



Student Behaviour and Discipline

Date Approved: 2021

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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, mental health, and well-being. The policy reflects an approach to utilizing a continuum of strategies including promotion of programs to build social skills, interventions to investigate the underlying factors of behaviour and to help students change maladaptive behaviours, consequences and progressive discipline when maladaptive behaviours persist and cause harm, and progressive discipline when serious incidents occur.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Every student is entitled to a safe, caring, and bias free learning environment. Every student has the right to learn in an environment that is free from harassment and discrimination.
- Every student has the responsibility to keep their learning environment free from harassment and discrimination
- Respectful, positive, working and learning environments are created by modeling relationships founded in mutual acceptance and inclusion, and by promoting, supporting, and recognizing adaptive behaviours and consequencing maladaptive behaviours.
- Programs which focus on equity education, building pro-social skills, bullying prevention, building healthy relationships and restorative practices provide the foundation for an effective continuum of prevention and intervention strategies within a school.
- Maladaptive 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 and safety.
- Consider bias, prejudice and discrimination that may influence student discipline. This involves considering the impact of all beliefs and actions that may enter a situation, especially those involving currently and historically underserved populations of students
- Mitigating circumstances are considered for all students.

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 their full potential academically
- Promote positive student behaviours through a focus on social skills and healthy relationships.
- Reinforce adaptive student behaviour and address maladaptive student behaviours



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RESPONSIBILITY:

Director of Education
Members of Executive Council
School Principals

TERMINOLOGY:

Adaptive Behaviour: Behaviour that enables a person to perform in their environment with greatest success and least conflict with others to meet academic, cultural, and social responsibilities. This is a term used in the areas of psychology and special education.

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.

Bias: very similar to, but not as extreme as prejudice. Someone who is biased usually refuses to accept that there are views other than their own.

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.



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Discrimination: the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people or things, especially on the grounds of race, age, or sex.

Harassment: engaging in a course of vexatious [annoying or provoking] comment or conduct which is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. Engaging in a course of " means that a comment or action would usually have to occur more than once for it to be considered harassment.

Hate Crime: Hate/bias motivated crimes are criminal offences or incidents motivated solely or in part because of the suspect's hate, bias or prejudice against another person based on the victim's ancestry, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression.

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.)

Maladaptive Behaviour: Behavior that can be viewed as the direct opposite of adaptive behavior. It is a counterproductive or interfering form of behavior which harms individuals or the environment.

Medical Cannabis User: as defined by the Education Act, a person who is authorized to possess cannabis for the person's own medical purposes in accordance with applicable federal laws.

Mitigating Circumstance: There can be positive or negative mitigating circumstances. These are factors that lessen the severity or culpability of an act requiring a suspension or expulsion.

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.

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, community members) feel safe, included, and respected; and actively promote address the needs of the student population, particularly those currently and historically underserved. Principles of equity and inclusive education are embedded in the learning environment to promote a positive school climate and a culture of mutual respect.

Prejudice: An opinion against a group or an individual based on insufficient facts and is usually unfavourable and/or intolerant.

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.



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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, community members 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, students, parents and community. 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

SUSPENSION(1 to 20 days) Consult with School Superintendent for any recommendations over 5 days	EXPULSION Consult with School's Superintendent; Issue 20-day suspension pending expulsion; Conduct investigation; Determine suspension or referral to expulsion hearing
<p>A principal <u>shall consider whether to suspend</u> a student if they have 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>Education Act</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. uttering a threat to inflict serious bodily harm on another person 2. possessing alcohol, illegal drugs or cannabis (unless the individual has been authorized to use cannabis for medical purposes) 3. being under the influence of alcohol, or cannabis (unless the individual has been authorized to use cannabis for medical purposes) 4. swearing at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority 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 6. bullying 7. non-consensual sharing of intimate image(s) 8. any other activity that is an activity for which a principal may suspend a student under a policy of the Board <p>HWDSB</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. violations of the Code of Conduct, school and Board policy, e.g. repeated disrespect of authority. 10. using social media in such a way that negatively impacts others or school climate. 11. inappropriate behaviours, including biting, spitting, kicking, etc. 12. physical fighting and assault (not requiring medical treatment). 13. an act harmful to one's physical/mental well-being. 14. being under the influence of drugs. 15. making a bomb threat 	<p>A principal <u>shall expel</u> a student if they have 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>Education Act:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. possessing a weapon, including possessing a firearm 2. using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person 3. committing physical assault on another person that causes bodily harm requiring treatment by a medical practitioner 4. committing sexual assault 5. trafficking in weapons or in illegal drugs 6. committing robbery 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>) 8. any activity listed in Ed Act Subsection 306(1) that is motivated by bias, prejudice, or hate (An activity in violation of the Equity and Inclusion Policy or any human rights violation under the Human Rights Code (pending Human Rights Policy, e.g., use of racial slurs, homophobic/transphobic language; etc.) 9. giving alcohol or cannabis to a minor 10. any other activity for which a student may be expelled under Board policy <p>HWDSB</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. serious violations of the Standards of Behaviour in the Code of Conduct, e.g. Repeated disrespect of authority 12. committing an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to Board property 13. continuous pattern of behaviour injurious to the learning or safety. 14. Their presence constituting an unacceptable risk.



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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, inclusion and Indigenous Cultural Safety.
- Developing a common understanding of student behaviour expectations
- Preventing behaviours that could lead to suspension or expulsion
- Multidisciplinary team collaboration to support students

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.

Board Plan:

The Board will develop a three-year Safe Schools Action Plan to improve the well-being of students and staff and to close the gap for those currently historically underserved. We will build student and staff well-being through positive climate strategies and positive relationships.

School Plans:

Each school will develop a bullying prevention and intervention ~~school~~ plan, in consultation with their School Council, Home and School (where one exists), students, teachers, and other staff members,

Resources:

Curriculum-linked resources and other relevant materials that promote positive student behaviour will be identified for schools. Resources will focus on building prosocial behaviours, healthy relationships, and other factors that contribute to student achievement and well-being. Other Resources (e.g.: Programs, Student Services, Community Partnerships, Student Engagement) will be reviewed annually for data related to student behavior to determine the needs of students who require further support to promote adaptive and prosocial behaviours and healthy relationships.



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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
Support a safe, inclusive and accepting learning and teaching environment in which every student can reach their full potential academically	School Climate and Parent Surveys indicate 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.
Promote positive student behaviours through a focus on social skills and healthy relationships.	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.
Reinforce adaptive student behaviour and address maladaptive student behaviours	Decrease in incidents resulting in suspensions or expulsions. Incidents of bias, prejudice and hate are reported and addressed Fewer incidents of bullying leading to suspension.

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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Policy Program Memorandum 119: Developing and Implementing Inclusive Education Policies in Ontario Schools 2009
 Policy Program Memorandum 166: Keeping Students Safe: Framework for school Board Protocols to Combat Sex Trafficking (2021)
 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

Anti-Black Racism (in development)
 Bullying Prevention and Intervention
 Code of Conduct
 Equity and Inclusive Education
 Human Rights (in development)
 Police/Board Protocol
 Privacy and Information Management
 Staff Progressive Discipline
 Volunteer