bullying, regardless of their gender, gender identity and expression, race, culture, religion or sexual orientation, while remaining consistent with our Catholic faith-values, cultural perspectives and philosophical values.

Students who feel respected, accepted and connected tend to be physically and mentally healthier, and perform better academically. They tend to have fewer incidents of violent or "acting out" behaviour, be less sexually active, have a lower rate of "experimentation", with or "use" of, drugs and alcohol (*Preventing Bullying and Ensuring Safe and Caring School Communities – Level 1; Province of British Columbia, 2013, p 13*).

### **Policy**

*The safety and well-being of children in CISPG Schools is of paramount consideration. Children deserve to be protected from abuse, neglect, bullying, harm or threat of harm. CISPG schools will ensure that children attending our schools will experience a learning environment that enables every child to feel safe, accepted and respected.*

## **Procedures**

CISPG Schools are Catholic learning communities. There are many strategies and activities that can be employed within a school to enable students to feel safe, accepted and respected. The following suggestions are provided to facilitate a conversation on strengthening the learning environment for children.

- acknowledge students by name
- be visible within the school during class transitions, breaks, before/after school
- engage parents in the educational program and school life of their children
- find ways to acknowledge students for their contributions in the school community, including those where improvement comes only in small increments.
- communicate expectations, values and norms that support positive health and academic behaviour in the school community
- be proactive in connecting with students that are experiencing academic and/or social issues
- promote open communication among administrators, teachers, staff, students, families and communities
- encourage parents to share their culture and expectations
- engage students in the decision-making process of policies and activities that build community