



# Policy: Bullying Prevention & Intervention

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## Policy Statement

The Superior North Catholic District School Board recognizes that providing students with an opportunity to learn and develop in a safe and respectful environment, is a shared responsibility in which school boards and schools play an important role. In keeping with current legislation, the Board shall endeavour to ensure that the school environment is one of respect, dignity and trust consistent with the Gospel Values. All members of the school community, including staff, students, parents/guardians and visitors, will be respectful to one another and are responsible in helping to create a safe and caring school environment free from bullying.

It is the policy of the Superior North Catholic District School Board to use bullying prevention and intervention strategies which foster a positive learning and teaching environment for all students to help them achieve their full potential.

## Guidelines

1. Bullying adversely affects students' ability to learn.
2. Bullying adversely affects healthy relationships and the school climate.
3. Bullying adversely affects a school's ability to educate its students. Principals shall consult with Catholic School Councils about bullying prevention and intervention as a shared community responsibility.
4. The Board shall expect and support students to develop healthy relationships with others which support an effective learning environment in accordance with Catholic teachings.
5. The Board shall maintain a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan reviewed every two years.
6. Bullying will not be accepted on school property, at school related activities, on school buses, or in any other circumstances (eg. online) where engaging in bullying has a negative impact on the school climate.
7. The Board shall provide programs, interventions, and other supports for students who have been bullied, students who have witnessed incidents of bullying, and students who have engaged in bullying. The programs, intervention, and other supports may be provided by social workers, psychologists, or other professionals who have training in similar fields, as determined by the board.

## Definition of Bullying

For the purpose of policies on bullying prevention and intervention, school board's must use the following definition of bullying, given in subsection 1(1) of the Education Act:

"bullying" means aggressive and typically repeated behavior by a pupil (or any other person) where,

- a. the behavior is intended by the person to have the effect of, or the person ought to know that the behavior would be likely to have the effect of,

- I. causing harm, fear or distress to another individual, including physical, psychological, social or academic harm, harm to the individual's reputation or harm to the individual's property, or
  - II. creating a negative environment at a school for another individual, and
- b. the behavior occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance between the person and the individual based on factors such as size, strength, age, intelligence, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race, disability or the receipt of special education;

**Bullying** – For the purposes of the definition of “bullying” in subsection (1), behavior includes propagating through the use of any physical, verbal, electronic, written or other means.

**Cyber-Bullying** – For the purposes of the definition of “bullying” in subsection (1), bullying includes bullying by electronic means (commonly known as cyber-bullying), including,

- a. creating a web page or a blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person;
- b. impersonating another person as the author of content or messages posted on the internet; and
- c. communicating material electronically to more than one individual or posting material on a website that may be accessed by one or more individuals.

## Types of Bullying

**Social:** Repeated excluding others from the group, gossiping, spreading rumours, making another person or persons look foolish, and damaging another person's friendships.

**Electronic/Cyber:** The repeated use of email, cell phones, text, internet and web sites to threaten, harass, embarrass, socially exclude or damage reputations or friendships.

**Religious:** Repeated aggression directed to a person or persons because of their religious beliefs or background; repeatedly saying negative things about a religious

background or belief; repeatedly calling a person names or making fun of his/her religious beliefs or background.

**Sexual:** Repeatedly leaving a person or persons out or treating them badly because of their gender; repeatedly making crude comments about a person or persons' sexual behavior; repeatedly making sexist comments or jokes, touching, or grabbing someone in a sexual way; repeatedly spreading sexual rumours about a person or persons; repeatedly calling a person or persons gay, fag, lesbian, or other inappropriate names.

**Racism:** Repeatedly treating people badly because of their race and/or ethnic background; making negative comments about a person's ethnic traditions or beliefs; excluding and ignoring them or [damaging friendships].

**Ability:** Repeatedly excluding a person or persons or treating them badly because of an ability or need for special education; repeatedly making comments or jokes to hurt a person or persons with a disability.

**Homophobic:** The repeated ill treatment of another individual based on his/her sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation, including disclosure of someone else's sexual orientation. Ill treatment may include gossiping, physical or verbal aggression, physical or mental violence, obscene or sexualized gestures, or cyber harassment.

## References

- Education Amendment Act
- Bill 13
- Education Act (Sections 265(l)(m), 302(1)(3)(4), 305, 306, Regs. 298, 472/07
- Ontario Human Rights Code, Revised 2012
- Revised PPMs 128, 141, 142, 144, 145
- Provincial Code of Conduct
- Student Discipline
- Code of Conduct
- Equity & Inclusive Education

## Approval and Review Dates

Prior Date Approved: February 11, 2013

Board Meeting Approval Date: April 2017

Next Review Date: April 2019

Reviewed by: Policy Review Committee, Administrative Council