



National Association
of Independent Schools

SDLC Participant Handbook

Core Values

The National Association of Independent Schools (“NAIS”) is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all individuals participating in the Student Diversity Leadership Conference (“SDLC”). Such an environment precludes behaviors that are disrespectful of, and physically and/or emotionally harmful to, others. All participants play important roles in maintaining these standards.

NAIS expects all participants to treat others with civility, respect, and dignity, and to interact (electronically or otherwise) honestly, politely, and appropriately. Before acting, participants should give careful consideration to how their communications—whether through words, appearances, actions, or otherwise—may negatively impact others.

NAIS believes that open communication about these sensitive topics is integral to fostering a culture of personal responsibility, mutual accountability, and positive peer leadership. Should participants have any questions about NAIS’s expectations, or if they are concerned about another participant’s conduct, they should contact **Caroline G. Blackwell, NAIS Vice President, Equity and Justice**, at blackwell@nais.org or (202) 973-9700.

Speech and Respect

NAIS seeks to foster cultural competency in participants and expects all participants to respect others—even those with whom they disagree. The practice of mutual respect and regard is especially warranted when engaging in subjects such as race, gender, ethnicity, religious affiliation, ability, and other aspects of people’s identity. We strive to combat prejudice in all forms, including in speech. We recognize that words have the power to negatively impact others, and we prohibit speech that discriminates, attacks, disparages, demeans, intimidates, or deliberately mischaracterizes an individual or group, for any reason, and particularly because of their identity. Offensive speech can take many forms, including but not limited to negatively biased categorical statements, stereotypes, and epithets. NAIS invites sincere discussion and questions and recognizes that there will be moments when insufficient information, erroneous belief, or faulty presentation will create opportunities to review statements and clarify impact. NAIS encourages participants to address those incidents directly when they occur and recognizes that not all participants may feel comfortable doing so.



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E-Safety

NAIS wants to help ensure a safe, secure, and supportive online environment for participants. NAIS strives to create such an environment while also making it as effective and user-friendly as possible. At all times, however, NAIS's online environment is subject to the requirements and limitations of NAIS's technology. NAIS expects participants to adhere to the following standards, as well as any additional rules or protocols put in place for a specific SDLC program or event:

- **Attendance:** Participants are expected to attend all conference sessions and activities, and to be on time for all such commitments. Only individuals who are registered for SDLC may participate in SDLC events and activities. To the extent that it is possible, please participate in all conference events from a private space. *You and your peers are prohibited from sharing or distributing conference meeting links with anyone—even a friend.*
- **Use of Electronic Devices:** Cellphones and other electronic devices not used to log in to SDLC should be turned off or put away during the conference sessions. You should use only your computer—one provided to you by the school or one that you use for schoolwork. You must be the only person logged into the computer, and your face can be the only one on the device screen.
- **Dress Code:** When visible in the online environment, and in any related interactions, participants are expected to be appropriately dressed, which requires that participants refrain from wearing revealing clothing or items with inappropriate words or logos. The dress code is based on common sense, moderation, and respect for self and others. The expectation is that all clothing be modest, neat, clean, in good repair, and fit properly so that you are comfortable.
- **Online Conduct:** NAIS does not tolerate verbal or physical behavior that constitutes bullying (including cyberbullying), discrimination, or harassment. When participating in the online environment, and in any related interactions, it is of the utmost importance that participants maintain and model the highest standards of conduct, respect, and integrity, including by refraining from any activity that might constitute or contribute to bullying, discrimination, harassment, or other interpersonal misconduct.
- **Inappropriate Items/Weapons:** Participants may not use or possess alcohol or other unauthorized drugs or substances, including tobacco and tobacco-related products (such as e-cigarettes and vaping), and/or any paraphernalia associated with the use of illegal



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drugs while participating in SDLC. Possession or use of a firearm, a pellet gun, a knife, or any other weapon is also prohibited. Toy guns and weapons are also prohibited.

- Remote Environment: Backgrounds and physical spaces captured in online and remote learning should not have vulgar or profane words, symbols, or images. Images of weapons or images that depict people or groups as stereotypes or offensive caricatures are prohibited. Backgrounds should be appropriate. For example, participants should not be sitting in a bed, but should be set up at a desk or table.
- Chat Functions: Participants are expected to use any chat functions, if permitted, in an appropriate and respectful manner. Participants should not unmute themselves when an SDLC faculty leader or NAIS staff member has placed participants on mute.
- Recording: Participants are prohibited from (a) recording any part of any SDLC program; (b) recording any other participants or other individuals participating in any SDLC program; and (c) sharing, broadcasting, and/or making public any materials created or recorded by NAIS, its employees, or anyone else in relation to SDLC. Participants should consider SDLC sessions and events confidential and NAIS may not record these programs. Participants should understand that all internet data that is composed, transmitted, or received via the SDLC platform communications system is considered NAIS's property.
- Acceptable Use: NAIS has explicit guidelines for using computers and other electronic devices, to which NAIS expects participants to adhere. The examples below are not an all-inclusive list of requirements and possibilities. Participants may not:
 - Access or attempt to access network resources not intended for them;
 - Use, steal, or disclose someone else's username/password and/or share their own username/password (with the exception of parents/guardians SDLC faculty, and school chaperones);
 - Alter electronic communications to hide their identity or impersonate another person;
 - Use inappropriate language or images;
 - Be disrespectful by talking, sharing, or posting derogatory material (images, video, etc.);
 - Access or attempt to access inappropriate information;
 - Participate in the viewing or exchange of pornography or obscene materials;



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- Plagiarize printed or electronic information—participants must follow all copyright, trademark, patent, and other laws governing intellectual property;
 - Pass personal views as representing those of NAIS or SDLC;
 - Disparage or otherwise make defamatory remarks about NAIS, SDLC, member schools, or other participants;
 - Disclose confidential or proprietary information related to NAIS or SDLC, or recklessly disregard or distort the truth of the matters commented on;
 - Engage in illegal activities; and
 - Vandalize, steal, or cause harm to NAIS’s equipment, network, or services (including, but not limited to, uploading or creating viruses, attempting to gain unauthorized access, changing hardware or software settings, or changing online materials without permission).
- Risk Management: All participants are responsible for maintaining a safe online and remote learning environment. In that spirit, NAIS will strive to support and ensure participants’ safety while participating in SDLC, and participants and their families are also expected to employ appropriate safeguards and manage risks appropriately.

Consequences for Misconduct

Should NAIS determine that any participant has violated the SDLC Code of Conduct, acted inconsistently with its spirit or purpose, or otherwise negatively interfered with the SDLC program or its mission, that individual may be precluded from further participation in all SDLC sessions and activities and may be subject to other consequences, as determined appropriate by NAIS. Additionally, the actions of others connected with the participant (e.g., parents or others in the participant’s home) may warrant limitations or removal from SDLC and other consequences, as determined appropriate by NAIS.

Disclosure to Member Schools

NAIS may communicate with any participant’s school about any misconduct or other inappropriate behavior involving that individual.