



# Student Behaviour and Discipline

Date Approved: 2015

Projected Review Date: 2019

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## PURPOSE:

The purpose of the Student Behaviour and Discipline Policy is to promote a positive school climate through a whole school approach that supports student achievement and well-being. The policy reflects an approach to utilizing a continuum of strategies including promotion of programs to build social skills, interventions to help students change inappropriate behaviours, consequences when inappropriate behaviours persist, and progressive discipline when more serious incidents occur.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Every student is entitled to a safe and caring learning environment in which to learn.
- Respectful, positive working environments are created by modeling relationships founded in mutual acceptance and inclusion, and by promoting, supporting, and recognizing appropriate behaviours.
- Programs which focus on violence prevention, bullying prevention, 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.

## INTENDED OUTCOMES:

The goal of the Student Behaviour and Discipline Policy is to:

- support a safe, inclusive and accepting learning and teaching environment in which every student can reach his or her full potential
- promote positive student behaviours through social skill programs that support the character attributes of Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB): acceptance, caring, citizenship, courage, empathy, honesty, integrity, respect, responsibility, and trustworthiness
- reinforce appropriate student behaviours
- address inappropriate student behaviours
- enhance academic achievement and student well-being
- provide a shared understanding of characteristics of a positive school climate
- reflect current legislation and Ministry of Education policy

## RESPONSIBILITY:

Director of Education  
 Members of Executive Council  
 School Principals



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## TERMINOLOGY:

*Adult Pupil:* For the purpose of this policy, an “adult pupil” who is 18 years of age or older or who is 16 or 17 and has withdrawn from parental control.

*Bullying:* (refer to the Bullying Policy for types and descriptions of bullying behaviours)

Bullying is defined as aggressive and typically repeated behaviour by a student where the behaviour is intended, or the student ought to know that the behaviour would be likely to have the effect of:

- causing fear or distress to another individual, including physical, psychological, social or academic harm
- harm to the person’s reputation or property, or
- creating a negative environment at the school for another individual, and the behaviour occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance 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.

*Child and Family Services Review Board (CFSR Board):* The Child and Family Services Review Board provides a mechanism under the Child and Family Services Act to hear an appeal of a school Board's decision to expel a pupil. The CFSR Board makes specific decisions on the residential placement of children; refusal of placement by private adoption licensees; rules on licenses for children’s residences, adoption placement, day nurseries and private home day care; refusal to disclose adoption information; and applications for the release of children from emergency secure treatment facilities.

### *Committees:*

(i) *Expulsion Hearing Committee:* A committee of three or more Trustees of Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board, established to hear a recommended expulsion of a pupil.

(ii) *Suspension Appeals Committee:* A committee of three or more Trustees of Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board, established to hear an appeal of a principal’s decision to suspend a pupil.

*Individual Education Plan (IEP):* A plan that provides modifications or accommodations to program of exceptional students, or, in some cases, students who have specific needs. (complete definition available in schools or on the Ministry of education website.)

*Parent/Guardian:* Where there is a reference to involving a parent/guardian it means the custodial parent or guardian of a minor who is under 18 years of age or is not 16 or 17 and removed from parental control.



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*Positive School Climate:* School climate is the learning environment and relationships found within a school and school community. A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community (staff, students, parents) feel safe, included, and respected; and actively promote and model positive behaviours and interactions. Principles of equity and inclusive education are embedded in the learning environment to promote a positive school climate and a culture of mutual respect.

*Progressive Discipline:* Progressive Discipline is an approach that utilizes a continuum of prevention programs, interventions, and supports to promote positive student behavior. Appropriate consequences to address inappropriate student behavior are also included in the continuum. This approach to student discipline also includes learning opportunities for students that reinforce positive behaviours and help students make good choices.

*Superintendent:* Superintendent of Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board responsible for the supervision of the school attended by the pupil who is suspended or recommended for expulsion.

*Whole-School Approach:* A whole-school approach involves all members of the school community including, but not limited to, staff, students, administrators, and parents. It supports efforts to ensure that schools are safe, inclusive and accepting. It involves the development of respectful and caring relationships between staff, between students and between staff and students and parents. All aspects of school life are included in a whole-school approach, such as curriculum, school climate, teaching practices, policies and procedures.

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## Activities Leading to Possible Suspension or Expulsion

<b>SUSPENSION</b> (1 to 20 days)	<b>EXPULSION</b> <b>Consult with School's Superintendent; Issue 20-day suspension pending expulsion; Conduct investigation; Determine suspension or referral to expulsion hearing</b>
<p>A principal <u>shall consider whether to suspend</u> a student if he or she has reasonable grounds to believe that the student has engaged in any of the following activities while at school, at a school-related event, or in other circumstances where engaging in the activity will have an impact on the school climate:</p> <p><b>Education Act</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. uttering a threat to inflict serious bodily harm on another person</li> <li>2. possessing alcohol or illegal drugs</li> <li>3. being under the influence of alcohol</li> <li>4. swearing at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority</li> <li>5. committing an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to school property at the student's school or to property located on the premises of the student's school</li> <li>6. bullying</li> <li>7. non-consensual sharing of intimate image(s)</li> <li>8. any other activity that is an activity for which a principal may suspend a student under a policy of the Board</li> </ol> <p><b>HWDSB</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. an activity in violation of the Equity Policy; e.g. racist, sexist, hate-motivated or derogatory comments</li> <li>10. violations of the Code of Conduct, school and Board policy, e.g. repeated disrespect of authority.</li> <li>11. using social media in such a way that negatively impacts others or school climate.</li> <li>12. inappropriate behaviours, including biting, spitting, kicking, etc.</li> <li>13. physical fighting and assault (not requiring medical treatment).</li> <li>14. an act harmful to one's physical/mental well-being.</li> <li>15. being under the influence of drugs.</li> <li>16. making a bomb threat</li> </ol>	<p>A principal <u>shall expel</u> a student if he or she has reasonable grounds to believe that the student has engaged in any of the following activities while at school, at a school-related activity or event, or in other circumstances where engaging in the activity will have an impact on the school climate:</p> <p><b>Education Act:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. possessing a weapon, including possessing a firearm</li> <li>2. using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person</li> <li>3. committing physical assault on another person that causes bodily harm requiring treatment by a medical practitioner</li> <li>4. committing sexual assault</li> <li>5. trafficking in weapons or in illegal drugs</li> <li>6. committing robbery</li> <li>7. bullying (<i>if the student has been previously suspended for engaging in bullying and the student's continuing presence in the school creates an unacceptable risk to the safety of another person</i>)</li> <li>8. any activity listed in Ed Act Subsection 306(1) that is motivated by bias, prejudice, or hate</li> <li>9. giving alcohol to a minor</li> <li>10. any other activity for which a student may be expelled under Board policy</li> </ol> <p><b>HWDSB</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. serious violations of the Standards of Behaviour in the Code of Conduct, e.g. Repeated disrespect of authority</li> <li>12. committing an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to Board property</li> <li>13. continuous pattern of behaviour injurious to the learning or safety.</li> <li>14. his/her presence constituting an unacceptable risk.</li> </ol>



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## ACTION REQUIRED:

### School Climate Surveys:

- School climate surveys will be administered to students in schools once every two years.
- Parent and Staff surveys will include questions related to school climate.
- Staff surveys are administered annually.
- Parent surveys are administered once every two years.

### Prevention and Awareness Training:

The Board will develop programs and provide opportunities for all members of the school community to increase their awareness and understanding to ensure consistency in the policy implementation.

Training will focus on:

- developing a positive school climate and building healthy relationships through safe schools, equity, mental health and inclusion,
- developing a common understanding of student expectations
- promote student engagement in supporting positive school climate
- prevention of behaviours that could lead to suspension or expulsion, and
- appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior
- progressive discipline.

### Communication:

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board will post the Student Behaviour and Discipline Policy and supporting policy procedures on the Board Website. Schools will ensure that parents/guardians/students/staff are aware of the Student Behaviour and Discipline Policy. A revised Safe and Caring Pamphlet for parents/guardians will be developed and made available to parents.

### Board Plan:

The Board will develop a two-year plan to address bullying and other school climate issues. The plan will include strategies for prevention, intervention, consequences, and discipline. The plan will be posted on the Board website and reviewed annually, beginning 2013.

### School Plans:

Each school will develop a school plan, in consultation with their School Council, Home and School (where one exists), students, teachers, and other staff members, that includes a continuum of interventions, supports, and consequences that reflect the direction of this policy.

### Resources:

*Curriculum-linked* resources and other relevant materials that promote positive student behaviour will be identified for schools. Resources will focus on building character attributes, healthy relationships, and other factors that contribute to student achievement and well-being.



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*Other Resources (e.g.: Programs, Student Services, Community Partnerships, Student Engagement)* The Board will annually review the data related to student behavior to determine the needs of students who require further support to promote positive behaviours and healthy relationships.

Specific resources can be viewed in the supporting policy procedures for this policy, which include:

- Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour
- Bullying Prevention and Intervention

## PROGRESS INDICATORS:

Intended Outcome	Assessment
Students feel safe, included and accepted in the learning environment.	School Climate Survey indicates improved student sense of safety. Board data shows improvement in all categories  Input /data from student forums indicates students feel comfortable and safe at school.
Schools will provide evidence based/ curriculum-linked pro-social skill building opportunities/programs for students.	School plans include programs/opportunities for students to learn/engage in building healthy relationships and pro-social skills. The plans are reviewed with the Superintendent during the School Improvement Visit using school based data.
Students demonstrate fewer inappropriate behaviours.	Decrease in incidents resulting in suspensions or expulsions.  Fewer incidents of bullying leading to suspension.
Parents indicate that their children are safe at school.	Parent Survey

## REFERENCES:

### Government Documents

Part XIII of the Education Act (300.0-316.0): Student Behaviour, Discipline, and Safety

An Act to Amend the Education Act (Accepting Schools Act), 2012

Policy/Program Memorandum 141, Programs for Students on Long Term Suspension

Policy/Program Memorandum 142: Program for Expelled Students

Policy Program Memorandum 145: Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour



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PPM 119: Developing and Implementing Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools 2009  
Keeping Our Kids Safe at School Act (Bill 157) 2010  
Ontario Regulation 472/00 Shaping A Culture of Respect in Our Schools 2008  
Ontario Regulation 181/98 "Identification and Placement of Exceptional Pupils"  
Access to School Premises – Ontario Regulation 474/00  
OCT Standards of Teaching Practice  
Caring and Safe Schools in Ontario: Supporting Students with Special Education Needs Through Progressive Discipline, K-12 2010  
English Language Learners: ESL and ELD First Nation, and Inuit Education Policy Framework 2007  
Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy, 2009  
Ontario Human Rights Code  
Ontario Criminal Code

## **HWDSB Policies**

Bullying Prevention and Intervention  
Code of Conduct  
Equity and Inclusive Education  
Police/Board Protocol  
Privacy and Information Management  
Staff Progressive Discipline  
Volunteer