



## **Creating a Safe and Respectful Learning Environment: Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression<sup>1</sup> and Support for Student Organizations**

The mission of Rundle College Society (hereafter Rundle) is to create a nurturing, engaging environment that provides an enriched, personalized education, preparing students for an ever-changing world.

The policies and procedures described in this document represent a practical expression of our mission, and they align with Alberta Education's commitment to an equitable and inclusive education system. The Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) governs the disclosure of personal information by Rundle.

### **Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression**

#### *Policy*

This includes those students, staff, and families who identify or are perceived as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans<sup>2</sup>, two-spirit, queer, questioning and/or as gender-diverse in respect to their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. Rundle expects all members of this diverse community to be welcomed, respected, accepted, and supported in every school.

Self-identification is recognized as the sole measure of an individual's sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

All members of the school community have the right to learn and work in an environment free of discrimination, prejudice, and harassment. This right is guaranteed under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the *Alberta Human Rights Act*, and the *School Act*. This right shall be supported and enforced so that all members of the school community may work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and appreciation for individual differences. Rundle

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<sup>1</sup> First adapted from Edmonton Public School Board [Policy, Objective and Regulations](#) in 2016. *Updated January, 2018.*

<sup>2</sup> Some individuals identify with terms such as transgender, transsexual, gender fluid, gender diverse and agender. We have chosen to use the word trans in this document as an inclusive, continually evolving umbrella term commonly used to describe individuals whose gender identity and gender expression differ in some way from the sex they were assigned at birth. While we recognize this umbrella term may not fit for everyone, our intention is to be as inclusive as possible.

will not tolerate harassment, bullying, intimidation, or discrimination on the basis of a person's actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Rundle believes that all students, staff and families, including those in a sexual or gender minority, have the right to:

- be treated fairly, equitably, and with dignity and respect;
- have their confidentiality protected and respected;
- self-identification and determination;
- freedom of conscience, expression, and association;
- be fully included and represented in an inclusive, positive, and respectful manner;
- have equitable access to the same supports, services, and protections;
- have avenues of recourse (without fear of reprisal) available to them when they are victims of harassment, prejudice, discrimination, intimidation, bullying, and/or violence; and
- have their unique identities, families, cultures, and communities included, valued and respected within all aspects of the school environment.

Rundle is committed to implementing measures that will:

- define appropriate expectations, behaviours, language, and actions in order to prevent discrimination, prejudice, and harassment through greater awareness of, and responsiveness to, their harmful effects;
- ensure that all such discriminatory behaviours and complaints will be taken seriously, documented, and dealt with expeditiously and effectively through consistently applied policy and procedures;
- improve understanding of the individual lives of sexual and gender minorities and their families, cultures, and communities; and
- develop, implement, and evaluate inclusive educational strategies, professional development opportunities, and administrative guidelines to ensure that everyone, including those in sexual and gender minorities, are welcomed and treated with respect and dignity in all aspects of the school community.

### *Objective*

School staff are expected to ensure a welcoming, supportive environment for all members of the community, including sexual minority staff, students and families.

## *Regulations*

### **A. LEADERSHIP**

The principal shall:

- provide a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging;
- ensure all aspects of this document are clearly communicated to all staff, students, and families;
- ensure staff address and provide appropriate remedial consequences for all interactions involving the use of homophobic, transphobic, and sexist comments, behaviours and actions, whether they occur in person or in digital form;
- ensure staff know their professional responsibility to identify discriminatory attitudes and behaviours, and create caring, respectful and safe learning environments;
- ensure awareness and adherence to all Rundle policies with respect to diversity, equity, human rights, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, discrimination, prejudice, and harassment;
- ensure staff utilize language and educational resources and approaches that are inclusive, age-appropriate, and respectful of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions;
- provide inclusive and respectful services and supports to everyone, including those in sexual and gender minorities;
- ensure staff work proactively to eliminate systemic inequities and barriers to learning for everyone, including sexual and gender minorities;
- support the establishment of student organizations and support groups where interest by students has been expressed;
- inform the school community that the school counsellors will serve as safe contacts for all students, including those in sexual and gender minorities;
- direct staff members to not refer students to programs or services that attempt to fix, change or repair a student's sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression;
- ensure discriminatory behaviours and complaints will be taken seriously, documented and dealt with expeditiously; and
- ensure all staff recognize the confidentiality of the sexual orientation and gender identity of all students and protect them from unwanted disclosure of such information.

## **B. STAFF**

Rundle is a safe and respectful working environment where diversity is valued and embraced and staff are supported and treated with respect. All staff share responsibility for creating and maintaining a work environment that is free of discrimination and harassment. Complaints of discrimination and harassment of any kind, including complaints based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression shall be promptly investigated and resolved by administration.

## **C. EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES**

Rundle engages in employment practices which:

- are free of bias resulting from any prejudice, including prejudice related to sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression; and
- ensure equal opportunity for employment and advancement.

## **D. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

To assist all staff to become more knowledgeable about sexual and gender minority identities, expressions, cultures, and communities, Rundle will provide professional development opportunities to assist staff to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and appropriate teaching practices necessary to create safe, inclusive, equitable, and respectful schools.

## **E. TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES**

Teaching and learning resources shall be chosen and updated to promote critical thinking and should include age-appropriate materials that accurately reflect the diversity of Canada, including sexual and gender minority families, cultures, and communities.

## **F. SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

To foster community involvement, each school's Parent Advisory Council (PAC) will serve in an advisory role to be a voice for students and families and to support the effective implementation of this document.

## **G. GENDER IDENTITY AND GENDER EXPRESSION**

To support the safety, health, and educational needs of students who identify as, or express themselves as, transgender or transsexual persons, Rundle staff shall adhere to the following recommended practices wherever possible and appropriate:

## **Names and Pronouns**

Any person in the Rundle community has the right to be addressed by a name and pronoun that corresponds to his or her consistently asserted gender identity or gender expression. Anyone requesting a change in name or use of pronoun will be required to submit that request in writing, including the specific way to reference the student in school documents as well as to peers, parents, guardians, or other adults outside of the Rundle community.

## **Official Records and Communication**

When requested by an independent student, or the parent/guardian, documents in the student's official record from that day forward will be changed to reflect their consistently preferred name, sex, or gender. From then onward, all school forms and records shall be changed to ensure that the student's preferred name and sex or gender is current on class lists, timetables, student files, identification cards, etc.

The school will inform the independent student or parent/guardian of limitations regarding their chosen name and gender identity or gender expression in relation to official school records that require legal name designation. A legal name change is required to alter official Alberta Education documents.

## **Gender-Segregated Activities**

To the greatest extent possible, Rundle will reduce or eliminate the practice of segregating students by gender, with the exception of already established single gender-based programs. In classroom activities or extracurricular programs where students are segregated by gender, all students should reasonably be given the option to be included in the group that corresponds to their consistently asserted gender identity or expression.

## **Athletics and Changing Room Accessibility**

Rundle shall proactively review their Athletic Handbooks to ensure they are inclusive of sexual and gender minority students, and that they align with the policies of the Alberta Schools' Athletic Association (ASAA). Students shall not be asked or be required to have Physical Education outside of assigned class time, and shall, subject to safety considerations, be permitted to reasonably participate in any gender-segregated activities in accordance with their consistently asserted gender identity or expression, if they so choose.

All students shall, subject to safety considerations, have access to changing rooms that correspond to their consistently asserted gender identity or expression. In changing rooms that require undressing in front of others, students who desire increased privacy for any reason (e.g.,

medical, religious, cultural, gender identity, gender expression, etc.) shall be provided with an alternative changing room that best meets their individual needs and privacy concerns.

### **Restroom Accessibility**

All students shall have access to a restroom that allows for appropriate privacy and that does not significantly disrupt the school environment. Staff shall consistently demonstrate sensitivity to the needs and safety of all students with respect to restroom access. The principal shall ensure that individual solutions to restroom access are implemented with respect and discretion.

### **Dress Code**

Within the limits defined by the Rundle Student Dress Code for each school, all students have the right to dress in a manner consistent with their gender identity or gender expression.

### **Resolving Conflict**

The school's administration shall be the final determiner of disputes that may arise with regard to each student's participation in school activities. Furthermore, the resolution of any conflict will involve reasonable accommodation and inclusiveness.

### **Support for Student Organizations**

#### *Policy*

Students are entitled to welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments that respect diversity and nurture a sense of belonging and a positive sense of self.

#### *Procedures*

1. If one or more students request a staff member for support 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 of the school 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.

2. An organization or activity includes an organization or activity that promotes equality and non-discrimination with respect to, without limitation, race, religious belief, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, family status or sexual orientation, including but not limited to organizations such as gay-straight alliances, diversity clubs, anti-racism clubs and anti-bullying clubs.
3. 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. For greater certainty, the principal shall not prohibit or discourage students from choosing a name that includes “gay-straight alliance” or “queer-straight alliance”.
4. The principal is responsible for ensuring that notification, if any, respecting a voluntary student organization or an activity referred to in section 3 above is limited to the fact of the establishment of the organization or the holding of the activity and is otherwise consistent with the usual practices relating to notifications of other student organizations and activities.

### **Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week**

The 3rd week in November in each year is Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week and its purpose is to promote awareness and understanding of bullying and its consequences in the school community.

**Rundle College Society  
Student Code of Conduct**  
*(Updated March 2018)*

The Board of Directors originally established a Code of Conduct when Rundle College Society (“Rundle”) was founded in 1985. In accordance with the *School Act*<sup>3</sup>, the Code of Conduct is now made publicly available, reviewed every year, and provided to all staff, students and parents/guardians.

The Student Code of Conduct contains:

1. Purpose and Rationale
2. Prohibited Grounds of Discrimination
3. Acceptable and Unacceptable Behaviour
  - 3.1 Student Responsibilities
  - 3.2 Bullying
  - 3.3 Academic Integrity
  - 3.4 Use of Technology
  - 3.5 Dress Code
  - 3.6 Conduct Detrimental to the Safe Operations of the School
4. Consequences of Unacceptable Behavior
  - 4.1 Applicability
  - 4.2 Individualization and Support
  - 4.3 Student Wellness
  - 4.4 Suspensions and Expulsions
5. Limitations

## **1. Purpose and Rationale**

The purpose of this Student Code of Conduct is to provide a clear standard for student behaviour that is acceptable in the Rundle community. It is based on the rationale that the Rundle community of students, parents/guardians, and staff will focus on providing welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments. Students will display positive attitudes and behaviour suggesting they are serious about all aspects of their school experience, will respect each other’s person and property, and will adhere to a high standard of moral and ethical conduct.

## **2. Prohibited Grounds of Discrimination and Harassment**

All persons are equal in dignity, rights and responsibilities without regard to 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

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<sup>3</sup> *School Act s45.1(3)*



sexual orientation.<sup>4</sup> Rundle does not condone any form of discrimination based on these prohibited grounds.

Harassment means any inappropriate conduct, comment, display, action or gesture by a person that constitutes a threat to a person's health or safety or that is likely to create a hostile environment. It involves either repeated conduct, comments, displays, actions or gestures or a single, serious occurrence of conduct, a comment, a display, an action or a gesture that has a lasting harmful effect. The effect could adversely impact a person's psychological or physical well-being. In cases of harassment, the person knew or ought reasonably to have known that their behaviour would cause a person to be humiliated or intimidated.

Harassment is a form of discrimination if it is based on one or more of the prohibited ground listed above.

Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to: written, verbal or physical abuse; threats; derogatory remarks; jokes and practical jokes that result in embarrassment or awkwardness; innuendo or taunts; bullying; physical or verbal assault; displays of pornographic, racist or offensive signs, images or material; unwelcome invitations or requests, whether indirect or explicit; and patronizing or condescending behaviour.

### **3. Acceptable and Unacceptable Behaviour**

#### **3.1 Student Responsibilities**

Each student shall comply with the expectation to:

- a. be diligent in pursuing their studies;
- b. attend school regularly and punctually;
- c. cooperate fully with everyone who provides education programs and other services;
- d. comply with the rules of the school;
- e. account to their teachers for their conduct;
- f. respect the rights of others.<sup>5</sup>
- g.

#### **3.2 Bullying**

"Bullying" means repeated and hostile or demeaning behaviour by an individual in the school community 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.<sup>6</sup> "Cyberbullying" is a bullying that involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile

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<sup>4</sup> *Alberta Human Rights Act, Preamble*

<sup>5</sup> *School Act s12*

<sup>6</sup> *School Act s1(1)(b.1)*

behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others.<sup>7</sup>

“Bullying” also means the distribution of an intimate image of another person knowing that the person depicted in the image did not consent to the distribution, or being reckless as to whether or not that person consented to the distribution.<sup>8</sup>

The third week in November in each year is Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week and serves to promote awareness and understanding of bullying and its consequences in the school community.<sup>9</sup>

### 3.3 Academic Integrity

Rundle has a high standard of accountability in its academic rigor. Our students have a high level of knowledge and competence upon graduation. This standard cannot be recognized when academic dishonesty occurs whether through active choice (e.g., copying someone else’s work; plagiarism) or by collusion (e.g., providing work for someone else to copy). A breach of academic integrity is unacceptable and dishonest students will face consequences as severe as suspension or recommendation for expulsion.

### 3.4 Student Use of Technology Resources

Student behaviour will adhere to the Rundle ‘Student Use of Technology Resources Agreement’ that specifically governs the use and application of technology resources for all students.

### 3.5 Dress Code

Students at Rundle will adhere to their school’s established dress code during school hours and on related excursions. In situations where students are not required to wear the standard uniform (e.g., dress down days, theme days, Phys Ed and option courses, sports team practices, field trips and travel), students will dress in a manner that is modest, conservative, and promotes a positive image of Rundle. It is the responsibility of school personnel to address uniform concerns with student dress and deportment in all school-related activities.

### 3.6 Prohibited Activities

No person shall disturb or interrupt the proceedings of a school, disturb or interrupt the proceedings of a school meeting or board meeting; loiter or trespass in a school building or on school property;—or canvass, sell or offer to sell goods, services or merchandise to a teacher or a student in a school without the prior approval of the board.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Bill Belsey

<sup>8</sup> *School Act s1(1)(1.1)*

<sup>9</sup> *School Act s43.1(1)*

<sup>10</sup> *School Act s27 (1) and (2)*

## **4. Consequences of Unacceptable Behaviour**

Any behaviour which occurs either at school or in public which has the effect of seriously jeopardizing the good name and reputation of Rundle will lead to consequences as severe as suspension or recommendation for expulsion.

### 4.1 Applicability

A student may be suspended or be recommended for expulsion if the student fails to comply with the Code of Conduct or if the student's conduct, whether or not the conduct occurs within the school building during the school day or by electronic means, is injurious to the physical or mental well-being of others in the school.

### 4.2 Individualization and Support

Within each school, incidents of unacceptable behaviour will take account of the student's age, maturity and individual circumstances. Each school will provide reasonable support for students who are impacted by inappropriate behaviour, as well as for students who engage in inappropriate behaviour, through school personnel or referral to professional support outside of Rundle.<sup>11</sup>

### 4.3 Student Wellness

Physical wellness is highly valued at Rundle. The possession or use of tobacco, inhalants (including vape apparatus, e-cigarettes), alcohol, or illegal drugs in any and all activities related to Rundle will face consequences as severe as suspension and recommendation for expulsion. Students under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs in any activities related to Rundle will also face consequences as severe as suspension or recommendation for expulsion.

### 4.4 Suspensions and Expulsions<sup>12</sup>

A student may be suspended from school, from one or more class periods or courses, from bus transportation, or from any school-related activity for failing to comply with the expectations described in Rundle's Code of Conduct.

Students may also be expelled from Rundle for willful, blatant, and repeated behaviour that contravenes Rundle's Code of Conduct; or for demonstration of conduct that is injurious to the physical or mental well-being of others in the school; or for distributing an intimate image of another person in the circumstances described in section 3.2.

Parents/Guardians must be aware that their contracts with Rundle state that there will be no refund of fees in cases of expulsion.

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<sup>11</sup> *School Act s45.1(3)(d)(iv)*

<sup>12</sup> *School Act s24 and s 25*

## 5 Limitations

The exercise of any right or the receipt of any benefit in this Code of Conduct is subject to those limitations that are reasonable in each circumstances under which the right is being exercised or the benefit is being received.<sup>13</sup>

### Acknowledgement of Understanding

I have read and understand this Student Code of Conduct. I also understand that the failure of my child to abide by these expectations may result in disciplinary action, civil and criminal penalties, and potential suspension or expulsion from Rundle. I have discussed this Code of Conduct with my child and hereby confirm that they understand and agree to abide by this Code of Conduct.

In the case of any contradiction in this agreement with applicable legislation, the legislation will hold precedence.

**Student Name:**

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**Parent Name:**

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**Parent Signature:**

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**Date:**

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<sup>13</sup> *School Act s (2)*

## **Rundle College Junior Senior High Student Dress Code**

Rundle College's dress code is part of our tradition as an independent school. The school expects that a student will be neat, well groomed and clean in dress at all times. Students will wear the uniform components that align with their consistently asserted gender identity or gender expression. Every teacher is responsible to ensure that students are well groomed and appropriately dressed. Teachers will deal with minor infractions of the school uniform. School administration will become involved when problems are ongoing and will expect parents to take an active role in working with the school regarding uniforms.

### Components

- Crested burgundy blazer.
- Crested burgundy vest, cardigan or pullover - optional (black vests - Gr. 12).
- Crested white oxford shirt buttoned at the neck (long or short sleeves).
- School tie. (Optional on Fridays.)
- Black leather dress shoes (heels no higher than 2 1/2").
- Black leather belt.
- Grey dress trousers with grey dress socks.
- Tartan skort (3' maximum above the knee) with burgundy or grey tights, or burgundy or grey knee socks (black tights or knee socks for grade 12 only).

### Dress Down Days

Once a month (usually the last Friday of each month) students are permitted to wear non-uniform clothes to school. Students are expected to wear appropriate clothing on these days. Shirts with inappropriate sayings, halter/tube tops, belly shirts and low-rise pants/short-shorts exposing the midriff are not considered appropriate. Students may wear hats in school on dress down days only.

### Gym Strip

Rundle College has a school gym strip (shorts and T-shirt) that is compulsory for all Junior High students for their Physical Education classes. Students in Senior High Physical Education classes will wear their own athletic gear appropriate for the class.