



## KENORA CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

### 300 Student Procedures

#### AP 306: Safe Schools – Bullying/Harassment Prevention and Intervention

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Bullying adversely affects healthy relationships, the school climate, and a school's ability to educate its students. It impacts negatively on students' ability to learn. Bullying will not be accepted on school property, at school-related activities, on school buses, or in any other circumstances where engaging in bullying will have a negative impact on the life of the school.

Providing students with an opportunity to learn and develop in a safe, caring and respectful society is a shared responsibility in which the district and its schools play an important role. Schools that use bullying prevention and intervention strategies foster a positive learning and teaching environment that supports academic achievement for all students.

The Kenora Catholic District School Board in accordance with the Education Act as amended by the Education Amendment Act (Progressive Discipline and School Safety/*Safe Schools Act* ), 2007, will endeavour to ensure that the school environment is one that reflects character education and the Ontario Catholic Graduate Expectations. The Board believes that all forms of bullying are unacceptable and will be dealt with in a serious and timely manner.

This administrative procedure has been developed to provide direction to the system for the prevention of bullying and for intervention when inappropriate behaviour occurs.

#### 1. Provincial Definition of Bullying:

- 1.1 Bullying is typically a form of repeated, persistent, aggressive behaviour that is directed at an individual(s) that is intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear, 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 balance. (PPM 144)
- 1.2 Bullying can be social, physical, verbal and/or electronic (cyber bullying). ([\*Bullying: We can all help stop it: A Guide for Parents of Elementary and Secondary School Students, 2006\*](#)).
- 1.3 Bullying
  - 1) Adversely affects students' ability to learn
  - 2) Adversely affects healthy relationships and the school climate

- 3) Adversely affects a school’s ability to educate students
- 4) Will not be tolerated on school property, at school related activities, on school buses, or in any other circumstance (e.g. online) where engaging in bullying will have a negative impact on the school climate.

## 2.0 Provincial Definition of Harassment:

Harassment is words, conduct or action that is directed at an individual and serves no legitimate purpose and which annoys, alarms or causes that individual emotional distress. Harassment occurs when an individual is repeatedly singled out for serious mistreatment, which may include threats, bullying, verbal assault, taunting, ostracizing or violent gestures and actions.

2.1 The term “harassment” is used in human rights codes as one form of discrimination. Administrative Procedure 121: Human Rights deals with harassment based on the enumerated grounds in the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#).

- 1) AP121 is to be consulted for any example of harassment based on the grounds of race, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation or other human rights grounds, including any sexual harassment of a student by a student.
- 2) However, the term of “harassment” is now used outside of the human rights context as well to describe types of inappropriate conduct that are not related to the Code.

2.2 Both bullying and harassment are related to real or perceived power over others.

- 1) Students may attain or maintain power over others in the school through real or perceived differences.
- 2) Some areas of difference may be size, strength, age, intelligence, economic status, social status, solidarity of the peer group, religion, ethnicity, disability, need for special education, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender and race.

2.3 Bullying and harassment are dynamics of unhealthy interaction that can take many forms:

- 1) physical (e.g., hitting, pushing, tripping)
- 2) verbal (e.g., name calling, mocking, or making sexist, racist, or homophobic comments)
- 3) social (e.g., cyber bullying - spreading rumours, images, or hurtful comments through the use of email, cell phones, text messaging, Internet websites, or other technology).

### **3.0 Character Education**

- 3.1. Schools, parents and the broader community in the Kenora Catholic District School Board are engaged in character development initiatives. The principles and attributes of character development are universal and transcend socio-economic status, racial, ethno-cultural, linguistic, religious, gender, physical and intellectual ability and other demographic factors.
- 3.2 The board believes that all stakeholders share in the responsibility to model the attributes of good character. Good character needs to be modeled, taught and practiced by all members of the district’s learning community.
- 3.3 The Kenora Catholic School Board recognizes and honours best practice initiatives and programs and activities that contribute to character development. Character education provides a foundation of respect and positive behaviours upon which anti-bullying programs can thrive.

### **4. School-Wide Prevention and Awareness Strategies**

- 4.1 A positive school climate is essential to the prevention of bullying behaviour. A positive climate is developed when administrators, teachers and support staff:
  - 1) Promote the development of healthy and inclusive relationships among the staff and student body and with parents and the broader community
  - 2) Provide and support training for students and staff members that raises awareness of the problem of bullying
  - 3) Know and follow administrative procedures related to safe, caring and respectful schools
  - 4) Reinforce bullying prevention messages through programs addressing discrimination based on such factors as age, race, sexual orientation, gender, faith, disability, ethnicity, and socio-economic disadvantage
  - 5) Post, communicate and enforce clear codes of student conduct
  - 6) Assess the awareness and scope of the bullying problem at the school through school climate surveys (minimum of one every two years)
  - 7) Ensure that students are supervised in all areas of the school and on the school grounds, with particular attention being given to any areas where bullying has been identified as a problem in a particular school setting
  - 8) Find a variety of ways to reward students for positive, inclusive behaviour and to support them in being positive leaders in their school community

- 9) Encourage parents to participate and become engaged in the life of the school and to volunteer to assist in school activities and projects
  - 10) Involve school councils in the development of anti-bullying initiatives and the ongoing implementation of prevention programs.
- 4.2 When involving parents and school councils, staff members will provide information about bullying, including ways to support a child who reports being bullied or witnessing bullying.
  - 4.3 Administrators, teachers and support staff must inform parents about the dangers of encouraging their children to be aggressive or to strike back.
  - 4.4 They will also provide experienced advice to parents about how to avoid rescuing their children from every challenge and creating over-dependence.
  - 4.5 Parents and the school can work together to teach children to be assertive and to develop age-appropriate independence. This independence can contribute to self-confidence and may deter bullies who often seek out acquiescent victims.
  - 4.6 Administrators, teachers and support staff must regularly reinforce the message that bullying will not be tolerated in the school and that everyone must work together to create a positive learning environment.

## **5.0 Classroom Prevention Strategies**

- 5.1 Teachers and support staff provide opportunities for students to talk about bullying and to define unacceptable behaviours.
  - 1) Teachers involve students in establishing classroom rules against bullying and peer harassment.
  - 2) Teachers and support staff engage students in classroom activities and discussions related to bullying and violence, including awareness of the harm that they cause and strategies to reduce them.
- 5.2 Teachers provide and regularly reinforce clear expectations for appropriate student behaviour.
- 5.3 Teachers provide integrated programs that support bullying prevention strategies.
- 5.4 Teachers and support staff focus on developing healthy relationships in classroom lessons and include books that deal with related issues in student reading materials.
- 5.5 Teachers promote cooperation by assigning projects that require collaboration.

- 1) Such cooperation teaches students how to compromise and how to assert without being demanding.
  - 2) Teachers vary the grouping of participants in these projects and monitor the treatment of participants in each group.
- 5.6 All staff ensure that students know what to do when they experience or observe a bullying confrontation. Knowing the process to follow gives the students confidence and a feeling of security.
- 5.7 In accordance with Board Wide Code of Conduct, PPM 144 and 145 and Reg. 472/07, and in addition to the school Code of Conduct, schools shall be required to develop a bullying prevention plan.
- 5.8 All schools within the board will establish procedures for investigating bullying behaviours and will use progressive discipline to develop consequences in their own school Code of Conduct.
- 5.9 All schools within the board will include an anti-bullying statement in their local school Code of Conduct.
- 5.10 All school within the Board will have in place a Safe Schools Team responsible for school safety, composed of at least one student, parent, teacher, support staff, community partner and the principal. Safe School teams must have a staff chair.

## 6.0 **Intervention Strategies**

### 6.1 School-Wide Intervention Strategies

6.1.1 School administrators, teachers and support staff encourage students to make a confidential report if they are the victims of bullying or are aware of another victim or victims.

- 1) Reporting methods are designed to minimize the possibility of reprisal.
- 2) Details of incidents are carefully recorded and tracked.
- 3) Such reports are investigated and resolved expeditiously, consistent with administrative procedures.

6.1.2 Parents who report bullying are given a receptive hearing, followed by investigation and resolution of the allegations.

6.1.3 Interventions are conducted in ways that are consistent with a progressive discipline approach.

- 1) The strategies will range from early and ongoing interventions to more intensive interventions in cases of persistent bullying, with possible referral to community or social service agencies.
- 2) A variety of early interventions, ongoing interventions, supports and consequences are described in Administrative Procedure AP 302: Safe Schools - Code of Conduct and AP 308: Safe Schools - Progressive Discipline.

6.1.4 Bullying is one of the infractions for which a principal may consider suspension from school. The principal will take into account any mitigating or other factors which may apply.

## 6.2 Classroom Intervention Strategies

6.2.1 All staff must take immediate action when bullying is observed and let students know that they care and will not allow anyone to be mistreated.

- 1) By taking immediate action in dealing with the bully, educators support both the victim and the witness or witnesses.

6.2.2 Dealing with a bully does not necessarily mean confronting the bully in front of his or her peers.

- 1) Staff will usually confront the bully in private.
- 2) Challenging a bully in front of his or her peers may actually enhance the bully's status and lead to further aggression.

6.2.3 Teachers or the principal, as appropriate, will notify the parents of both victims and bullies when a confrontation occurs, and seek to resolve the problem quickly at school.

- 1) Refer both victims and aggressors to counselling whenever appropriate.

6.2.4 School staff provides protection and support for bullying victims whenever necessary, including creating a buddy system whereby students have a particular friend or older buddy on whom they can depend.

6.2.5 Teachers and support staff listen receptively to parents who report bullying and teachers investigate reported circumstances so that immediate and appropriate action can be taken.

6.2.6 Staff should avoid attempts to mediate a threatening bullying situation alone if they are uncomfortable.

- 1) Inform the principal, who will address the situation as appropriate, including contacting police services.

## 7.0 Reporting to Principals

7.1 The purpose of reporting incidents of inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour is to ensure that the principal is aware of any activities taking place in the school for which suspension or expulsion must be considered.

7.1.1 Section 300.2 of Part XIII of the Education Act states that an employee of the board who becomes aware that a student at a school of the board may have engaged in an activity for which suspension or expulsion must be considered, shall report the matter to the principal as soon as reasonably possible.

7.1.2 The employee must consider the safety of others and the urgency of the situation in reporting the incident, but, in any case, must report it to the principal no later than the end of the school day.

7.2 In cases where an immediate action is required, a verbal report to the principal may be made. **A written report must be made when it is safe to do so.**

7.3 All employee reports made to the principal must be confirmed in writing, using Form 067 – Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form – Part 1.

- 1) Boards must specify on this form any other activities for which a student may be suspended or expelled, according to board policy.
- 2) Boards must not make any other modifications to this form.

7.4 Principals are expected to provide information to board employees on completing the Safe Schools Incident Reporting Forms provided for this Administrative Procedure.

- For example, employees who are reporting an incident must submit Form #067 - Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form – Part I to the principal in a timely manner.
- The principal must provide the person who submitted the report with written acknowledgement of receipt on Form #068 – Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form – Part 2 Acknowledgement of Receipt of Report– Part II.
- Each report will be assigned a report number.

7.5 If the principal has decided that action must be taken as a result of an incident of bullying, s/he will file a copy of the reporting form with documentation indicating the action taken in the Ontario Student Record (OSR) of the student whose behaviour was inappropriate.

- 1) The names of all other students that appear on the form – both aggressors and victims – must be removed from the form before it is filed in the student's OSR.
- 7.6 Where the principal has taken action in the case of more than one student, a copy of the reporting form and documentation indicating the action taken must be filed in the OSR of each student whose behaviour was inappropriate.
- 1) The names of all other students that appear on the form – both aggressors and victims – must be removed from the form before it is filed in the OSR of the student whose behaviour was inappropriate.
- 7.7 In the case of the victim, no information about the incident must be placed in his or her OSR, unless the victim or parent of the victim expressly requests that it be placed in the OSR.
- 7.8 In situations where the victim is also an aggressor and the principal has taken some action short of suspension, no information about the incident must be placed in this student's OSR if the principal has decided not to notify this student's parents.
- 1) However, if the principal has notified this student's parents, information regarding the incident and the action taken will be placed in the OSR.
- 7.9 The form and documentation must be kept in the OSR for a minimum of one year unless the board has required a longer period.
- 7.10 In all cases, the principal must provide the employee who reported the incident with written acknowledgement of receipt of the report, using Form #067 – Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form – Part 2, and must specify whether action has been taken or no action is required.
- 1) If no further action is taken by the principal, the principal is not required to retain the report, and should destroy it.
  - 2) Information that could identify the student(s) involved must not be part of the acknowledgement.
- 7.11 In addition to employees of the board, school bus drivers must also be required to report such incidents in writing to the principal of the school.
- 7.12 Other non-board employees who come into direct contact with students on a regular basis, as outlined in subsection 300.4 (5.3) of Part XIII of the Education Act, to report such matters to the principal (e.g., outdoor education instructors).

## **8.0 Investigation of Reported Bullying Behaviour**

- 8.1 Any allegation of bullying shall be investigated by the principal or his/her designate.
- 8.2 Information related to bullying behaviour shall be gathered and documented from all students involved, including any witnesses.
- 8.3 A Bullying Incident Tracking Form will be completed and filed.

## **9.0 Actions if Bullying Behaviour is Evident**

- 9.1 Actions to address incidents of bullying behaviour shall take into account:
  - 1) The particular student and circumstances (e.g. mitigating or other factors)
  - 2) The nature and severity of the behaviour
  - 3) The impact on the school climate (e.g. the relationship within the school community).
- 9.2 Progressive discipline prior to suspension may include:
  - 1) Withdrawal of privileges
  - 2) Withdrawal from class
  - 3) Out of class withdrawal of classroom privileges
  - 4) Detention
  - 5) Restitution for damages
  - 6) Peer mediation
  - 7) Restorative damages
  - 8) Transfer
  - 9) Consultation.
- 9.3 The behaviour of each student involved must be monitored to determine further action(s).
- 9.4 The school principal or his/her designate in consultation with the teacher shall determine whether it is appropriate to contact the parents of the students involved.
- 9.5 The school principal or his/her designate may request assistance from various outside agencies such as the O.P.P. community policing officer, the attendance officer, or other appropriate community agencies or resources.
- 9.6 Intentionally and falsely accusing another student of bullying shall be considered bullying

behaviour.

9.7 Formal procedures will be outlined specifically by each school.

9.8 All schools within the board shall distribute ministry resources readily available for distribution that follow up on [Shaping Safer Schools: A Bullying Prevention Plan \(e.g. the parent bullying brochure, Bullying: We can all help stop it: A Guide for Parents of Elementary and Secondary School Students](#), and Kids Help Line 1 800 668-6868 and/or <http://www.kidshelpphone.ca> ).

9.9 Each school will create an Anti-Bullying or Safe School Team comprised of representatives from the community.

9.10 A school climate survey will be taken by the staff and students on the topic of bullying. (minimum of one survey every two years).

#### **10.0 Procedure Communication**

10.1 The school principal shall review this policy at the beginning of each school year with staff members.

10.2 The school principal shall review this policy at the beginning of the school year with parents and school council.

10.3 Board policy mandates that this procedure will be reviewed every three years.

#### **11.0 School Level Plans**

11.1 All schools must develop and implement school-wide bullying prevention and intervention plans as part of their school improvement plan.

11.2 Components of these plans must include the following:

- 1) the definition of bullying
- 2) prevention strategies
- 3) intervention strategies
- 4) training strategies for members of the school community
- 5) communication and outreach strategies
- 6) monitoring and review process

## 12.0 Implementation Strategies

### 12.1 Training, Communication and Outreach

- 1) The Board will put in place training strategies on bullying prevention and intervention for all administrators, teachers, and non-teaching staff (including staff in social work, child and youth work, psychology, and related areas, and educational assistants).
- 2) The training strategies must include ways of responding to gender-based and homophobic bullying that are consistent with equity training on cultural sensitivity, on respect for diversity, and on special education needs.

### 12.2 Monitoring and Review

- 1) The board will monitor and review the prevention and intervention strategies to determine their effectiveness.
- 2) This process will include a regular cycle of analysis of the school climate through anonymous surveys. (minimum of one every two years)

## Legal References:

1. Education Amendment Act (Progressive Discipline and School Safety) 2007
2. Education Act (sections 265 (1) (m), 302 (1) (3) (4), 305 and 306.
3. Ontario Regulation 298, 427/07.
4. The Human Rights Code, PPM #'s 128,141,142,144,145

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