



Safe Schools Pillar Policy

Date Approved: January, 2010

Projected Review Date: October, 2011

Purpose

To develop and maintain a safe, respectful and caring school and work environment.

Guiding Principles

- Every student is entitled to a safe and caring learning environment in which to learn.
- Students who are free from bullying (intimidation and victimization) are able to give their education the full attention and effort needed for success.
- The right to be safe requires taking responsibility for demonstrating acceptable standards of behaviour including respect, civility, responsible citizenship, and safety.
- Respectful, positive working environments are created by modelling relationships founded in mutual acceptance and inclusion and by promoting, supporting and recognizing appropriate behaviours.
- Preventative strategies help students make sound personal decisions and deter inappropriate behaviours.
- Programs which focus on violence prevention, anti bullying and building healthy relationships provide the foundation for an effective continuum of prevention strategies within a school.
- Inappropriate behaviours are effectively dealt with by employing a range of consequences that are developmentally appropriate, provide the opportunity to learn from mistakes and focus on improving behaviour.
- Effective staff development programs ensure that knowledge remains current, stimulate assessment of current practice and provide opportunities for sharing successful instructional and assessment strategies.
- Safe schools are the responsibility of a community partnership among government ministries, administrators, teachers, trustees, support staff, students, parents, police and community partners.

Intended Outcomes

The implementation of the *Safe Schools Pillar Policy* together with specific related policies will:

- foster a positive school experience for all students;
- promote the safety of all people in schools;
- ensure that all members of the school community are treated with respect and dignity;
- create a supportive learning environment for all students with a focus on academic achievement and building healthy relationships;
- promote, support and recognize positive student behaviour;
- provide early and on-going intervention;
- provide preventative programs and strategies which focus on violence prevention and building healthy relationships – e.g. conflict resolution; bullying prevention; gender-based violence prevention, peer mediation and citizenship development;
- address inappropriate behaviour with appropriate consequences applied within a framework of progressive discipline that are supportive and corrective in nature;
- provide on-going communication between all school staff and parents on student progress and behaviour and actively engage parents in disciplinary decisions made about their children;
- create proactive partnerships among police, social services, mental health services; and
- have alternative programs and reintegration strategies available for all students who are expelled or on long-term suspension.

Responsibility

The Director and members of Executive Council.

Definitions

Bullying: *Bullying is typically a form of repeated, persistent, and aggressive behaviour directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear and distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance.*

Diversity: *The presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes within a group, organization, or society. The dimensions of diversity include, but are not limited to, ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status.*

Expulsion: *A decision made by the Expulsion Hearing Committee of the Board that prohibits a student from attending his/her own school, or all schools of the Board, or participating in school-related activities until such time as the requirements of the Student's Action Plan are completed.*

Ontario Schools Code of Conduct: *The Ontario Schools Code of Conduct establishes provincial standards of behaviour for students and for all individuals involved in the publicly funded school system (i.e. parents or guardians, volunteers, teachers and other staff members), whether they are on school property, on school buses or at school-authorized events or activities.*

Peer Mediation: *Programs in which student are trained to act as mediators to help other students resolve conflict.*

Prevention: *The establishment of programs such as bullying prevention, citizenship development, and other positive activities designed to promote building healthy relationships and appropriate behaviours.*

Progressive Discipline: *A whole-school approach that utilizes a continuum of interventions, supports, and consequences to address inappropriate student behaviour and to build upon strategies that promote positive behaviours.*

School Council: *A school advisory body composed of parents and other members of the school and community, which makes recommendations to principals and school boards with the intent to improve student achievement and enhance the accountability of the education system to parents.*

Suspension: *A decision that prohibits a student from attending school or participating in school-related activities for a period not to exceed 20 days.*

Action Required

The development and implementation of specific policies, policy directives, programs and staff development programs that will:

- promote positive student behaviour;
- provide early and ongoing intervention;
- prevent inappropriate behaviour;
- address inappropriate behaviour with appropriate consequences; and
- actively involve students, staff, parents and the community working together to create and sustain safe, respectful and caring school environments.

Progress Indicators

A review of this Pillar Policy will be conducted to include, but not limited to, the following key areas and related components. Data will be collected to measure the degree to which the intended outcomes contained in the Pillar Policy and related specific policies have been achieved.

Key Areas	Components
<p>Creating and sustaining a positive, respectful and safe school culture.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ foster a positive school experience for all students; ▪ promote the safety of all people in schools; ▪ ensure that all members of the school community are treated with respect and dignity; ▪ create a supportive learning environment for all students with a focus on academic achievement and building healthy relationships; and ▪ promote, support and recognize positive student behaviour.
<p>Developing and maintaining policies, policy directives, programs and community partnerships that emphasize prevention, intervention and accountability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ provide early and on-going intervention; ▪ provide preventative programs and strategies which focus on violence prevention and building healthy relationships – e.g. conflict resolution; bullying prevention; gender-based violence prevention, peer mediation and citizenship development; ▪ address inappropriate behaviour with appropriate consequences applied within a framework of progressive discipline that are supportive and corrective in nature; ▪ provide on-going communication between all school staff and parents on student progress and behaviour and actively engage parents in disciplinary decisions made about their children; ▪ create proactive partnerships among police, social services and mental health services; and ▪ have alternative programs and reintegration strategies available for all students who are expelled or on long-term suspension.

References

Legislative:

- Part XIII of the Education Act
- Ontario Regulation 472/07
- Access to School Premises – Ontario Regulation 474/00
- OCT Standards of Teaching Practice
- Collective Agreements for all employee groups
- Ontario Human Rights Code
- Ontario Criminal Code
- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

Related HWDSB Policies:

- 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
- Equity Policy
- Conflict Resolution Policy (under development)
- Harassment Policy
- Progressive Discipline Procedures (employees)
- Purchasing/Procurement Policies