



SAFE, CARING AND INCLUSIVE SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

The Board of Education believes that every child deserves an education free from bullying, intimidation, discrimination, harassment and violence. Student safety is paramount and can only be realized through ongoing focus on fostering safe, caring and inclusive school communities and ensuring schools have appropriate education, prevention and intervention strategies in place.

The purpose of this policy is to guide staff in their efforts to create safe, caring and inclusive learning environments and develop prevention and intervention strategies for dealing with harmful behaviours and threats or risks of violence.

Central to these efforts to create safe, caring and inclusive learning communities is the Board's commitment to support staff as they seek to:

- develop positive school cultures and focus on prevention
 - use school-wide efforts to build compassionate communities which foster respect, inclusion, fairness and equity
 - set, communicate and consistently reinforce clear expectations of conduct
 - teach, model and encourage positive social behaviours that contribute to the school community, solve problems in peaceful ways, value diversity and defend human rights
 - assume responsibility, in partnership with the wider community, for resolving critical safety concerns
 - develop multi-disciplinary (multi-agency) community protocols for violence threat or risk assessment
 - work together to better understand issues such as:
 - bullying
 - intimidation
 - harassment
 - discrimination
 - racism
 - sexual orientation and gender identity
 - sexism and homophobia
 - behaviours that are harmful to self and others
- and to learn new skills to respond to the above.
- respond consistently to incidents in a fair and reasoned manner, using interventions that repair harm, strengthen relationships and restore a sense of belonging
 - establish procedures, protocols and practices that promote school safety
 - engage in continuous professional learning designed to foster safe school communities and address emerging safety concerns
 - maintain a secure and calm environment that fosters alert and engaged learners



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DEFINITIONS:

- a) **Bullying** occurs when one or more individuals target another with the purpose of harassing or inflicting verbal, physical or emotional harm. Bullying is different from ordinary conflict or quarreling: when bullying occurs, there exists a power imbalance.
- b) **Intimidation** occurs when one or more individuals target another with the intent of causing fear and apprehension through verbal and/or non-verbal threats.
- c) **Discrimination** occurs, for the purposes of this policy, when an individual is subjected to insults, ridicule, or alienation for reasons of:
 - race
 - colour
 - ancestry
 - place of origin
 - religion
 - marital status
 - family status
 - physical and mental disability
 - sex
 - sexual orientation
 - gender identity or expression,
 - age; and,
 - other like discrimination

The Board of Education supports the values expressed in the *BC Human Rights Code* (2016) prohibiting discrimination based on the items listed above.

- d) **Harassment** occurs when one or more individual's verbal and/or non-verbal (e.g. gestures) behaviour towards others is, and is intended to be: insulting, humiliating, malicious, degrading or otherwise offensive.
- e) **Violence** occurs when words or actions (threatened or actual) are used with the intent of harming oneself, another person, or a group.
- f) **Criminal Code of Canada, Sec. 82: "Weapon" means:**
 - a. anything used or intended for use in causing death or injury or not; or,
 - b. anything used for threatening or intimidating any person, and without restricting the generality of the foregoing, includes any firearm as defined in Section 82."

References:

- *Administrative Procedure: Safe, Caring and Inclusive School Communities*
- *Board Policy 7001: Student Discipline and its attendant Administrative Procedure*
- *BC Human Rights Code (July 2016)*
- *Violence, Threat-Making, Risk and Threat Assessment Community Protocol*
- *Provincial Standards for Codes of Conduct Order [Ministerial Order 276/07(M341/16)]*
- *Youth Criminal Justice Act*
- *Guidelines: School Support for Trans and Gender Non-Conforming Students (Vancouver School Board)*
- *SOGI 1-2-3*
- *National LGBT Health Education Centre*