

Changes to the Safe Schools Policy

Objective:

- While the current policy focuses on concerns to personal safety and maintaining order in schools, the new policy empowers all students to reach their full potential and introduces bias as a barrier to equitable prevention and intervention strategies that manage student behaviour.

Definitions:

- The proposed policy adds human rights-related definitions such as “Bias” (Section 2.2) and “Restorative Approaches” (Section 2.8).

Guiding Principles:

- The current policy focuses on prohibited conduct in schools (e.g. bullying and trespassing). These sections were moved to P.125.SCO School District Code of Conduct which sets the conditions for safe schools.
- The proposed policy adds a human rights lens to what the Board believes is important for managing student behaviour. This includes the importance of culture- and trauma-sensitive communications (Section 3.3) with students whose rights are protected under the Human Rights Code and other international treaties (Section 3.5).

Specific Directives:

- The current policy is dominated by expectations of conduct. The proposed policies have been rewritten based on the understanding that the Code of Conduct Policy sets the conditions for safe schools while Safe Schools Policy deals with students breaches of the Code of Conduct. Therefore, the following sections been moved to the proposed P.125.SCO School District Code of Conduct :
 - Sections 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7
 - Bullying sections (4.8-4.15)
 - Weapons sections (4.23-4.25)
- Most of the sections under “Access to Board Premises” in the current policy were considered procedural and some are already in the current procedure [PR.524.SCO Access to School/Board Premises](#). Visitors who breach the code of conduct are considered trespassers and dealt with in accordance with the abovementioned procedure. This is now referenced in the proposed P.125.SCO School District Code of Conduct.
- Sections 4.31-4.34 in the current policy require schools to develop their own policy on progressive discipline and the promotion of positive student behaviour. This requirement has been waived in the proposed policy as schools do not provide their policies, they rather follow the Board policy and procedures.
- The Partnerships Sections (4.35-4.39) in the current policy have been amalgamated in the Communications section in the proposed policy with no specific mention to Police blending it with the rest of the community partners in consideration of the current consultations regarding Police Resource Officers in schools.

- A new Application and Scope section has been added to the proposed policy with references to two new policies:
 - Human Rights Policy (currently being developed) which prevails over all other Board policies where students' human rights are at stake (Section 4.1).
 - Policy P.144.SCO Modified Days and Exclusions which governs the non-disciplinary responses to student behaviour.
- The proposed policy adds special consideration to:
 - Minimizing the disruptions to students' learning when considering disciplinary interventions (Section 4.6)
 - Discriminatory application of progressive discipline that affects certain groups protected under the Human Rights Code (Section 4.8)
- Section 4.12 has been added to the proposed policy in lieu of the current [P. 040.SCO Withdrawal of Transportation Privileges](#) as a disciplinary measure that could be implemented along the continuum of progressive discipline.
- Accountability mechanisms, such as anonymous climate surveys (Section 4.15) and annual disaggregated reports on suspension and expulsions (Section 4.19), have been added to the Communications section in the proposed policy in order to assist in addressing discriminatory application of the policy.