

# Title: Safe and Caring Student Groups Creation

## Policy Statement:

*Trinity Christian School Association (TCSA) believes that all children are loved by God, are individually unique and that the school has a mission to help each student to fulfill their God-given potential in all aspects of their person: physically, academically, socially, morally and spiritually.*

**Approved:** Lynn Gullackson  
(Chair of the Board)

**June 27, 2015**  
(Date)

**First Approval Date:** June 27, 2015

**To Be Reviewed:** June 2019

**Review and Amendment Date(s):** Amended June 29, 2018, September 8, 2018

**Stakeholders Consulted (Date):** April 2015, August 2018

## A. Principles:

1. TCSA is committed to using the policy as a guideline for the creation and operation of student groups that are comprehensive in their approach to inclusion and open to the exploration in a Christian context of a variety of issues including bullying, sexual harassment, sexual orientation, gender identity, discrimination, justice and injustice, and respectful relationships and language.
2. TCSA will provide each enrolled student and every employed staff member with a welcoming, caring, respectful, safe and Christian learning environment.
3. TCSA has established a code of conduct for students that addresses bullying behaviour called the ***TCSA Anti-Bullying Policy***.
4. TCSA affirms the rights, as provided for in the ***Alberta Human Rights Act*** and the ***Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms***, of each staff member employed by the School Authority and each student enrolled in the school in the ***TCSA Bylaws, Article 7.2***.
5. ***Article 7.2*** of the ***TCSA Bylaws*** ensure that staff members employed by the TCSA and students enrolled in a school operated by TCSA will not be discriminated against as provided for in the ***Alberta Human Rights Act*** or the ***Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms***.

6. TCSA follows the principles of the ***TCSA Privacy Policy***, and the Privacy Information Protection Act regarding the disclosure of personal information of staff and students.
7. TCSA follows the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Family Law Act and the Alberta Bill of Rights.
8. Student conduct within a Safe & Caring Group will follow norms established in ***TCSA's General School Regulation, D. Student Conduct***. Violation of those norms may subject a student to disciplinary measures outlined in TCSA's ***Discipline Policy***.

## **B. School Bylaws & Policy Applicable to this Policy:**

This policy adheres to the following Bylaws and Policy of TCSA.

### **1. TCSA Bylaws, Article 7 General 2.**

The Association recognizes that all persons are equal in dignity, rights and responsibilities. In accordance with Christ's command in Matthew 7:12, in accordance with the statutes of the Alberta Human Rights Act RSA 2000 and in accordance with the precepts of the Constitution, the Association will not discriminate or encourage discrimination in its policies and practices.

### **2. TCSA Anti-Bullying Policy**

#### **Policy statement:**

The Board of TCSA is committed to providing a loving, welcoming, caring, respectful, friendly and safe environment for all of our students, so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere free from any form of abuse.

#### **Principles:**

All children and young people should be able to go about their daily lives without the fear of being threatened, assaulted or harassed. Bullying is ultimately an anti-Christian behaviour and affects everyone. All types of bullying are unacceptable at TCSA and will not be tolerated. Our students should feel able to notify us when being bullied, and when bullying behaviour is brought to our attention and identified as such, prompt and effective action will be taken.

### **3. Privacy Policy**

#### **Policy Statement:**

Trinity Christian School Association is committed to protecting the privacy of individual employees, students and guardians. To that end, the Board has implemented a privacy program to meet its privacy goals.

#### **Principles:**

The Board is committed to protecting the confidentiality of personal information in its custody or under its control in compliance with the applicable federal or provincial legislation.

#### **4. General School Regulations**

##### **Principles:**

The Association is dedicated to maintaining an environment that supports trust, respect, honesty, civility, free inquiry, creativity, and an open exchange of ideas. Individual rights are best protected by a commitment to mutual respect. The procedures, rights, and safeguards outlined in this policy are indispensable to achieving the goals desired.

##### **D. Student Conduct.**

3. As per the Bullying Policy, bullying, mocking, fighting, and deliberately insulting or ostracising one's peer's is strictly forbidden.
4. A student will ensure that their personal conduct does not physically or emotionally harm others.

#### **C. Applicable Federal and Provincial Legislation:**

1. **Alberta Human Rights Act**
2. **Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms**
3. **Alberta School Act**

Section 45.1 of the School Act requires the Association include the following sections of the School Act:

##### **Support for student organizations**

**16.1(1)** If one or more students attending a school operated by a board request a staff member employed by the board 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) subject to subsection (4), 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)** For the purposes of subsection (1), 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.

(3.1) For greater certainty, the principal shall not prohibit or discourage students from choosing a name that includes “gaystraight alliance” or “queer-straight alliance”.

**(4)** The principal shall immediately inform the board and the Minister if no staff member is available to serve as a staff liaison referred to in subsection (1), 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.

**(5)** If a staff member indicates to a principal a willingness to act as a staff liaison under subsection (1),

(a) a principal shall not inform a board or the Minister under subsection (4) that no staff member is available to serve as a staff liaison, and

(b) that staff member shall be deemed to be available to serve as the staff liaison.

**(6)** The principal is responsible for ensuring that notification, if any, respecting a voluntary student organization or an activity referred to in subsection (1) is limited to the fact of the establishment of the organization or the holding of the activity.

#### **45.1(1) 6.**

**(c)** The principal is responsible for ensuring that notification, if any, respecting a voluntary student organization or an activity referred to in section 16.1(1) of the School Act:

- a.** is limited to the fact of the establishment of the organization or the holding of the activity, and
- b.** is otherwise consistent with the usual practices relating to notifications of other student organizations and activities.

TCSA intends to comply with the School Act insofar as it complies with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Alberta Bill of Rights. TCSA is aware that the School Act as amended by Bill 24 is currently subject to a constitutional challenge in the Alberta courts.