

DRUG FREE PROTOCOL

Operating Guidelines

- As a general principle, possession of, or trafficking in, any illegal substance is utterly incompatible with the statutory requirement of the *Education Act* and the Student Responsibilities.
- The boards are committed to dealing with possession of, or trafficking in, illegal substances in the school environment in a vigorous way.
- The school may request assistance of the RCMP personnel assisted by a trained canine member(s) of the force to conduct co-operative patrols of the school when reasonable suspicion exists.
- If any illegal substance is detected within school property as a result of an RCMP investigation the school will request to the RCMP that the appropriate student be dealt with by school administration rather than, and instead of, the student being dealt with in a criminal context by the RCMP.
- If the affected student is unable to provide a compelling reason why the general principle should not be applied to him or her, a recommendation for expulsion may be the result.
- In all cases, the parents or legal guardians of an affected student will be notified of salient facts that have come to light as a result of any contravention of the Protocol.

Education Act, Section 31

A student, as a partner in education, has the responsibility to:

- attend school regularly and punctually,*
- be ready to learn and actively engage in and diligently pursue the student's education,*
- ensure that the student's conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging,*
- respect the rights of others in the school,*
- refrain from, report and not tolerate bullying or bullying behaviour directed toward others in the school, whether or not it occurs within the school building, during the school day or by electronic means,*
- comply with the rules of the school and the policies of the board,*
- co-operate with everyone authorized by the board to provide education programs and other services,*
- be accountable to the student's teachers and other school staff for the student's conduct, and*
- positively contribute to the student's school and community.*

Education Act, Section 37 (1)

If a student is suspended in accordance with section 36, the principal may recommend, prior to the end of the student's suspension, that the board expel the student if:

- a. the student has displayed an attitude of wilful, blatant and repeated refusal to comply with Section 31, or*
- b. the student has displayed an attitude of wilful, blatant and repeated refusal to comply with the code of conduct established under section 33 (2),*
- c. the student's conduct, whether or not the conduct occurs within the school building or during the school day, is injurious to the physical or mental wellbeing of others in the school, or*
- d. the student has distributed an intimate image of another person in the circumstances described in section 1(1.1).*

Consequences

- Possession of illegal drugs will normally result in a recommendation for expulsion from the school being forwarded to the Board of Trustees.
- Alternative educational programming will be provided to students expelled for violation of this Protocol.
- A student will be required to complete an Addiction Services (formerly AADAC) or like program before seeking reinstatement into school.
- As part of the Protocol, legal charges will not be laid for possession of drugs unless the amount found is of sufficient quantity to indicate trafficking.
- The school will request to the RCMP that the student receive consequences from the school/school board rather than through the Criminal Justice System.

Partnership Roles & Responsibilities**Board of Trustees**

The boards of both St. Albert school divisions will work diligently to create and maintain a safe, caring and secure learning environment for all the students that they serve.

Students

All students are expected to comply with the *Education Act* and the intent of the Drug Free Protocol. They will also be asked to sign a locker license, which states that their use of a school locker is subject to search at any time, with reasonable grounds, by school personnel in accordance with the Protocol. Lockers will continue to be assigned through the school office.

Parents/Guardians

Parents/guardians play an essential role in working with their school divisions to develop appropriate student behaviour and conduct. As such, they are expected to be aware of

board policy and regulations, and the school's expectations for student behaviour. Parents/guardians are viewed as partners in every aspect of their child's education, and schools welcome their participation in the resolution of emergent issues that affect their children.

Staff

School Administrators will work collaboratively with the RCMP to ensure staff, students and parents/guardians know what the Protocol entails and what the procedures will be. They will communicate with parents/guardians in a variety of ways on an annual basis. They will also be responsible to notify the parents/guardians of a student found in possession and under the influence of drugs at school.

RCMP

Members of the St. Albert detachment of the RCMP will participate in student and parent information sessions. When reasonable suspicion exists, the RCMP will conduct canine patrols with school administrators in all secondary schools, and provide assistance as required to school and system administration.

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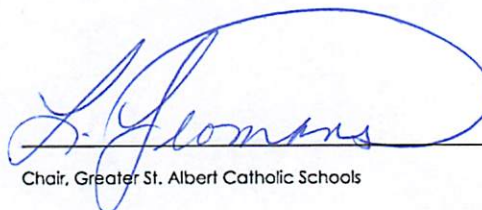
Formal Agreement

In June 1999, St. Albert Public Schools (formerly known as St. Albert Protestant Schools) and Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools entered into a formal agreement with the RCMP that permits the implementation of a Drug Free Protocol in St. Albert schools. The success of the two-year Drug Free Protocol pilot program led to the endorsement by both school divisions to continue with the program.

The aim of the Drug Free Protocol is to support what schools and parents/guardians are already doing to reduce and eventually eliminate drugs in secondary schools. It reflects the wisdom of several stakeholder groups and the "safe, caring and secure schools" philosophy that is shared by both school boards, Alberta Education and other educational organizations. The Protocol continues to provide leadership in the development of a community response to drug issues in St. Albert.

Our goal is to maintain the best possible learning environment for our students, settings in which they feel safe and secure, and where they can learn without hindrance.

A wise person once said, "You are more than a human being, you are a human becoming". We are sure that, as parents/guardians, you will share our goal for your children to grow and thrive in schools that enrich their journey into adulthood and responsible citizenship. As always, we welcome your support and value your encouragement.


Chair, St. Albert Public Schools
Chair, Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools