

SYLVAN MEADOWS ADVENTIST SCHOOL  
HANDBOOK  
2024/2025



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Sylvan Meadows Adventist School, hereafter referred to as SMAS, is a coeducational day school for grades K-9 in Sylvan Lake, Alberta located 3 kilometres west of Sylvan Lake on Range Road 20. It is operated by the Sylvan Lake Adventist church in conjunction with the Alberta Seventh-day Adventist Conference.

SMAS is governed by a Board of Trustees composed of elected members from the constituency of the Sylvan Lake Seventh-day Adventist Church. Meetings are held monthly.

SMAS is operated primarily for Seventh-day Adventist youth of Sylvan Lake and area, but all students who understand and comply with the school's programs and regulations are welcome.

SMAS is run by the Alberta General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and accredited and funded by the Alberta Government. All teachers have valid Alberta teaching certificates and teach the Alberta curriculum with a Christian perspective.

SMAS was first opened in 1975 in the basement of the Sylvan Lake SDA Church. By 1976, the current school building was completed and classes began there. The school grew again, when, in 1993-1994, another teacher and classroom were added for the primary students.

Since opening the school, many students have graduated from grade 9 and moved on to successfully complete grades 10-12 in other schools in the area. The school currently consists of one building that houses three classrooms, a library, a full-sized gym, and a kitchen. The school also has a playground, an outdoor permanent hockey rink, a ball diamond, and a field.

The founders of SMAS believed whole-heartedly in the principles of Christian education and worked to begin a legacy that has lasted over 40 years.

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## **Teachers and Staff:**

**Administrative Principal:** Chris Dubyna  
cdubyna@albertasdaedu.org

**Gr 5-9 Teacher:** Raene Bell  
raene.bell@sylvanmeadowsadventistschool.ca

**Head Teacher/Grades K-4:** Samantha Elias  
sam.elias@sylvanmeadowsadventistschool.ca

**Gr 7-9 LA & Socials:** Jane Holmes  
janeh@sylvanmeadowsadventistschool.ca

## **Daily Schedule:**

**School Begins** Monday - Thursday . . . . . 8:15 am

**School Dismisses** Monday - Thursday . . . . . 3:30 pm

## **Our School**

**Our Mission:** is to use the Bible and its principles to equip students for a life of service.

**Our Vision:** is to inspire students to:

- Build a personal relationship with Jesus Christ
- Pursue academic excellence
- Develop positive social relationships
- Learn practical life skills
- Achieve an optimum level of physical health

. . . with the intent of enabling them to share with others the hope of Christ's soon return.

**Our Philosophy:** is to foster a balanced development of the whole person - physical, intellectual, social, and spiritual

**Objectives:** The expectations of staff and student behaviour at SMAS can be summed up as follows:

- If it enhances Christianity, it's OK.
- If it increases learning, it's OK.
- If it builds people, it's OK.

### **Accreditation:**

SMAS is a fully accredited educational facility, registered with the Government of Alberta as a "Category I Private School" authorized to offer the ECS, elementary, and junior high programs of study. SMAS is also accredited by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Church Board of Education

### **SMAS Board:**

The SMAS Board members are elected by the Sylvan Lake SDA Church to serve a term of office up to three years with an option of re-election. The Board is comprised of current/past parents of students as well as current church members. It serves to oversee the overall policies and operation of the financial, administrative, and admission procedures of the school and to ensure a nurturing, rich academic and spiritual atmosphere. Monthly board meetings are called each month (Sept-June). Parents and constituent

members of the church are welcome to attend as observer(s) providing prior notification is given to the school office. An observer cannot voice opinions or vote on motions.

### **Early Childhood Services:**

The ECS program adopts the school philosophy as stated and accentuates learning and responsible decision making.

### **Application for Admission**

All students (new or returning) must complete an “Application for Admission” form which will be reviewed for approval by the SMAS Admissions Committee. Admission is not guaranteed.

**DETAILS:** Bring the following personal identification for your child(ren):

- **Alberta Health Care number** (new students only)
- **Birth Certificate** (new students only)
- **Proof of Citizenship** (of student and parents, if not Canadian)

School supply lists are available at the school office for pick up at the end of June.

**NOTE: All Registrants** must submit completed application forms and be approved by the SMAS Admissions Committee before the first day of school. Registration forms can take up to 2 weeks to process.

### **Requirements:**

SMAS is sponsored and supported by the constituent members of the Sylvan Lake SDA Church, with the majority of the students being members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church family. However, no particular religious affiliation is required for admission. Anyone who sincerely desires a Christian education and is willing to uphold the standards and purposes of this school is invited to apply.

It is understood that when applications are made for admission to the school all students thereby pledge themselves to follow the regulations and to live in harmony with the ideals and policies of the school.

### **Privacy Act:**

The *Personal Information Protection Act* (PIPA) (“the Act”) protects the personal information of the public and employees of private sector organizations operating in Alberta. It governs the collection, use and disclosure of personal information by organizations in a manner that recognizes and balances the right of an individual to have his or her personal information protected, and the need of an organization to collect, use or disclose personal information for purposes that are reasonable.

SMAS is bound by the requirements of this Act and collects, uses or discloses personal information in accordance with its provisions.

To this end, parents will be requested to sign a permission form for their child(ren) as part of the Registration process to acknowledge acceptance of the privacy policies of SMAS.

### **School Entrance Age:**

Students entering **ECS (Kindergarten)** must attain the age of 5 years old and not more than 7 years old by September 30. Students entering **Grade 1** must attain the age of 6 years old by September 30.

### **Appeal Process for Denied Admission:**

Any student denied entrance into the program, may appeal the decision by sending a letter to the School Board. The letter shall outline all reasons given for denial of application and provide any information that

refutes such reasons. The School Board will review the information and render a decision. In cases where the concerned party is dissatisfied with the Board's decision on the appeal, a further appeal may be made to the Superintendent of Schools for the Alberta Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The Superintendent will render a final decision on the appeal, and no further appeals will be considered.

**Foreign and Transferring Students:**

All students requesting transfer to SMAS will be interviewed by the Administrative Principal.

**Financial Information and Policies:**

**Registration Fees:**

Kindergarten to Grade Nine - \$150.00

Registration fees cover the agenda, technology fund, and classroom expenses. Registration fees are due in September.

**Tuition:**

In lieu of tuition, parents are asked to make contributions through the Sylvan Lake SDA Church to the tuition replacement fund.

**Textbooks:**

The school provides textbooks. These books can be very expensive. If loss or damage over and above normal wear and tear occurs, students will be charged the replacement cost.

**Academic Program and Policies:**

**Philosophy:**

Each student at Sylvan Meadows Adventist School is capable of achieving academic success. For some, this success comes more easily than others, but each student has the ability to reach their greatest potential. The teachers at SMAS are committed to creating an environment that is conducive to learning and helping each student achieve their very best

**Grading System:**

SMAS teachers from grades K-9 use the grading system set out by the Alberta Seventh-day Adventist Conference. Parents and students (K-9) will be able to access grades at any time using PowerSchool, an online grading program. This allows students to take responsibility for ensuring that all their homework is handed in, and to keep track of how they are doing in class.

**Agendas:**

Classroom Agendas will be used as a communication tool between home and school. Please read and sign your child(ren)'s agenda on a daily basis.

**Academic Advancement:**

A student's academic advancement is determined by how prepared a student is to handle the next level. At SMAS, students advance by grade level. *Students who fail (50% or lower) more than three core subjects will not be recommended to advance.*

**Report Cards:**

Communication about student progress is of crucial importance. Report cards are issued three times a year and are accompanied by an interview with the teacher twice a year. Informal reporting also occurs throughout the year. Parents and students are encouraged at any time to contact your teacher with any questions, concerns or comments.

<b>Grade Scale for Grade 4-9</b>			
<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Above Average</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Below Average</b>
A+ 96-100%	B+ 82-84%	C+ 70-74%	D 50-59%
A 90-95%	B 78-81%	C 65-69%	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>
A- 85-89%	B- 75-77%	C- 60-64%	F 0-49%

### **Student/Parent-Teacher Conferences:**

Parents are encouraged to schedule a conference after report cards are issued for each student and their families to review and discuss in depth the student's progress. It is an opportune time to come prepared to share ideas, concerns, praise, encouragement, and to see their children's work.

### **Canadian Achievement Test:**

In June, grades 2-5, 7-8 students write the CATs. These tests are designed to assess student progress. These tests cover the areas of Language Arts, Math, and Reference Usage.

### **Provincial Achievement Test:**

In May and June all Alberta students in grades 6 and 9 are expected to write provincial tests for their grade levels. The tests are designed to show how well students are meeting the provincial standards. Grades 6 and 9 students write tests in Math, Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies.

### **Attendance:**

The goal for all students and parents should be perfect attendance, but sometimes emergencies occur and it is not always possible to be in school. Plan ahead with your teacher to make up schoolwork. Students (and parents) are responsible for days missed. In the case of unforeseen absences, please call the school by 8:30 am to keep your teachers informed. Exceptions may be made only if a request has been made to the teachers prior to the absence.

### **Tardiness:**

Students are expected to be in their classes on time and prepared to learn. Students should arrive on time but not prior to 8:00 am. Exceptions should be arranged in advance with the homeroom teacher. Students are expected to go directly home after dismissal each school day.

### **Illness:**

If your child becomes ill during the school day, you will be notified. SMAS has a bed for short-term care until the parent/guardian arrives. Please do not send a sick child to school since there are limited facilities for care or comfort and illness may spread to others.

### **Field Trips:**

Parents/guardians planning to drive for school field trips, must bring proof of \$2 million public liability insurance and a criminal record check.

### **Student Life:**

#### **Student Behaviour:**

Principles of Christian conduct are upheld at SMAS. Honesty, courtesy, reverence, purity, and obedience are emphasized. It is understood that when applications are made for admission to the school, all students thereby pledge themselves to follow the regulations and to live in harmony with the ideals and policies of the school. Students are encouraged to practice the principles:

- showing respect for God, the Bible, and the religious ideals of the Seventh-day Adventist Church
- showing respect for self and others by refraining from:
  - the infliction of injury

- insubordination (rebellion)
- bullying
- cheating, stealing, dishonesty
- inappropriate association with members of the opposite sex
- showing respect toward the property of the school and the property of others
- using language that is free from profanity
- attending school punctually and regularly
- maintaining a cooperative attitude
- seeking out constructive entertainment, recreation, and leisure time activities
- bringing to school only those items required for regular school use and approved activities (items such as knives or weapons, matches/lighters, occult objects, and obscene literature are not acceptable)
- refusing to possess or be under the influence of any mind-altering substance such as alcohol, tobacco, or non-medical drugs
- keeping electronic devices such as personal sound systems, cell phones and electronic games out of use during the school hours of 8:15 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. (teacher's permission must be given for the use of electronic devices for school use)
- students in Grades 5-9 are encouraged to bring electronic devices to school for use in researching academic information. Student's ability to use personal devices will be based on responsible behaviour and management by the student. This privilege may be withdrawn for misuse.
  - having proper authorization before leaving school grounds or taking other students from the school grounds during school hours of 8:15 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
  - refraining from the entry of locked facilities
  - refraining from the misuse of fire alarms or extinguishers.

Students who demonstrate an unwillingness to cooperate in maintaining the school standards, including the support of the above principles, seriously jeopardize their privilege of continuing in school.

### **Harassment:**

Harassment is any unwelcome physical or verbal behaviour. Harassment occurs when such conduct undermines another individual's personal dignity by causing embarrassment, discomfort, humiliation or offence; or such conduct interferes with an individual's work performance or learning opportunities by creating an intimidating or hostile work or learning environment.

### **Bullying:**

We are committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to work and to learn in a safe setting which promotes equality of opportunity and which prohibits discriminatory practices.

### **Policy for Bullying Prevention:**

Sylvan Meadows Adventist School believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. The school and community have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance.

Sylvan Meadows Adventist School will not tolerate behaviour that infringes on the safety of any student. A student shall not intimidate or harass another student through words or actions. Such behaviour includes direct physical contact, such as hitting or shoving, verbal assaults such as teasing or name-calling; social isolation or manipulation, and cyber bullying such as posting harmful material or engaging in other forms of social cruelty using the internet or other digital technologies.



The SMAS School Board is committed to providing an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to work and to learn in a safe setting which promotes equality of opportunity and which prohibits discriminatory practices.

Sylvan Meadows Adventist School expects students and/or staff to immediately report incidents of bullying to the Head Teacher or Administrative Principal. Staff members are expected to immediately intervene when they see a bullying incident. Each complaint of bullying should be promptly investigated. This policy applies to students for any activity on school grounds while travelling to and from school, during the lunch period or any other school-sponsored activity whether on or off campus.

Suggested Student Code of Conduct should include, but not be limited to the following actions and consequences:

- Any student who engages in bullying may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.
- Students are expected to immediately report incidents of bullying to the Head Teacher or Administrative Principal.
- Students can rely on staff to promptly investigate each complaint of bullying in a thorough and confidential manner.

If the complainant student or the parent of the student believes that the investigation or complaint was not resolved appropriately, the student or parent of the student should contact the Head Teacher or Administrative Principal. The school prohibits retaliatory behaviour against any complainant or any participant in the complaint process.

The procedures for intervening in bullying behaviour include, but are not limited to the following:

- The school will make reasonable efforts to keep confidential a report of bullying and the result of the investigation.
- Parental concerns regarding acts of bullying toward their child will be logged and investigated, followed by feedback to the parents.
- Staff members will immediately intervene when they see a bullying incident occur.
- People witnessing or experiencing bullying are encouraged to report the incident. Such reporting will not reflect on the victim or witness in any way.

### **Student Clubs:**

If a group of students (12 or more) requests to establish a voluntary student organization (Student Club), they may make an application to the Administrative Principal by filling out a “Student Club Application” (found in the School Office). The application must include club name, purpose, proposed activities, meeting frequency, time and place, budget requirements, student organizers, and requested staff advisor. The decision to approve the establishment of a Student Club will reside with the Administrative Principal and School Board. The school guidelines for Student Clubs have been established by the Alberta Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and are as follows:

1. All club activities must be congruent with school’s Mission and Vision.
2. All student clubs must build student morale, contribute to the community through acts of service, and build positive support for the school.
3. All club activities must be inclusive to all students (regardless of race, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, or disability).
4. All club meetings and activities must be voluntary and student-initiated.
5. All club activities must be supervised by the staff advisor.
6. All club activities must have prior approval from the Administrative Principal.
7. Club meetings and activities must occur during non-instructional time.
8. All published student club materials must be approved by the Administrative Principal.

9. Clubs may have guest speakers but may not have regular attendance by non-school persons
10. The school will not expend funds beyond the incidental cost associated with providing the space for student-initiated meetings.

### **General School Information:**

#### **Student Accident Insurance:**

Each student is covered by twenty-four-hour accident insurance with Industrial Alliance Pacific Insurance Financial Services Inc. This insurance does not duplicate Alberta Health Care coverage. If a student receives an injury, or is involved in an accident which could be covered by accident insurance, contact the school office for more information and to receive an accident claim form.

#### **Bicycles and Vehicles:**

Students using bicycles to travel to and from school must park them upon arrival and leave them so until school is dismissed. An exception will be recognized for students who go home for noon lunch. For safety reasons, students are asked to not ride or use their bicycles, scooters, skateboards or rollerblades on the school grounds during school hours. Failure to comply with these regulations may result in forfeiting privileges. In compliance with existing laws, students are required to wear proper bike helmets. The school assumes no responsibility for bicycles or motorized vehicles at the school beyond the customary playground supervision at recess and noon.

#### **Computer Use:**

The use of the Internet and computers provides real educational benefits to students. Access to computers and the Internet is given as a privilege to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner under the direction of the teacher. We require that students and parents or guardians read, accept and sign an Acceptable Computer Use Policy Agreement at the beginning of the school year.

#### **Home and School Association:**

The Home and School Association has been established to promote understanding and cooperation between parents/guardians and teachers. All parents/guardians, teachers, and other interested adults are invited and encouraged to attend regularly the meetings and programs of the association. Please watch for announcements in the school newsletter and in the church bulletin.

#### **Library:**

Students are encouraged to make use of the books in our library. We ask that books be handled with care and returned by the due date.

#### **Locks:**

The school provides lockers or cubbies for the student's personal use. The school, however, cannot take responsibility for the contents in the lockers. Valuable property should not be brought to school. The school retains its ownership rights to the lockers and may at any time inspect the lockers and confiscate articles which should not be on school premises.

#### **Lost and Found:**

Please check the Lost and Found box periodically. Several times a year the lost and found box will be emptied and the contents will be put on display. Any unclaimed articles will be donated. Valuable and small lost and found items will be kept in the office. Students may ask for a lost item at the office during office hours.

**Medication Policy:**

At registration, a health statement, including allergies or any other special medical issues, must be filled out by the parent/guardian. The parent/guardian of the student assumes responsibility for informing the Head Teacher or Administrative Principal of any change in the student's health.

The school will not supply medication for students. It is the parent's responsibility to provide any medication that a student requires.

The school will generally not administer medication to students. However, if, as an activity of daily living, a student is required to take medication during school hours and the parent/guardian cannot be at the school to administer medication, a staff member, in the presence of an adult witness, may assist by overseeing the child administer pre-measured doses of medication provided by the parents. The following regulations will be adhered to. Written instructions signed by the parent/guardian and physician are required and will include the following: student's name, name of medication, purpose of medication, time of medication, dosage, possible side effects, and procedures to follow in case of an adverse reaction, and termination date of administering the medication. Parents who request the school to assist with medication will be required to fill out the "Administration of Medication" form.

It is the parent's responsibility to notify the Head Teacher or Administrative Principal in writing of any medical issues their child may have, initiate medication at home, and notify the Head Teacher or Administrative Principal in writing of any change in medication or medical condition.

The SMAS Board (and school) retains the right to reject requests for administration of or assistance with medicine.

**School Visits & Security:**

Parents who wish to visit with a teacher are asked to do so after school hours. Making an appointment will ensure that the teacher is available. Parent visits before school are strongly discouraged as teachers need to be available to greet students and help them get ready for a prompt school start at 8:15 a.m. Thanks for your help.

SMAS students wishing to invite a relative or friend to school must first make arrangements with the teacher(s) involved. Students from other schools are to do their visiting after school hours only.

**Emergency and Safety Procedures:**

The safety and well-being of all students and staff are a top priority for the SMAS Board and Administration. As such, SMAS has an established Emergency Action Plan, which includes fire evacuation, lockdown, bomb threat and First Aid/Medical Emergency Care. Fire and lockdown drills will be held periodically throughout the school year. Students are educated on the emergency procedures at the beginning of each year. Additionally, student fire evacuation and lockdown procedures are posted in visible areas of each classroom. SMAS Fire Evacuation, Lockdown and Bomb Threat Emergency Procedures. SMAS strives to provide all staff with first aid training.

**Fire Drills:**

A specific number of fire drills are required of each school during the school year. Whenever the fire alarm rings, everyone in the building must leave through the designated doors and meet in assigned areas. Each classroom has a map posted near the door showing the route to be taken and the place to assemble. Teachers will stay with their classes at all times while outside. The signal to re-enter will be given by a member of the administrative team.

**Lockdown:**

A lockdown is an emergency procedure where students, teachers, and faculty are confined to their rooms due to a perceived or real threat either outside or inside the school. Throughout the school year, a number of lockdown drills will be practiced. A lockdown drill is much like a fire drill in that it is a drill or practice to help students be prepared and not to panic if a real threat were to occur. Teachers will educate their students on the specific procedures required for a lockdown. Drills can be scary and students may feel threatened; however, because safety is our number one priority, they are necessary.

**School Closures:**

In the event of a blizzard or severe weather with a windchill of  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}$  or below, SMAS will not be open. Faculty will contact the students and parents to alert them of the closure.

**Weapons:**

Students are not allowed to bring or use any objects construed as capable of causing bodily harm. Items found in and around the school that could cause injury are also not allowed to be used for the purpose of physically injuring others.

**Telephone:**

A courtesy phone is provided in the office for students to use during school hours when they need to make personal phone calls. If parents/guardians need to call their child(ren) or teacher(s), it would be preferred that they call at recess, noon break, or after school.

**Dress Code:**

The dress code at SMAS is based on principles of modesty, safety, common sense, and Christian morality.

- Students must wear clothing that is clean, in good taste, and properly fastened. Any clothing with holes or tears is not permitted.
- Clothing should reflect modesty and decency at all times. This includes avoiding revealing or suggestive attire. Undergarments should not be visible at any time. This includes ensuring that pants or skirts are worn at an appropriate height to prevent exposure of undergarments.
- Any clothing or accessories with slogans or pictures must adhere to the principles of good Christian character. Offensive language or imagery is strictly prohibited.
- Shorts and skirts must be longer than fingertip length when arms are held naturally at the sides. Crop tops, which expose the midriff, are not permitted.
- Sleeveless tops are permitted, but the width of the straps should be at least three fingers in width.
- Wearing hats or hoods indoors is not permitted, as they may obstruct the student's view and prevent teachers from seeing students' faces, which is important for communication and safety purposes.
- Violations of the dress code policy may result in disciplinary action. It is the responsibility of all students to familiarize themselves with and adhere to these guidelines. We believe that maintaining a respectful and modest dress code contributes to a positive and focused learning environment for all students.

**School Ground Leave:**

In the interest of student safety, students will not be allowed off SMAS school grounds without staff supervision during school hours (8:15 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.) unless the school has received written permission from a parent/guardian.

### **Discipline Philosophy and Procedure:**

We believe that we are responsible for our actions and that every action has a consequence. Taking responsibility for our actions is the main purpose of our disciplinary philosophy.

### **General Misbehaviour:**

Acts of misbehaviour will be dealt with in a 'situation by situation' basis. The consequence to any misconduct will depend on the circumstances.

### **Serious Misbehaviour:**

Serious misbehaviour such as fighting, harassment, defying teachers, misuse of fire alarms and devices, stealing, vandalism etc will result in immediate consequences such as suspension, the duration of which will be determined by the Administrative Principal. Parents/guardians will be contacted, and a meeting set up to discuss the problem and possible solutions. As a result of that meeting, an agreement based on the Behaviour Report/Agreement will be entered into. In severe cases, a meeting with the SMAS School Board will take place.

Parents/Guardians and students are encouraged to communicate to the staff of SMAS concerns that they may have. Following Matthew 18, this process is as follows:

1. Initial contact should be between the parent/guardian or student and the staff member concerned. The staff member may document this contact.
2. If the parent/guardian or student does not feel that the concern has been resolved, they should inform the Administrative Principal. The Administrative Principal will then seek to mediate the settlement.
3. If this mediation does not resolve the issue (or the concern is with the Administrative Principal themselves), the parent may contact the School Board Chairperson.
4. If this issue remains unresolved, the SMAS School Board will be presented with the concerns and the mediation process will continue.
5. If this Board mediation does not resolve the issue, the parent may contact the Superintendent of Schools for the Alberta Seventh-day Adventist school system. Contact information may be obtained from the school's office.

### **Student Code of Conduct:**

Students who attend SMAS are expected to support the school and its philosophy of providing a quality and wholesome Christian education to its students. In particular, they agree to the following:

- Strive to achieve personal excellence in all that I do: academics, extracurricular activities, service to others, and behaviour;
- Respect God and strive to follow Jesus Christ;
- Treat others with dignity and respect, acting with compassion and kindness;
- Faithfully develop the gifts and abilities God has given me;
- Be truthful and uphold my integrity;
- Show pride in my work;
- Contribute to a positive learning environment;
- Respect and honour my parents and teachers for their knowledge, guidance, and support;
- Refrain from harassment and bullying of any kind.

### **Academic Honesty Policy:**

It is critical that students are aware of situations that may arise where they are tempted to act dishonestly and of the consequences that these acts will result in. In order to prevent situations where cheating or plagiarizing may take place, students will acquire skills with respect to documentation of sources (bibliography, endnotes, and quotations) and studying. Appropriate consequences (academic penalties,

suspensions, etc.) will apply to acts of plagiarism, cheating, collusion or other acts through which a student unfairly misrepresents his/her effort or achievement.

- “Plagiarism” occurs when a student knowingly takes someone else’s work or ideas and passes it off as their own (on either academic assignment, project, test, or examination).
- “Cheating” occurs when a student acts dishonestly or unfairly in order to gain an advantage.
- “Collusion” occurs when a student knowingly allows his or her work to be submitted by another student.

### **Complaint Process:**

We recognize that, from time to time, questions, concerns and/or complaints may arise regarding the operation of the school and/or the school district. At SMAS, we will attempt to address these in a courteous, timely, and constructive manner. Our desire is to do so as close to the source of the concern or complaint as possible in a manner that is fair to parents, students, members of the community, and SMAS school staff and administration. An individual’s concern will be given respectful attention while upholding the integrity of the educational system. When raising such questions, concerns or complaints we ask that they be made at an appropriate time and place in a respectful manner. They must not be made: in the presence of students or during class time, as the initial contact person is usually the teacher, or when the issue is related to an employee, in the presence of the employee’s coworkers. For questions, concerns or complaints regarding school matters, instruction, discipline or learning materials, the sequence below should be followed: 1) teacher, 2) school Administration (Head Teacher and/or Assistant Superintendent of Micro Schools), 3) School Board Chairman, 4) Superintendent.

A concern or complaint will be handled in a confidential manner. In order to resolve the concern or complaint, in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the information about the concern or complaint and the identity of the person lodging the concern or complaint must be disclosed to: the person or persons named in the concern or complaint, those persons who need to be contacted for information about the concern or complaint, or those persons who need to know about the concern or complaint as part of their duties, or those persons who will be responding to the concern or complaint. No action will be taken on anonymous complaints other than to refer it to the appropriate supervisor.

A SMAS employee who is contacted by a parent, student or community member with a concern or complaint will advise the person of the Complaint Process. Every effort should be made to resolve the concern or complaint at the earliest stage of the process. Each step in the process is completed in a timely manner to avoid unnecessary delays.

### **There are four levels of complaint process:**

**Level One** - When a parent, student or community member has a concern or complaint, the first step is to raise the issue with the individual SMAS employee at the school. The employee(s) involved shall make every effort to meet with the individual with the concern or complaint. This meeting should be: a) in person, b) one-to-one, and c) focused on resolving the matter.

**Level Two** - If a resolution is not reached with the individual employee, the individual may direct the concern or complaint to the Head Teacher or Principal. The administration and appropriate staff members shall make every effort to meet with the individual to discuss the concern or complaint. The administration and staff members will work with the individual to find a resolution.

**Level Three** - If the matter is not resolved at Level Two with the Head Teacher or Principal, the individual may direct their concern or complaint, in writing, to the SMAS Board Chairman. The written documentation shall outline: a) the nature of the complaint and b) the steps taken at the previous two levels to resolve the matter directly with the employee(s) involved. The SMAS Board Chairman may meet with the individual directly to ensure the issue is heard. The SMAS Board Chairman shall consider the concern or complaint, which may include gathering information and involving other members of SMAS administration as required. If the concern is regarding an educational program, the student’s

educational program shall continue in a manner established by the Administrative Principal until the review of the concern or complaint is completed. The SMAS Board Chairman shall communicate his or her decision on the resolution of the concern or complaint in writing, including a rationale for the decision, within 10 business days from the date of the meeting with the individual.

**Level Four** - If the matter is not resolved at Level Three with the SMAS Board Chairman, the individual may ask for an Alberta Conference of SDA Education Superintendent to review the concern or complaint. The request shall be in writing and include a description of the nature of the concern or complaint; steps taken to resolve the matter; a description of the decision complained; and the reasons for the review request. The Education Superintendent may meet with the individual to ensure the issue is heard. The Superintendent shall communicate a decision on the resolution of the concern or complaint in writing, including a rationale for the decision, within 10 business days from the date of the meeting with the individual.

### **Appeals:**

A parent or a student, who is 16 years of age or older, may appeal a decision made by a SMAS employee that significantly affects the education of a student, provided there are sufficient grounds for the appeal. In order for an appeal to demonstrate sufficient grounds for appeal, it must claim that the SMAS employee failed to substantially follow procedures as laid out in the Parent-Student Handbook, applicable legislation or regulations; made a decision that was influenced by bias; made a decision where there was no supporting evidence; or made a decision that was not reasonable. The failure of a person to make a decision is deemed to be a decision that may be appealed.

The determination of whether a decision “significantly affects the education of a student” must be made on a case-by-case basis. In the context of an appeal, an event will be deemed significant if it results in some kind of loss or jeopardy to a student.

The parent or student asking for an appeal must demonstrate that the decision prejudiced the student or that the action complained of materially influenced the decision. Examples of decisions that may be deemed to be decisions that significantly affect the education of a student include: a decision that impedes the student’s ability to participate in or complete their program of study; access to or the accuracy or completeness of the student record; disciplinary suspensions in excess of 5 days or expulsion of a student. Where a decision is made by a SMAS employee which would be appealable under this administrative regulation, the affected parent or student shall be notified of their right of appeal, and) the time limits governing the initiation of an appeal. Employee decisions that do not significantly affect the education of a student are within the final authority of the Principal.

### **Filing an Appeal:**

Before filing an appeal, the parent or student must first attempt to resolve the matter using the Complaint Process. Failure by a parent or student to use the Complaint Process may result in the appeal being dismissed. A parent or student who wishes to appeal a decision that significantly affects the education of a student must file his or her appeal in writing within 20 (twenty) business days from the date the decision was made. The written appeal be submitted to the Superintendent and must contain the following information: the name and address of the parent or student filing the appeal; the current placement of the student; the decision which is being appealed; the date the parent or student was informed of the decision; where the decision was communicated in writing, a copy of the decision; the grounds for appeal (the policy, procedure, rules, regulation, and/or criteria on which the appeal is being made). If the Chief Superintendent or delegate determines that a decision of an employee is not appealable, the parent or student will be informed of the decision and the reasons for it.

### **Appeal Process:**

Once an appeal is received by the Superintendent or designate, he/she shall provide a copy of the written appeal to SMAS administration and/or employee who made the decision. The Superintendent or delegate

may decide the matter based upon written submissions or the Superintendent or delegate may invite oral submissions, in which case, he or she may decide the matter based on written and/or oral submissions. The SMAS administration shall prepare a written report to be considered on appeal. The report shall be in writing and distributed to the parent or student appealing the decision within the timelines set by the Superintendent or delegate. The parent or student who asked for the appeal shall be provided with an opportunity to respond, in writing, to the administration report. The Superintendent or delegate will set timelines for the response. In the event of a necessary oral hearing, the Superintendent or delegate shall notify the parent or student appealing the decision and SMAS administration of the date and time of the hearing. The Superintendent may set procedural rules to conduct an oral hearing and shall provide all parties in advance, written notice of the hearing. The written notice shall include:

- that the hearing shall be held within 30 (thirty) business from the date the appeal was received
- that the parent and/or student may be accompanied by a person of their choosing at any meetings held in connection to the appeal;
- that where a parent launches an appeal, the student who is the subject of the appeal may, with consent of the parent(s), attend the hearing;
- that the Superintendent has the right to restrict the number of people attending the appeal hearing;
- the parent and/or student or their representative shall be provided an opportunity to make an oral presentation, which may include other presenters;
- administration shall be provided with an opportunity to provide an oral presentation, which may include other presenters;
- no participant may cross examine another participant at the hearing;
- the Superintendent or delegate may ask questions of the participants, as well as additional presenters;
- the Superintendent or delegate may set time limits on presentations and may limit the number of presenters; and any other procedures required to conduct the hearing in a fair manner.
- At any time during the appeal process, the Superintendent or delegate may call upon legal advisors for advice and consultation.

### **Appeal Decision:**

Within 20 (twenty) business days from the hearing or close of written submissions, the Superintendent or delegate will make any decision he or she deems appropriate in regard to the appeal, including whether to uphold, alter, or revoke the decision of the matter under appeal. The Superintendent or delegate's decision shall be in writing and provide reasons for it. The parent and/or student making the appeal shall be provided a copy of the decision. The decision of the Superintendent or delegate is the final decision. Once a final decision is made, the Superintendent shall notify the parent and/or student if the matter is one that may be appealed to the Minister of Education. An appeal is considered to be abandoned if one year elapses from the day that a step in the appeal was last taken.

### **Responsible Technology Agreement:**

Students, staff and administrators at SMAS have the opportunity to access the SMAS network to facilitate educational and professional growth objectives. Network/Internet access opens up a vast resource for school entities throughout the world and allows users to reach out to many other people, to share information, learn concepts and research subjects. With this educational opportunity comes responsibility. It is understood that SMAS does not have sufficient resources to monitor every aspect of network use. However, the purpose of these guidelines is to foster the independent use of the network, subject to compliance with procedures and standards for appropriate network behaviour and communication. All SMAS computer users must follow the guidelines set out in the SMAS Responsible Technology Use Agreement.



**Privileges:**

The use of the SMAS network is a privilege, not a right. As such, inherent with this privilege are responsibilities with which the school expects full and complete compliance. Breach of these responsibilities may result in loss of complete access privileges. The school has the right to review any material stored on its network and to edit or remove such material as well as to monitor all network activity. The user is held responsible for his/her actions whenever using SMAS's technology. Inappropriate/ unacceptable uses of the SMAS technology will result in the withdrawal of computer privileges. All users of SMAS technology will agree to respect the equipment, security and privacy of other users. The school Administrative Principal in conjunction with the System Administrators will deem what is appropriate use and their decision is final. The System Administrators may close an account at any time as required. The administration and school staff of SMAS may request the System Administrator to deny, revoke, or suspend specific user accounts or specific privileges such as Internet or email at any time as required.

**Property:**

The SMAS network and e-mail system is the property of SMAS. Unauthorized use of the network and e-mail system is prohibited. Access to the network and e-mail and other online systems of SMAS is a privilege granted to users by SMAS and may be revoked or withheld at the discretion of the Head Teacher or Administrative Principal.

**Privacy:**

Users do not have a personal privacy right in any matter created, received, stored in or sent from the SMAS network or e-mail system. The Administrative Principal or designate reserves the right to access any files to determine whether or not a student or employee is using the system for items of true "educational value". SMAS may at times and without prior notice, monitor and review e-mail messages and website retrieval by network users to ensure proper use.

**Personal Safety:**

The following rules will help promote user personal safety:

- Protect personal privacy, as well as the privacy of others. Do not give out personal information (address, telephone, number, parents' work address/telephone number, or name and location of your school);
- Let someone in authority know right away if you come across any information that makes you feel uncomfortable;
- Never agree to get together with someone you meet online;
- Never send a personal picture or any other personal information;
- Do not respond to any messages that are inappropriate, mean or in any way make you feel uncomfortable;
- If you are being harassed let someone in authority know.

**Accounts and Passwords:**

Users must obtain an authorized account and password from the SMAS Technology Services Department in order to access the SMAS network and e-mail system. The user should consider the account and password confidential and should not share the account or password with any other person or leave the account open or unattended at any computer system.

**Systems and Maintenance:**

Users should periodically remove or erase their files from their folders or e-mail messages from SMAS's server. E-mail or other files stored on a SMAS file server are not considered private property and may be removed by authorized Technology Services personnel without prior notice to the user.

## **Responsible Use:**

All technology use must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives of SMAS. Transmission of any material in violation of any Federal or Provincial regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Network use is restricted to only those users that have been issued an authentic username and password by the SMAS Technology Services Department
- Downloading or transferring copyrighted materials to or from any SMAS computer without the express consent of the copyright owner is a violation of federal law and is expressly prohibited
- All unauthorized and unlicensed software is prohibited on the SMAS network
- Users will not engage in illegal or unethical acts, including use of network access to plan or carry out any scheme to defraud or to obtain money, or other things of value by false pretences, promises, or representations; or to damage or destroy computer-based information or information resources
- Any use of the SMAS network for defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually-oriented, threatening, racially offensive and illegal material or other inappropriate activities is strictly prohibited. Individuals are expected to report any abuse to the appropriate authorities
- Students may be disciplined if their speech on social networking sites causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment, interferes with the rights of another, or is a true threat. Criminal action may be taken if the speech constitutes a true threat.
- Use of e-mail and other SMAS network communications facilities to harass, defame, offend, or to disseminate defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually-oriented, threatening, racially offensive, illegal material, or otherwise annoy other users of the networks is forbidden. Each user has the responsibility to report all such violations
- Downloading or transmission of pornographic, obscene or other socially unacceptable materials is strictly prohibited
- Network users shall not allow any other person to use their password/key or to share their account. It is the user's responsibility to protect email accounts from unauthorized use by changing passwords/keys periodically and using passwords that are not easily guessed
- Any attempt to circumvent system security, guess passwords or in any way gain unauthorized access to local or network resources is forbidden
- Users may not move, repair, reconfigure, modify or attach external devices to the networks
- Network users will not knowingly engage in sending messages and files containing any form of digital information or encoding that is likely to result in loss or disruption of the recipient's work or system
- Network users will not engage in gaining access to any resources, entities or data of others for any purpose without authorization
- Network users will not engage in activities that are wasteful of network resources or that degrade or disrupt network performance including other networks and systems accessed over the Internet
- Network users will not engage in plagiarism of information obtained via the SMAS network.
- Network users will not engage in the breaking of confidentiality of any user, revealing personal information such as phone numbers or addresses of others, or otherwise invading the privacy of others over the network.
- Network users will not use the SMAS network for private or business use or for political purposes.
- Accessing sites that are restricted on SMAS computers and network resources is prohibited. SMAS computers and network resources are for educational purposes only.

## **Warranties:**

SMAS makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. SMAS will not be responsible for any damages suffered. This includes loss of data resulting from delays,

non-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by negligence, errors, or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the SMAS network is at the user's own risk. SMAS specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through this service.

**Security:**

Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. SMAS will make every effort to screen (filter) undesirable material from the Internet and continuously upgrade and employ the maximum safety measures possible. If a user identifies a security problem on the SMAS network, they must notify a System Administrator, Administrative Principal, or Head Teacher as soon as the problem is identified. The user shall not demonstrate the problem to other users. Attempts to log-in to the system as any other user will result in disciplinary action. Attempts to log into the SMAS network as a System Administrator will result in cancellation of user privileges. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the SMAS network.

**Updating User Information:**

The SMAS network may occasionally require new registration and account information from you to continue the service.

**Computer and Email Misuse and Abuse:**

Computer misuse and abuse may result in cancellation of network privileges for a defined period of time and may result in other school disciplinary action. Serious offences may be referred to the RCMP for investigation and possible criminal charges if the offence warrants.

**Student Commitment:**

By using SMAS computer and accessing SMAS's network and email, students agree to abide by the Policy Guidelines set out in this document. Students accept that a violation of these provisions may result in loss of use of network privileges, as well as possible disciplinary actions. This may include, but is not limited to, revocation or suspension of network privileges, suspension or expulsion from school, and/or appropriate legal action.

**Parent Commitment:**

Parents recognize the importance of students becoming technologically aware in an increasingly technological society. Parents understand that by sending their child(ren) to SMAS, they give consent for their child(ren) to access the Internet and email systems of SMAS. Parents accept that SMAS's network opens the possibility of students having access to possibly defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive or illegal material by having access to the Internet and by sending and receiving e-mail. Parents understand that no matter how much supervision and monitoring and technical barriers SMAS can utilize, there will always be the possibility of their child(ren) coming into contact with defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive or illegal material. However, SMAS commits to using its best efforts and making every effort to screen (filter) undesirable material from the Internet and continuously upgrade and employ the maximum safety measures possible. SMAS affirms that security on any computer system is a high priority.