



WORKPLACE BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

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Context:

The Board of Education of Qualicum School District recognizes the right of employees and students to work and learn in an environment free from bullying and harassment. The District has an obligation to prevent and address workplace bullying and harassment. This obligation is reinforced by legislation, contractual language and forms the basis of all relationships in our district.

Policy Statement:

The Board considers bullying and harassment in any form to be totally unacceptable and will not tolerate its occurrence. The Board believes that in diversity there is strength.

The Board believes and is committed to:

1. Ensuring that all individuals will be treated in a fair and respectful manner;
2. Encouraging full acceptance and valuing diversity.
3. Treating any claim of bullying or harassment as serious and taking immediate action.

Guiding Principles:

1. The Board recognizes the rich diversity of Canadian Society and the benefits which diversity brings to all members of our community.
2. All individuals must be treated with dignity and respect,
3. All personnel must be effectively trained to understand, identify, and take appropriate action when bullying or harassment is reported.
4. Bullying and harassment excludes any reasonable action taken by an employer or supervisor relating to the management and direction of workers or the place of employment.

Definitions:

Bullying and harassment may include any inappropriate conduct or comment by a person towards a worker that causes the worker to be humiliated or intimidated.

Bullying/harassment may occur in any interpersonal, written or electronic communications.

To be considered bullying, there must be an imbalance of power between the parties, which may be a result of reporting structure, social currency, or physicality. To be considered harassment, the behaviours must be both unwanted and ongoing.



QUALICUM SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD POLICY 604

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References:

- [WorkSafeBC; Toward a respectful workplace: a handbook on preventing and addressing workplace bullying and harassment](#)
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (Sections 115 to 117)
- Workers' Compensation Act (Action 150)
- MATA Collective Agreement Article E.2
- CUPE Collective Agreement Article 4.3
- Administrative Procedures to Board Policy 604: *Workplace Bullying and Harassment*
- Board Policy 700: *Safe, Caring and Inclusive School Communities*
- Board Policy 606: *Respectful Workplace*

Dates of Adoption/Amendments:

Adopted: 1985.07.11

Amended: 1991.06.11: 1991/09.10: Review October 2000: 2000.12.19: 2008.03.11:
15.11.24: 2017.06.27: **2021.11.23**



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Purpose

To ensure that all persons covered by these procedures are aware of their duties regarding bullying and harassment in the workplace, as per Policy 604: Workplace Bullying and Harassment.

Responsibilities

It is the District's expectation that all persons covered by these procedures, will comply with the District's policies and procedures, and are required to:

- a. refrain from engaging in bullying and harassment of other employees, supervisors, the employer or persons acting on behalf of the employer
- b. report occurrences of bullying and harassment observed or experienced in the workplace
- c. apply and comply with the District's policies and procedures on bullying and harassment
- d. participate in training sessions and/or annual reviews (MATA Members also refer to Collective Agreement Article E.2.6.)

WorkSafeBC OHS Definition of Workplace Bullying and Harassment

Bullying and harassment includes any inappropriate conduct or comment by a person towards a worker that the person knew or reasonably ought to have known would cause the worker to be humiliated or intimidated, but excludes any reasonable action taken by an employer or supervisor relating to the management and direction of workers or the place of employment.

MATA Members also refer to Collective Agreement Article E.2.2.

Bullying and Harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- a. Verbal aggression or insults; calling someone derogatory names
- b. Vandalizing personal belongings
- c. Sabotaging someone's work
- d. Spreading malicious gossip or rumours
- e. Engaging in harmful or offensive initiation practices or hazing
- f. Physical or verbal threats (this could also constitute "violence" or "improper activity or behaviour" under the Regulation)
- g. Making personal attacks, based on someone's private life and/or personal traits
- h. Making aggressive or threatening gestures
- i. Any comment, look, suggestion, physical contact, or real or implied action of a sexual nature which creates an uncomfortable working environment for the recipient
- j. Any circulation or display of visual material of a sexual nature that has the effect of creating an uncomfortable working environment
- k. An implied promise of reward for complying with a request of a sexual nature
- l. Misuse of power or authority as intimidation, threats, coercion and blackmail
- m. Reprisal or a threat of reprisal made by a person in authority after a sexual advance is rejected
- n. Cyber-bullying – the sending of derogatory or threatening messages to either the Complainant or others about the Complainant through email, text messaging, social networking, and websites or sharing personal and confidential messages or images



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Repetition is not always a necessary element in harassment; however, the more innocuous the behaviour, the less likely a reasonable person would consider the behaviour harassment if it only happened a few times. Serious allegations, however, even if the action only occurred once, can be considered harassment.

Bullying and Harassment is not:

- a. Expressing differences of opinion
- b. Offering constructive feedback, guidance, or advice about work-related behaviour and performance
- c. Making a legitimate complaint about someone's conduct through established procedures

Workplace Defined

For the purpose of these procedures, the workplace includes locations where activities related to the business of the District take place. These include:

- a. Activities within offices, staff rooms, classrooms, lunch rooms and other District property
- b. Events associated with and including extra-curricular activities
- c. Situations outside of District operated premises e.g., field trips, work-related conferences, training sessions, travel, community events or social gatherings
- d. Activities in other locations where workplace bullying and harassment may have a subsequent impact on the work relationship, performance or environment

References:

- Administrative Procedures to Board Policy 604: Workplace Bullying and Harassment
- Board Policy 606: Respectful Workplaces
- Board Policy 700: Safe, Caring and Inclusive School Communities
- MATA Collective Agreement Article
- CUPE Local 3570 Collective Agreement Article
- [WorkSafeBC, Towards a Respectful Workplace: A Handbook on Preventing and Addressing Workplace Bullying and Harassment](#)
- [Occupational Health and Safety Regulation](#) (Sections 115 to 117)
- [Workers' Compensation Act](#) (Action 150)

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