

SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Background

The Division is committed to ensuring a safe learning and working environment throughout the Division.

Procedures

1. Safe and Caring Schools

- 1.1 Principals are to familiarize themselves and their staffs with Division procedures and information regarding Safe and Caring Schools.
- 1.2 The Principal, in collaboration with the staff and School Community Council, will implement measures to assess the school climate.
- 1.3 The Principal, in collaboration with the staff, the School Community Council and appropriate community partners, shall lead the school through the development of a Safe School Charter.
 - 1.3.1 Required elements in the Charter include:
 - 1.3.1.1 A belief statement;
 - 1.3.1.2 A definition of the desired school climate;
 - 1.3.1.3 The names of those participating in the development of the Charter;
 - 1.3.1.4 Means to assess the school climate;
 - 1.3.1.5 Strategies to strengthen the school climate;
 - 1.3.1.6 A code of conduct;
 - 1.3.1.7 Discipline procedures;
 - 1.3.1.8 Provisions for bullying and harassment;
 - 1.3.1.9 Provisions for dangerous weapons;
 - 1.3.1.10 Provisions for illegal substances;
 - 1.3.1.11 Provisions for reporting child abuse/neglect;
 - 1.3.1.12 Provisions for student leadership;
 - 1.3.1.13 A communication plan;
 - 1.3.1.14 Partnerships.
 - 1.3.2 The Charter shall be reviewed annually.

Bullying and Harassment

- 1.4 Incidents of student bullying and harassment will be addressed in the school's Safe and Caring School Charter.
- 1.5 All members of the school community (students, staff, parents/guardians and the larger community) have a responsibility to report incidents of bullying and harassment to the Principal or designate. All staff members have a responsibility to respond to instances of bullying and harassment when they occur.
- 1.6 When bullying and harassment occurs the following steps will be taken:
 - 1.6.1 All staff members will provide a clear message that bullying and harassment will not be tolerated and will respond in a firm but fair manner when such behaviour occurs.
 - 1.6.2 The Principal or designate will investigate each incident and inform the classroom teacher and parent/guardian of the students involved in the incident.
 - 1.6.3 A record of each incident will be kept at the school level.
 - 1.6.4 The Principal or designate will follow Division discipline procedures when consequences for bullying and harassment warrant such action.
 - 1.6.5 The Principal or designate will conduct an annual review of bullying incidents and revise the school plan accordingly.
 - 1.6.6 Consequences are to be corrective rather than punitive with a focus on progressive discipline should there be further incidents.

2. Dangerous Weapons

- 2.1 Explosives, firearms and/or other dangerous instruments are forbidden on school property, on the way to and from school, or during any school related activity unless for special purposes in authorized activities where the Principal has granted special permission.
- 2.2 The Principal shall respond decisively and judiciously to students in possession of explosives, firearms or other dangerous instruments or materials when the incidents occur on school property, during any school activity, or on the way to and from school.
- 2.3 Offenders in possession of firearms, explosives or items of similar danger will be subject to reprimand, suspension, expulsion or other forms of discipline in accordance with Administrative Procedure 355 – Student Discipline.
- 2.4 Police involvement shall be requested in dealing with such incidents.
- 2.5 The Principal shall enact the provisions of Administrative Procedure 171 – Threat Assessment Protocol, when a student is in possession of explosives, firearms or other dangerous instruments.
- 2.6 Investigations and responses regarding students in possession of explosives, firearms, or other dangerous instruments or materials shall be conducted with due regard to Administrative Procedure 330 – Student Welfare.

3. Illegal Substances

- 3.1 Possession of, distributing, selling or supplying drugs or alcohol listed under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act or the Food and Drugs Act is prohibited on school premises, school buses or at school-sponsored activities.
- 3.2 The Principal may suspend any student who is in possession of, distributing, selling, or supplying drugs or alcohol listed under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act or the Food and Drugs Act and is on school premises, school buses or at school sponsored activities. The suspension is to be in accordance with Administrative Procedure 355 – Student Discipline.
- 3.3 Any student convicted of trafficking in drugs on school property, school activities or school buses is to be suspended after consultation with the Director or designate in accordance with Administrative Procedure 355 – Student Discipline.
- 3.4 Any student who has a drug or alcohol problem and confides in a teacher or Principal for the purpose of receiving assistance in overcoming the problem is to be directed to appropriate programs and services for assistance.
- 3.5 The Principal and staff are to cooperate fully with parents, community agencies and law enforcement agencies in their attempts to solve problems associated with drug and alcohol usage.
- 3.6 Authorized use of Drug Dogs by Police Services
 - 3.6.1 If the Principal ascertains that there is reasonable suspicion for belief that a student is in possession of drugs listed under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act or the Food and Drugs Act, a Police Officer may be called to investigate with a Drug Dog.
 - 3.6.1.1 In the event that the Drug Dog indicates the presence of drugs listed under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act or the Food and Drugs Act, while investigating a matter of reasonable suspicion, the Principal may use this evidence to enforce school discipline procedures and the Police Officer may use this evidence to pursue a criminal investigation or press charges.
 - 3.6.2 In the event that the Drug Dog indicates the presence of drugs listed under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act or the Food and Drugs Act, at any location in the school while the Police Officer is in the school for a lawful reason, the Principal may use this evidence to enforce school discipline procedures and the Police Officer may use this evidence to pursue a criminal investigation or press charges.
 - 3.6.3 Police Officers may be regularly scheduled to tour the school with a Drug Dog.
 - 3.6.3.1 Should the Drug Dog indicate the presence of drugs listed under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act or the Food and Drugs Act, during a regularly scheduled tour, the Police Officer may not use this evidence to pursue a criminal investigation or press charges.

4. Unusual Threats

- 4.1 Principals are responsible to review procedures to deal with emergencies or threats in accordance with Administrative Procedure 170 – Emergency Response.
- 4.2 Safety for students and staff shall be the primary consideration guiding all actions.
- 4.3 When an unusual threat to student or staff safety is received, the Principal is to assess the situation, take appropriate action and notify the Director as soon as practicable.
- 4.4 Among appropriate and expeditious responses that may be taken by the Principal the following, but not exclusive listing of actions may occur. The Principal may:
 - 4.4.1 Notify the police immediately and follow all directions given by the police;
 - 4.4.2 Carry on with regular activities unless advised to the contrary by police, Director or designate;
 - 4.4.3 Clear the school premises;
 - 4.4.4 Avoid any area of the school, which may threaten the safety of individuals;
 - 4.4.5 Lock down the school;
 - 4.4.6 Resume classes after clearance by the police, Director or designate.

5. Reporting Children in Need of Protection Services

- 5.1 The Principal shall be responsible for the implementation of these administrative procedures. Refer to Administrative Procedure 330 – Student Welfare
- 5.2 Principals shall annually advise school-based employees of this Administrative Procedure. Division Office managers and coordinators shall annually advise their respective employees of these procedures.
- 5.3 New employees shall be advised of this procedure as part of their orientation.

6. Cooperation with Police and Youth Workers

- 6.1 Interview and Interrogation
 - 6.1.1 Principals and teachers are to cooperate with the police when police officers find it necessary to interrogate students. All parties are to govern themselves in accordance with the Youth Criminal Justice Act.
 - 6.1.2 All requests by police for interviews or interrogation with students are to be directed to the Principal.
 - 6.1.3 Except by specific request to the contrary by police, the Principal is to notify, if necessary, the parent or guardian in advance of the interview or interrogation.
 - 6.1.4 The Principal is to arrange for any interviews or interrogation to be held in private. The Principal or designate may be present for the interview if the student requests.

- 6.1.5 If the police request to take a student from the school, the Principal is to suggest that the officer contact the parent or guardian using the Principal's telephone to inform them of the intended police action.
 - 6.1.5.1 However, the police will act as their duty directs. This may require the arrest and removal of the student from guardians.
 - 6.1.5.2 In either event, the Principal is to advise the parents or guardians of the police action as soon as is possible.
- 6.2 Search
 - 6.2.1 Principals and teachers are authorized to search school property in order to maintain order, safety or discipline.
 - 6.2.2 Each Principal is to develop procedures with respect to regular inspection by teachers of desks, lockers and other school property used for storage of student materials. These procedures must be communicated to the students upon registration.
 - 6.2.2.1 Prior to any search being conducted, all students, staff and parents are to be provided with "Fair Notice".
 - 6.2.2.2 Such "fair notice" shall be given in:
 - 6.2.2.2.1 A letter provided to each student at the beginning of the school year;
 - 6.2.2.2.2 An announcement made to all students at a student assembly at the beginning of the school year;
 - 6.2.2.2.3 A letter in the first school Newsletter advising the parents of the "fair notice" provided above.
 - 6.2.3 If the Principal or teacher ascertains that there is reasonable suspicion for belief that a criminal offense is being, or has been committed, that a search of the student or property will provide evidence in these matters, or will lead to the conclusion that the commission of a criminal offense has or is about to occur, a search can proceed subject to the following:
 - 6.2.3.1 The search is to proceed immediately if there is reason to believe that the safety of any student is in question.
 - 6.2.3.2 If the safety of any student is not in question:
 - 6.2.3.2.1 Attempts are to be made to have the student concerned present and consent to the search.
 - 6.2.3.2.2 Where the student is not present, or does not consent to the search or the school officials do not wish to undertake the search under their own authority, school officials are to contact the police and the search proceed under the direction of the police.
 - 6.2.3.2.3 At least one (1) witness is to be present when a search takes place.

- 6.2.3.3 The police must conduct all intrusive searches.
- 6.2.4 Any search on school premises initiated by the police is to be:
 - 6.2.4.1 Authorized by warrant; or
 - 6.2.4.2 In relation to drugs or weapons or, coincident with the appearance of the police for the purpose of arresting a student; or,
 - 6.2.4.3 In relation to a Principal initiated search that results in a request for police assistance.
- 6.2.5 The Principal or designate is to accompany the police in any search unless advised by the police to the contrary.

Reference: Sections 85, 87, 109, 175 Education Act
Child and Family Services Act
Controlled Drugs and Substances Act
Food and Drugs Act
Human Rights Code
Youth Criminal Justice Act
Provincial Child Abuse Protocol 2006