

YORK CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD



BOARD POLICY	
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POLICY TITLE: BULLYING PREVENTION

SECTION A

1. PURPOSE

The York Catholic District School Board values learning environments that are safe, nurturing, trusting, positive and respectful - consistent with our Gospel values. The Board believes that all bullying (physical, emotional, verbal, electronic) is a particularly insidious form of violence and that all students and educators have the right to a school environment free from bullying, harassment, threats and violence.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- denounce bullying in any form on board property, on buses, or in any other circumstance (e.g. online);
- reinforce the Board's commitment to support programs for bullying prevention; and
- provide procedures to address incidences of bullying incidents.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the York Catholic District School Board that bullying in any form is unacceptable and that staff shall implement bullying prevention and intervention strategies which foster a positive learning and teaching environment for all students and staff.

3. PARAMETERS

The York Catholic District School Board and its schools will actively promote a positive school climate reflecting, but not exclusive of, the following characteristics:

- a) students and staff feel safe and are safe;
- b) healthy and inclusive relationships are promoted;
- c) all partners are engaged;
- d) bullying prevention messages are reinforced through programs addressing discrimination factors such as age, race, sexual orientation, gender, faith, disability, ethnicity and socio-economic disadvantage;
- e) students are encouraged to be positive leaders in their school community;
- f) maximizing learning potential is emphasized;
- g) cultural sensitivity training, recognition of diversity, and responding to the needs of different learners.

4. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Bullying: -*“a form of repeated, persistent and aggressive behaviour that is 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.”* Policy/Program Memorandum No. 144, released by the Ministry of Education on October 4, 2007

Bullying is a dynamic of unhealthy interaction that can take many forms. It can be physical (e.g. hitting, pushing, tripping) verbal (e.g. name calling, mocking, or making sexist, racist, or homophobic comments), or social (e.g. excluding others from a group, spreading gossip, or rumours). It may also occur through technology (e.g. spreading rumours, images, or hurtful comments through the use of e-mail, cell phones, text messaging, Internet website, or other technology).

Cyber-bullying: “the use of information and communication technologies, such as e-mail, cell phones and pager text messages, instant messaging, personal websites and on-line personal polling websites, to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour by an individual or group, that is intended to harm others.”

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

5. CROSS REFERENCES

Policy 202 Interim Safe Schools (Student Discipline)
Policy 218 Code of Conduct
Religion & Family life Programs
Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) 144
The Education Act
CAYRE Curriculum Resources
Valuing Diversity – A Framework for Equity in the Classroom

6. RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 Senior Administration:

- a) provide training/in-service sessions on bullying prevention and intervention for all administrators, teachers and support staff.

6.2 Principals:

- a) demonstrate leadership in implementing and sustaining an anti-bullying culture in the school;
- b) establish a Safe School Team to develop and implement a school-wide approach to bullying prevention and intervention;
- c) model and reinforce appropriate interaction at all times;
- d) respond immediately in cases where actual or perceived bullying has occurred.

6.3 School Staff:

- a) encourage students to report incidents of bullying;
- b) support, monitor and act upon all inappropriate incidents to ensure the safety of students;
- c) use resources that will assist in developing age-appropriate conflict resolution skills, social skills and positive relationships;
- d) model and reinforce acceptable behaviours at all times.

6.4 Students:

- a) conform to the standards of appropriate behaviour outlined in Board policies and school Code of Conduct;
- b) report incidents of bullying to classroom teacher, other school staff, or to school administrators;
- c) Avoid participating in bullying as direct perpetrators or in the role of a bystander;
- d) Accept consequences for engaging in bullying activities, either as a perpetrator or bystander.
- e) model acceptable behaviours at all times.

6.5 Safe School Team:

- a) support the principal in developing and maintaining a school plan to address and eliminate bullying issues.

6.6 Parents, Visitors, Community Members:

- a) promote a safe, caring and positive environment for all by developing an awareness of bullying issues;
- b) inform the school if bullying is suspected;
- c) encourage students to discuss any incidents of bullying and reinforce the need to speak out;
- d) support the school through the Catholic School Council in promoting local school bullying prevention initiatives.

BULLYING PREVENTION

SECTION B

GUIDELINES

1. PREVENTION STRATEGIES

Bullying prevention is a whole school approach that heightens expectations for a safe, caring and inclusive school climate. It includes a supportive environment that upholds our Gospel Values and encourages positive relationships between students, staff and parents.

All students in York Catholic District Schools will participate in bullying prevention training and initiatives within their own school. These include but are not limited to:

- 1.1 ongoing classroom teaching with curriculum link
- 1.2 Religious Education Curriculum link
- 1.3 character education initiatives
- 1.4 student leadership
- 1.5 student success strategies
- 1.6 healthy lifestyles and relationships initiatives
- 1.7 social skills development
- 1.8 mentorship programs
- 1.9 conflict resolution
- 1.10 restorative practice
- 1.11 peer mediation
- 1.12 Tribes Learning
- 1.13 others

2. INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

The goal of intervention measures is to stop incidences of bullying and to foster a positive learning and teaching environment that is rooted in our mission statement. All intervention will be consistent with a progressive discipline approach that utilizes continuum of supports and consequences to address inappropriate student behaviour and to build upon strategies that promote positive behaviour. Intervention strategies range from simple responses to more intensive actions, such as suspension, in cases of persistent bullying. Early (simple) interventions may include the following:

- 2.1 contact with parent(s)/guardian(s)
- 2.2 review of expectation – verbal reminder
- 2.3 a written work assignment with a learning component
- 2.4 referral to counselling
- 2.5 consultation
- 2.6 withdrawal of privileges
- 2.7 restorative practices
- 2.8 school, board and community support programs
- 2.9 others

