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# Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour

## Policy Directive

(reference: PPM 145)

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Date Approved: 01/10

Projected Review Date: 02/11

### 1.0 RATIONALE

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On June 4, 2007, the Education Amendment Act (Progressive Discipline and School Safety), 2007 was passed, amending Part XIII of the Education Act dealing with behaviour, discipline, and safety. The Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour Policy supports these changes, which more effectively combines discipline with opportunities for students to continue their education.

The Education Amendment Act (Keeping Our Kids Safe at School) 2009, further amends Part XIII of the Education Act dealing with behaviour, discipline, and safety, effective February 1, 2010. (Bill 157). Significant changes are found in the reporting of, and responding to, issues related to bullying and other student behaviours that may have a significant impact on school climate. A new section addresses the Delegation of Authority Regarding Discipline.

The goal of the policy is to support a safe learning and teaching environment in which every student can reach his or her full potential. Appropriate action must consistently be taken to address behaviours that are contrary to the provincial and Board Codes of Conduct. The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board is committed to building and sustaining a positive school climate for all students to support their education.

### 2.0 DEFINITIONS

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**School Climate:** School Climate may be defined as the sum total of all of the personal relationships within a school. These relationships must be founded in mutual acceptance, inclusion, respect, responsibility, and civility, and must be modeled by all.

**Progressive Discipline:** Progressive Discipline is a whole-school approach that utilizes a continuum of interventions, supports, and consequences to address inappropriate student behaviour and builds upon strategies that promote both positive student behaviours and positive school climate. The approach to student discipline must include learning opportunities for students in order to reinforce positive behaviours and help students make good choices.

### 3.0 PRINCIPLES OF PREVENTION

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An enhanced school climate promotes the tone or prevailing attitude which encompasses the physical attributes of the school as well as the levels of order, satisfaction, and productivity. The following factors contribute to an enhanced school climate and the reduction of security and discipline problems:

**Positive Academic Environment**

- ✓ ensure a creative a stimulating learning atmosphere
- ✓ communicate academic expectations clearly
- ✓ flexible timetables to promote quality learning time, establish routines, etc.

### **Values/Skills and Character Education Curriculum**

- ✓ provide formal and informal instruction to promote concepts of respect, caring for self and others, conflict resolution, concern for the environment, and principles of law and citizenship
- ✓ focus on ethno-cultural sensitivity and the need to address gender role stereotypes

### **Physical Environment**

- ✓ promote an enhanced physical environment that fosters pride and caring about surroundings
- ✓ encourage actions to remodel school areas that are prone to problems, i.e., enhanced lighting, flexible use of space

### **Supportive Climate for Students and Staff**

- ✓ promote programs to enhance personal wellness
- ✓ establish peer programs to provide support, encouragement, awareness, and education
- ✓ provide access to counselors, resources, and teachers to assist with social/emotional problems, school and career issues
- ✓ establish purposeful staffing and supervision models

### **Codes of Conduct**

- ✓ prepare school Code of Conduct in collaboration with students, staff, school council and parents, and communicate them clearly to all involved
- ✓ enact firm, fair and consistent discipline
- ✓ encourage staff as role models for effective communication, mutual respect, and problem solving resolution

### **Parent/School Collaboration**

- ✓ foster a welcoming school environment to encourage increased participation by parents in their child's education, school activities and school policy-making
- ✓ involve parents in activities to assist children with academics

### **Community Partnerships**

- ✓ promote community awareness and participation in the school to enhance cohesiveness, support, and effective use of resources
- ✓ increase involvement of students in community service activities to create a climate of caring, respect and trust

### **Student Participation**

- ✓ involve students in problem-solving, school enhancement, and policy direction to enable them to feel valued and respected and to create a sense of ownership of and responsibility for the school community

### **Staff Development**

- ✓ create an awareness of the origins and impact of violence and other anti-social behaviour
- ✓ promote creative methods of discipline and school management
- ✓ devise positive school climate enhancement activities
- ✓ provide in-service to staff on managing violent and aggressive student behaviour
- ✓ provide in-service to address 'best practice' for working with students with specific exceptionalities

## **4.0 Addressing Inappropriate Student Behaviour** \_\_\_\_\_

Disciplinary measures should be applied within a framework that shifts the focus from solely punitive to both corrective and supportive.

Schools should utilize a range of interventions, supports and consequences as well as include opportunities for students to focus on improving behaviour. ***A Pyramid of Strategies for Secondary Schools*** and ***Progressive Discipline for Elementary Students*** provide suggestions of several interventions that may lead to success for all students within a positive school climate. The suggested lists may also include interventions and strategies that are developed and implemented from now until the next review period.

The following must also be taken into consideration:

- particular student and circumstance (mitigating and other factors);
- nature and severity of the behaviour;
- impact on the school climate;
- the involvement of student services and other support personnel;
- for students with special education needs, disciplinary interventions, supports and consequences must be consistent with the student's strengths, needs, goals and expectations contained in the Individual Education Plan (IEP);
- Homophobia, gender based violence, sexual harassment and inappropriate sexual behaviours must be addressed.
- opportunities for the student to learn from the choices he or she makes; and
- appropriateness and availability of parental involvement in discussions concerning disciplinary action.

#### 4.1 A Pyramid of Strategies for Secondary Schools

(adapted from Westdale Secondary School's Pyramid of Intervention)

##### SYSTEM PROGRAMS

System Alter Ed	Turning Point	Diagnostic Testing
Summer School	N-Gage	E-Learning
Night School	U-Turn	ILC Program
SALEP		

##### IN-SCHOOL INTERVENTIONS

Restorative Justice	Study Hall
Timetable Change	Social Worker
Co-op Placement	Tracking Sheet
Credit Recovery	Student Contract
OSSLC	Diagnostic Testing
Alter Ed	Code of Conduct Consequences
Parent Conference	Credit Substitution
Student Success Team Meetings	Guidance Counsellor/Student Success
Walk-In Closet	

##### IN-CLASS SUPPORTS

Differentiated Instruction  
 Resource Room Support  
 IEP/Accommodations with LRT  
 Extra Time for Assignments/Tests  
 Credit Rescue  
 Home Contact  
 One-on-One Conferencing  
 Tracking Sheet  
 Assessment Tracking Strategies  
 EA Support  
 Caring Adult/ Peer Mentoring

##### ATTENDANCE SUPPORTS

Teacher-Student Conference about Attendance as concerns arise, contact home if student Review absent for prolonged period  
 Home Contact by Classroom Teacher-contact includes discussion between parent/guardian and teacher, discussion is documented for VP referral if required  
 Attendance Letter Sent Home  
 Classroom Incident Tracking/ Result Tracking  
 Referral to Vice-Principal

The Pyramid of Interventions begins with the classroom teacher.

## 4.2 HWDSB Progressive Discipline Strategies for Elementary Schools

*(adapted from a model developed by the Safe Schools Advisory Team in January, 2008)*

***Achieve, Believe, Care***

**Prevention/Foundation**

**Clear and Transparent Communication**

**Comprehensive Literacy/ Differentiated Instruction/ Early Identification**

Student Success; Safe Schools (includes Bullying Prevention);  
Character Development; Boys to Men; G.O. Girls

Physical School Environment and School Climate  
Classroom Management / Student Engagement  
Caring / "Go-to" Staff Member

### **SCHOOL-WIDE & IN-CLASS PREVENTIONS and Strategies**

Staff Development/ Professional Learning Communities  
Special Education—Individual Education Plans/ Safe Intervention Plans/NVCI  
Educational Assistants, Social Workers, Special Education Services  
Student/Instruction centered timetable  
School Code of Conduct  
Communication Tools (e.g. Student agendas)  
Award Systems, Assemblies, Celebrations of Success  
Extra-curricular activities, Student leadership/ Peer Mentors/ Co-op students  
Student/Peer Mediation  
Empowerment Opportunities  
Parental Participation  
Social Models/ Restorative Justice  
Programs of Choice

### **IN-SCHOOL INTERVENTIONS and Strategies**

Problem Solving Model Reflection Activity  
1:1 Conference with student or group  
Contract  
Temporary Break  
Attendance Support Strategies  
Alternative Learning Environment  
Loss of Privileges  
In-School Community Service  
Restorative Justice Strategies  
Family Strategies  
HWDSB Student Support Services  
Referral to a community or medical agency/ program

### **BOARD INTERVENTION Programs and Services**

Special Education Services  
Communication Services, Psychological Services, Social Work Services,  
Care Treatment and Correctional Facilities  
Alternative Education Programs

Suspension  
Expulsion

## 5.0 Delegation of Authority Regarding Student Discipline \_\_\_\_\_

Whenever possible, at least one administrator is to be present on school property.

The Education Act provides a Principal with the authority to delegate power, duties, or functions under Part XIII – “Behaviour, discipline and Safety” as outlined below.

### 5.1 The Principal must ensure:

- that the delegate (Vice-Principal or Teacher ) are provided with the cell phone and office numbers of the appropriate Supervisory Officer of the school, plus the cell phone and office number of a minimum of one other Supervisory Officer
- if no administrator is present on school property, staff must be notified who has administrative responsibilities, and for what duration;
- the delegation of authority to a teacher is in writing outlining what the teacher delegate can, and cannot do.

### 5.2 Delegation to the Vice-Principal: Delegation may include all authority of the Principal under Part XIII of the Education Act except:

- the final decision regarding a recommendation to the Board to expel a student;
- suspensions for more than six school days.

### 5.3 Delegation to Teachers: The Principal’s authority may be delegated to a teacher under Part XIII of the Education Act. As such:

- the delegation must respect all collective agreements;
- the delegate may have the authority to initially deal with situations involving activities that must be considered for suspension or expulsion, with the most important consideration being given to safety of those involved;
- delegate may undertake an initial investigation according to Board direction;
- the delegate must report all details of the initial investigation to the Principal or Vice-Principal as soon as possible;
- the delegate must report to the Principal or Vice-Principal any activities that must be considered for suspension or expulsion reported to them by other staff members during the Principal’s absence(suggest a ‘log’ be kept);
- the delegate may be given limited authority to contact the parent’s of a student who has been harmed as the result of an activity for which suspension or expulsion must be considered; only the nature of the harm to the student and the nature of the activity that resulted in the harm may be shared.
- If the teacher is not sure if he/she should call the parents, the teacher should contact the Principal or supervisory Officer for direction. The Principal is responsible for following up with the parent as soon as possible.
- **Teachers may not be delegated authority regarding suspension decisions or recommendations regarding expulsion.**

## 6.0 Responding by Board Employees to Bullying Incidents \_\_\_\_\_

All Board employees who work directly with students must respond to all student behaviour that negatively impacts on school climate.\*

Board employees who work directly with student include administrators, teachers, and non- teaching staff (including staff in social work, child and youth, psychology, and related areas, educational assistants, etc, and bus drivers).

Responding may include: asking a student to stop the inappropriate behaviour, naming the inappropriate behaviour and explaining why it is inappropriate and /or disrespectful, and asking the student to correct the behaviour eg. apologize for a hurtful comment and/or to rephrase a comment).

**\*Note:** Board employees are not required to respond to incidents when, in their opinion, responding would cause immediate physical harm to themselves, a student, or to another person.

## 7.0 Reporting by Board Employees of Bullying Incidents \_\_\_\_\_

All Board employees who work directly with students must report to the Principal all student behaviour for which suspension or expulsion may be considered.

Board employees who work directly with student include administrators, teachers, and non-teaching staff (including staff in social work, child and youth, psychology, and related areas, educational assistants, etc, and bus drivers).

**Verbal Reports:** A verbal report must be made to the Principal for incidents for which suspension or expulsion would not be considered. The verbal report is to be made as soon as possible following the incident.

**Written Reports:** For incidents for which suspension or expulsion must be considered, Board employees must report to the principal no later than the end of the school day and confirm their report in writing using the Ministry Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form Part 1. The written report is to be submitted within 24 hours of the incident.

## 8.0 Principal Response to Reports \_\_\_\_\_

**After a report is submitted, the Principal must:**

- Provide a written acknowledgement of the receipt of the report using the Ministry Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form-Part II to the employee who reported. Information that could identify the student(s) involved must not be part of the acknowledgement;
- Identify if action has been taken or no action is required
- \*Possible actions taken can include anything on the progressive discipline continuum eg. warning, contacting parent, removal of privileges, suspension.

**If no further action** is taken by the Principal, there is no requirement to retain the report and it should be destroyed. The report is not to go in the Ontario School Record (OSR).

**If action is taken**, the form and documentation must be kept in the students Ontario School Record (OSR) for a minimum of one year, and,

- The names of all the other students appearing on the form (aggressors and victims) must be removed except the name of the student in whose OSR the form is going;
- Nothing about the incident is to go into the victim's OSR unless the victim/parent of the victim specifically request that this is done.

**Note: This formal report does not replace conversations between the employee and the Principal. The Principal and the employee are encouraged to talk about the incident regardless of action taken.**

## 9.0 Notice to Parent/Guardian of Victims (Section 300.3(3) Ed. Act) \_\_\_\_\_

Principals are required to inform parents/guardian of students who have been harmed as a result of any incident for which suspension/expulsion must be considered.

Principals are not permitted to inform the parents of a victim when, in the Principal's opinion, doing so would put the victim at risk of harm from the parent. If the Principal decides not to notify the parent, the Principal must:

- consult with the manager of student services for further advice
- document the rationale for the decision not to notify the parent or guardian of the pupil;
- inform the school Supervisory Officer of this decision;
- if a teacher reported the harm to the principal, inform the teacher of the decision;
- if it is determined it is appropriate to do so, inform other Board employees of the decision not to notify a parent or guardian of the pupil.

If a staff person has any reasonable grounds to suspect that a student, who is under the age of 16, is or may be in need of protection from the person having charge of him or her, the staff person must report this directly to the CAS, and not rely on any other person to report on his or her behalf.

## 10.0 Disclosure to Parents of Victims \_\_\_\_\_

When notifying the parent/guardians of a victim, Principals must disclose the following:

- the nature of the incident that resulted in harm to the student;
- the nature of the harm to the student;
- the steps taken to protect the student's safety, including the nature of any discipline in response to the incident (eg. suspension given, parent's called).

Principals must not share the name of the aggressor or any other identifying or personal information with the parents of the victim beyond what is listed above (eg. referral to counselling or any other personal information).

## 11.0 Supports for Victims of Serious Student Incidents \_\_\_\_\_

(incidents leading to suspension or expulsion)

All Board employees must take allegations of gender-based violence, homophobia, sexual harassment, and inappropriate sexual behaviour (PPM145) and bullying (PPM144) seriously and act in a timely, sensitive, and supportive manner.

Board employees working directly with students must support all students, including those who disclose/report such incidents by:

- providing contact information about professional supports (eg. community agency);
- developing specific student plans to protect the student (eg. safe intervention plans);
- making this information readily available to students who may wish to discuss issues of healthy relationships, gender identity, and sexuality (eg. public health);
- provide parents with student services pamphlet if they are not satisfied with the supports their child receives;
- contact the manager of student services for assistance in referring students to a community agency for confidential support when his/her parents are not notified (eg. Sexual Assault Centre, Kids Help Phone, LGBT Youth Line).

When the Board (in consultation with the Principal) determines that it is necessary to separate students to preserve school safety or to protect a student, it is preferable that the victim not be moved, unless the victim/parent/guardian makes a specific request to do so.

## 12.0 Progressive Discipline Implementation Strategy \_\_\_\_\_

Each school will develop, with their School Council, student, teachers, and other staff members, a continuum of interventions, supports, and consequences that reflect the direction of this policy. These should be developmentally appropriate and focus on improving student behaviour. Consequences may include, but are not limited to, meeting with student, parent, principal, or guidance counsellor, or detentions and loss of privileges. In some cases, a referral to a community agency may be necessary for substance abuse, anger management, grief counselling, etc.

## 13.0 Partnerships \_\_\_\_\_

The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board works in collaboration with community agencies to address the needs of students. Building these partnerships will be ongoing.

## **14.0 Alignment to Other Board Policies and Provincial Legislation includes but is not limited to:**

Part XIII of the Education Act  
An Act to Amend the Education Act (Progressive Discipline and School Safety), 2007  
Ontario Regulation 472/07  
Access to School Premises – Ontario Regulation 474/00  
Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy  
Code of Conduct Policy  
Suspension of Pupils Policy  
Expulsion of Students Policy  
Information Technology Policy  
Personal Electronic Devices Policy  
Trespass Act  
Appropriate Dress Policy  
OCT Standards of Teaching Practice  
Equity Policy (PPM 119)  
Respectful Working Environments Policy  
Harassment Policy  
Progressive Discipline Procedures (employees)  
Collective Agreements for all employee groups  
Purchasing/Procurement Policies  
Ontario Human Rights Code  
Ontario Criminal Code  
Safe Schools Pillar Policy  
Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act  
Partnership Policy  
Volunteer Policy