



Administrative Procedure: Bullying Prevention & Intervention

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Definitions

PPM is a Policy/Program Memorandum developed by the Ministry of Education.

BULLYING means aggressive and typically repeated behaviour by a pupil where,

1. the behaviour is intended by the pupil to have the effect of, or the pupil ought to know that the behaviour would be likely to have the effect of,
 - a. 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
 - b. creating a negative environment at a school for another individual, and

CYBER-BULLYING includes bullying by electronic means (commonly known as cyber-bullying), including,

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

- promoting hate or harassing an individual by use of social media ie. Twitter, Instagram

AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR

Aggressive behaviour is an action that may be intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect. It can take many forms, including physical, verbal, and social. If aggressive behaviour is physical, it may include hitting, pushing, slapping, and tripping. If it is verbal, it may include name calling, mocking, insults, threats, and sexist, racist, homophobic, or transphobic comments. If it is social, or relational, aggression, it is more subtle and may involve such behaviours as gossiping, spreading rumours, excluding others from a group, humiliating others with public gestures or graffiti, and shunning or ignoring. Social aggression may also occur through the use of technology (e.g., spreading rumours, images, or hurtful comments through the use of e-mail, cell phones, text messaging, Internet websites, social networking, or other technology).

HARM

Harm means injury that can be experienced in a number of ways, including physical, mental, emotional, and psychological.

- a. The behaviour occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance between the pupil 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;

NEXUS

The umbrella for “school behaviour” includes matters which fall under the category of “nexus”. Nexus means “relevant”. The student’s behaviour off school property and/or outside the school day may have a relevant and related impact on the safety and well-being of the school community.

SAFE SCHOOLS TEAM

Safe and Accepting Schools Team is a school-based team responsible for fostering a safe, inclusive, and accepting school climate that should include at least one student and must include at least one parent, one teacher, one non-teaching staff member, one community partner, and the principal. An existing school committee (e.g., the healthy

schools committee) can assume this role. The chair of this team must be a staff member.

Guidelines

Positive school climate is the sum total of all the personal relationships within a school. When these relationships are founded in mutual acceptance and inclusion, and modeled by all, a culture of respect becomes the norm. A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, comfortable and accepted. To help achieve a positive school climate, the Superior North Catholic DSB and its schools, will actively promote and support positive behaviours that reflect the Catholic Gospel Values.

School-Based Prevention Strategies

A positive climate is developed when administrators, teachers and support staff:

- Promote the development of healthy and inclusive relationships among the staff and student body and with parents and the broader community.
- Provide and support training for students, staff members and parents, that raises awareness of the problem of bullying.
- Know and follow administrative procedures related to safe, caring and respectful schools.
- Reinforce bullying prevention messages through programs addressing discrimination based on such factors as age, race, sexual orientation, gender, faith, disability, ethnicity and socio-economic disadvantage.
- Post, communicate and enforce clear codes of student conduct.
- Assess the awareness and scope of the bullying problem at the school through school climate surveys.
- Ensure that students are supervised in all areas of the school and on the school grounds, with particular attention being given to any areas where bullying has been identified as a problem in a particular school setting.
- Find a variety of ways to reward students for positive, inclusive behaviour and to support them in being positive leaders in their school community.
- Encourage parents to participate and become engaged in the life of the school and to volunteer to assist in school activities and projects.
- Provide ongoing communication with parents, ie. newsletters, about anti-bullying initiatives and resources.

- Involve school councils in the development of anti-bullying initiatives and the ongoing implementation of prevention programs.
- Parents and the school can work together to teach children to be assertive and to develop age appropriate independence. This independence can contribute to self-confidence and may deter bullies who often seek out acquiescent victims.
- Administrators, teachers and support staff must regularly reinforce the message that bullying will not be tolerated and that everyone must work together to create a positive learning environment.
- All schools within the Board will establish procedures for investigating bullying behaviours and use progressive discipline to develop consequences in their own school Code of Conduct.
- All schools within the Board will include an anti-bullying statement in their local Code of Conduct.
- All schools within the Board will have in place, a Safe Schools Team responsible for school safety, composed of at least one student, parent, teacher, support staff, community partner and the principal. Safe School Teams must have a staff chair.

Classroom Prevention Strategies

- a. Teachers and support staff provide opportunities for students to talk about bullying and to define unacceptable behaviours. Teachers involve students in establishing classroom rules against bullying and peer harassment. Teachers and support staff engage students in classroom activities and discussions related to bullying and violence, including awareness of the harm that they cause and strategies to reduce them.
- b. Teachers provide and regularly reinforce clear expectations for appropriate student behaviour.
- c. Teachers provide integrated programs that support bullying prevention strategies. Teachers and support staff focus on developing healthy relationships in classroom lessons and include books that deal with related issues in student reading materials.
- d. Teachers promote cooperation by assigning projects that require collaboration, when appropriate. Such cooperation teaches students how to compromise and how to assert without demanding. Teachers vary the grouping of participants in these projects and monitor the treatment of participants in each group.

- e. All staff ensure that students know what to do when they experience or observe a bullying confrontation. Knowing the process to follow gives the students confidence and a feeling of security.

Intervention Strategies

School-Wide Intervention Strategies

- a. School administrators, teachers and support staff encourage students to make a confidential report if they are the victims of bullying or are aware of another victim or victims. Reporting methods are designed to minimize the possibility of reprisal. Details of incidents are carefully recorded and tracked. Such reports are investigated and resolved expeditiously, consistent with administrative procedures.
- b. Parents who report bullying are given a receptive hearing, followed by investigation and resolution of the allegations.
- c. Interventions are conducted in ways that are consistent with a progressive discipline approach. The strategies will range from early and ongoing interventions, to more intensive interventions in cases of persistent bullying, with possible referral to community or social service agencies. A variety of early interventions, ongoing interventions, supports and consequences are described in the Student Discipline Administrative Procedure.
- d. Bullying is one of the infractions for which a principal may consider suspension from school. The principal will take into account any mitigating or other factors which may apply.

Classroom Intervention Strategies

- a. All staff must take immediate action when bullying is observed and let students know that they care and will not allow anyone to be mistreated. By taking immediate action in dealing with the behaviour of a bully, educators support both the victim and the witness or witnesses.

- b. Dealing with the behavior of a bully does not necessarily mean confronting the bully in front of his or her peers. Staff will meet with the bully in a confidential manner with regard for the safety of all. Challenging a bully in front of his or her peers may actually enhance the bully's and lead to further aggression.
- c. Teachers or the principal, as appropriate, will notify the parents of both victims and bullies, when a confrontation occurs and seek to resolve the problem quickly at school. They refer both victims and aggressors to counselling whenever appropriate.
- d. School staff provide protection and support for bullying victims whenever necessary, including creating a buddy system whereby students have a particular friend or older buddy on whom they can depend.
- e. School staff listen receptively to parents who report bullying. When appropriate, the incident will be reported to the principal who will provide direction on the next steps, as soon as possible.
- f. Staff should avoid attempts to mediate a threatening bullying situation alone if they are uncomfortable. They will inform the principal who will address the situation as appropriate, including contacting police services.

Reporting To Principals

- a. The purpose of reporting incidents of inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour is to ensure that the principal is aware of any activities taking place in the school for which suspension or expulsion must be considered.

Section 300.2 of Part XIII of the Education Act states that an employee of the Board who becomes aware that a student at a school of the Board may have engaged in an activity for which suspension or expulsion must be considered, shall report the matter to the principal as soon as reasonably possible. The employee must consider the safety of others and the urgency of the situation in reporting the incident, but in any case, must report it to the principal no later than the end of the school day.

- b. In cases where an immediate action is required, a verbal report to the principal may be made. A written report must be made when it is safe to do so.
- c. All employee reports made to the principal must be confirmed in writing, using the Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form in the Student Discipline Administrative Procedure 309, Appendix A. Boards must specify on this form any other activities for which a student may be suspended or expelled, according to Board policy. Boards must not make any other modifications to this form.
- d. Principals are expected to provide information to Board employees on completing the Safe Schools Incident Reporting Forms provided in the Student Discipline Administrative Procedure 309, Appendix A. For example, employees who are reporting an incident must submit the Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form to the principal in a timely manner. The principal must provide the person who submitted the report with written acknowledgement of receipt on the Safe Schools Reporting Form in the Student Discipline Administrative Procedure 309 Appendix B. Each report will be assigned a report number.
- e. If the principal has decided that action must be taken as a result of an incident of bullying, he or she will file a copy of the reporting form with documentation indicating the action taken in the Ontario Student Record (OSR) of the student whose behaviour was inappropriate.
- f. Where the principal has taken action in the case of more than one student, a copy of the reporting form and documentation indicating the action taken, must be filed in the OSR of each student whose behaviour was inappropriate.
- g. In the case of the victim, no information about the incident must be placed in his or her OSR, unless the victim or parent of the victim expressly requests that it be placed in the OSR.
- h. In situations where the victim is also an aggressor and the principal has taken some action short of suspension, no information about the incident must be placed in this student's OSR if the principal has decided not to notify this student's parents. However, if the principal has notified this student's parents, information regarding the incident and the action taken will be placed in the OSR.
- i. The form and documentation must be kept in the OSR for a minimum of one year unless the Board has required a longer period.

- j. In all cases, the principal must provide the employee who reported the incident with written acknowledgement of receipt of the report, using the Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form, Appendix B, and must specify whether the investigation is completed or an investigation is in progress. If no further action is taken by the principal, the principal is not required to retain the report. Information that could identify the student(s) involved must not be part of the acknowledgement.
- k. In addition to employees of the Board, school bus drivers must also be required to report such incidents in writing to the principal of the school.
- l. Other non-Board employees who come into direct contact with students on a regular basis, as outlined in subsection 300.4 (5.3) of Part XIII of the Education Act, to report such matters to the principal (ie. outdoor education instructors).

Investigation of Reported Bullying Behaviour

- a. Any allegation of bullying shall be investigated by the principal or his/her designate.
- b. Information related to bullying behaviour shall be gathered and documented from all students involved, including any witnesses.

Actions if Bullying Behaviour is Evident

- a. Actions to address incidents of bullying behaviour shall take into account the particular student and circumstances (ie. mitigating or other factors).
- b. The nature and severity of the behaviour.
- c. The impact on the school climate (ie. the relationship within the school community).
- d. Progressive discipline prior to suspension may include:
 - withdrawal of privileges

- withdrawal from class
 - out of class withdrawal of classroom privileges
 - detention
 - restitution for damages
 - peer mediation
 - restorative damages
 - transfer
 - consultation
- e. The behaviour of each student involved must be monitored to determine further action(s).
- f. The school principal in consultation with the teacher and the teacher-in-charge if appropriate, shall determine whether it is appropriate to contact the parents of the students involved.
- g. The school principal may request assistance from various outside agencies such as the OPP Community Policing Officer or other appropriate community agencies or resources.
- h. Intentionally and falsely accusing another student of bullying shall be considered bullying behaviour.
- i. Formal procedures will be outlined specifically by each school:
- Each school will create a Safe School Team.
 - An annual school climate survey will be taken by the staff and students on the topic of bullying every two years.
 - Each school may visit the Ministry of Education Website on Bullying Prevention
- j. All schools within the Board shall distribute Ministry resources readily available for distribution that follow up on Shaping Safer Schools: A bullying prevention plan (ie. the Parent Bullying Brochure, Bullying, We Can All Help Stop It, A Guide For Parents of Elementary and Secondary School Students, Kids-Help-Line 1-800-668-6868 and/or <http://www.kidshelpphone.ca>).

Procedure Communication

- a. The school principal shall review this policy at the beginning of each school year, with staff members.

- b. The school principal shall review this policy at the beginning of the school year, with parents and school councils.
- c. Board policy mandates that this procedure will be reviewed every three years.

School Level Plans

Schools are required to develop and implement school-wide bullying prevention and intervention plans as part of their School Code of Conduct. Components of these codes must be consistent with the policies and procedures of the Board and must include:

- The definition of bullying.
- Analysis of the school climate survey (completed every two (2) years).
- Prevention strategies.
- Intervention strategies.
- Procedures to allow students to report bullying incidents safely.
- Training strategies for members of the school community.
- Communication and outreach strategies.
- Monitoring and review processes.

Safe Schools Teams

Each school must have a safe schools team that is composed of at least one student (where appropriate), one parent, one teacher, one support member and the principal. The team must have a staff chair. An existing school committee can assume this role.

Implementation Strategies

Training, Communication & Outreach

The Board will put in place training strategies on bullying prevention and intervention for all administrators, teachers, and non-teaching staff (including staff in social work, child and youth work, psychology, and related areas, and educational assistants). The training strategies must include ways of responding to gender-based and homophobic bullying that are consistent with equity training on cultural sensitivity, on respect for diversity, and on special education needs.

Monitoring & Review

The Board will monitor and review the prevention and intervention strategies to determine their effectiveness. This process will include a regular cycle of analysis of the school climate through anonymous surveys.

References and Related Documents

- Ontario Education Act Bill 212, An Act to amend the Education Act in respect of behaviour,
- discipline and safety, June 4, 2007 Subsection 302(3.4) of Part XIII of the Education Act.
- Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) 144, October 4, 2007
- Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework, 2007 Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act Ontario Human Rights Code
- Provincial Code of Conduct Caring and Safe Schools in Ontario: Supporting Students with Special Education Needs through Progressive Discipline, Kindergarten to Grade 12
- Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, 2009;
- English Language Learners: ESL and ELD Programs and Services, 2007
- Ontario Regulation 298
- Ontario Regulation 472/07
- Bill 157, An Act to Amend the Education Act, Keeping Our Kids Safe at School, June 5, 2009
- Policy/Program Memorandum No. 128, Provincial Code of Conduct and School
- Policy/Program Memorandum No. 144, Bullying Prevention and Intervention
- Policy/Program Memorandum No. 145, Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour
- Student Discipline Administrative Procedure 309

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Appendix A

How to Handle Harassment in the Hallways in three Minutes

STOP the harassment.

- Interrupt the comment/halt the physical harassment.
- DO NOT pull students aside for confidentiality unless absolutely necessary.
- Make sure all the students in the area hear your comments.
- It is important that all students, whether onlookers, potential targets, or potential harassers, get the message that students are safe and protected in this school.

IDENTIFY the harassment.

- Label the form of harassment: “You just made a harassing comment/put-down based upon race (religion, ethnicity, abilities, gender, age, sexual orientation, economic status, size, etc.)”.
- DO NOT imply that the victim is a member of that identifiable group.
- A major goal is to take the “spotlight” off the target and turn the focus to the behavior. Students should realize what was said, regardless of what was meant (i.e. kidding).

BROADEN the response.

- DO NOT personalize your response at this stage: “At this school we do not harass people.” “Our community does not appreciate hateful/thoughtless behavior.”
- Re-identify the offensive behavior: “This name calling can also be hurtful to others who overhear it.”
- “We don’t do put-downs at this school” specifically includes those listening, as well as the school community in general. Even if they were “only kidding”, harassers must realize the possible ramifications of their actions.

ASK for change in future behavior.

- Personalize the response: “Chris, please pause and think before you act.”
- Check in with the victim at this time. “If this continues, please tell me, and I will take further action. We want everyone to be safe at this school.”
- Now turn the “spotlight” on the harasser specifically, asking for accountability. Again, be sure not to treat the target like a helpless victim. Rather, plainly give him/her this responsibility on behalf of others.