

TITLE: SAFE SCHOOLS (MANAGING STUDENT BEHAVIOUR)

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1.0 OBJECTIVE

To create a caring and safe learning environment to promote positive behaviour to empower all students to reach their full potential through bias-aware prevention and intervention strategies.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

In this policy,

- 2.1 **Board** means the Board of Trustees.
- 2.2 **Bias** means an opinion, preference, prejudice, or inclination that limits an individual's or a group's ability to make fair, objective, or accurate judgments.
- 2.3 **Discrimination** means is treating someone unfairly by either imposing a burden on them, or denying them a privilege, benefit or opportunity enjoyed by others, because of their age, ancestry, race, colour, citizenship, ethnic origin, place of origin, creed (religion), disability, marital status, family status, gender identity, gender expression, sex, or sexual orientation.
- 2.4 **District** means Ottawa-Carleton District School Board.
- 2.5 **Student Exclusion** means the principal's authority, in section 265 (1)(m) of the *Education Act*, that permits a principal to temporarily refuse to admit, to the school or to a class, someone whose presence in the school or classroom would, in the principal's judgment, be detrimental to the physical or mental well-being of others.
- 2.6 **Expulsion** means a disciplinary action which results in the removal of a student from school and school related activities for a period of time as specified by the Board. Expulsion is used to address activities typically seen as more severe than those addressed by suspension.
- 2.7 **Progressive Discipline** means a whole-school approach that utilizes a continuum of prevention programs, interventions, supports, and consequences to address inappropriate student behaviour and to build upon strategies that promote and foster positive behaviours. When inappropriate behaviour occurs, disciplinary measures

should be applied within a framework that shifts the focus from one that is solely punitive to one that is both corrective and supportive.

- 2.8 **Restorative approaches** are based on respect, compassion and inclusivity. Restorative approaches encourage meaningful engagement and accountability and provide an opportunity for healing, reparation and reintegration. Sometimes the process replaces suspensions and sometimes it runs alongside.
- 2.9 **School Climate** means the learning environment and relationships found within a school and school community.
- 2.10 **School Community** means students, parents/guardians, trustees, staff, contractors and service providers, volunteers, visitors and community members.
- 2.11 **Suspension** means the temporary removal of students from school and related activities for a specific period of time where it has been determined that the student has engaged in any activity for which a suspension must be considered and would have a negative impact on the school climate.

3.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 The Board believes that being and feeling socially, emotionally and physically safe is a precondition for student learning, achievement and well-being. A caring and safe school culture is the responsibility of all members of the OCDSB community.
- 3.2 In recognition of the disparity of experiences and outcomes for some identity groups in progressive discipline, this policy is grounded in respect for each person's dignity, rights and responsibilities, free from oppression and racism, and is bias-aware.
- 3.3 Open and ongoing culturally-sensitive and trauma-sensitive ongoing communication between school and home, which is culturally and trauma-sensitive, is essential to building relationships of trust which supports student learning and well-being.
- 3.4 A safe learning environment begins in the classroom through restorative approaches and progressive discipline that promotes healthy relationships and community building, and prioritizes prevention and early intervention.
- 3.5 The Board recognizes the rights of its students to be consistent with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Code.

4.0 SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES

Application and Scope

- 4.1 OCDSB policies shall conform to international regulations pertaining to the rights of the child and where there is inconsistency in the operation of this policy with any of the principles enshrined in Board policy P.XXX.GOV Human Rights, the latter shall prevail.
- 4.2 Student behaviour inconsistent with the expectations stipulated in Policy P.125.SCO School District Code of Conduct shall be addressed under this policy and associated procedures.

- 4.3 Student behaviour addressed in this policy is not limited to conduct on school property but also includes:
- a) conduct at a school-related activity, on school buses, during field trips, or at other school-related activities off school premises; and
 - b) conduct in other circumstances where engaging in the conduct is likely to have a negative impact on the school climate.
- 4.4 This policy does not govern modifications to the school day or temporary exclusion of a student from school, in accordance of section 265(1)(m) of the Education Act. Please refer to Board Policy P.144.SCO Modified Days and Exclusions and the accompanying procedure.

Response to Inappropriate Student Behaviour

- 4.5 School staff who work directly with students shall respond to breaches to the School District Code of Conduct in a timely, supportive, and sensitive manner prioritizing the students' safety.
- 4.6 Responses shall be clear, fair, and consistent, prioritizing the best interest of the student, and shall minimize disruptions to the child's learning process.
- 4.7 Restorative approaches shall be considered in conjunction with all measures along the progressive discipline continuum, in alignment with [Procedure PR.660.SCO Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour](#).
- 4.8 Implementing bias-aware progressive discipline requires an understanding of key human rights principles enshrined in the Human Rights Code and articulated in [Supporting Bias-Free Progressive Discipline in Schools: A Resource Guide for School and System Leaders, MOE and OHRC, 2013](#), and shall be used to limit disparities in the use of disciplinary referrals, in the severity of punishments, or in the impact of disciplinary action on students based on any protected ground for discrimination under the Human Rights Code.
- 4.9 When making decisions about interventions, supports, and progressive discipline, the student, or student's parent/guardian should be provided the opportunity to be heard and the views of the student shall be given due weight according to their stage of development.
- 4.10 Schools shall connect the student and their parents/guardians or caregivers to school and/or community partner supports to help address the underlying causes and help the student deal with the factors causing the behaviour.
- 4.11 When considering a suspension or an expulsion in response to a student's inappropriate behaviour, the District shall consider mitigating and other factors listed in Board Policy P.026.SCO Student Suspension and Expulsion and the accompanying procedure.
- 4.12 Principals may temporarily withdraw a student's transportation privileges, where the student's presence would, in the principal's judgment, be detrimental to the physical or

mental well-being of others on the transportation, in accordance with PR.530.SCO
Withdrawal of Transportation Privileges.

Communications

- 4.13 The District and schools shall engage in open communication and consultation with the members of its community to foster a caring, inclusive, accepting and safe school environment and to fulfill the guiding principles and objectives of the policy.
- 4.14 The District shall establish protocols with community agencies to support prevention and intervention programs.
- 4.15 The District shall conduct anonymous school climate surveys around perceptions on the fair and effective application of discipline and perceptions of safety and belonging.
- 4.16 The District shall provide training to all administrators, teachers, occasional teachers and support staff to support the implementation of this policy.
- 4.17 The District shall ensure that students, school bus drivers and operators, support staff, parents/guardians, members of community agencies, and volunteers are made aware of the policy.
- 4.18 Subject to legislation governing disclosure of personal information, as appropriate and on an ongoing basis, trustees and school council chairs shall be made aware of major violent events that have occurred.
- 4.19 The Board shall be provided with a disaggregated report annually on suspension and expulsions to monitor safety and help to inform and assist in the prevention of bias and elimination of barriers which result from the discriminatory application of the policy.
- 4.20 The Director of Education is authorized to issue such procedures as may be necessary to implement this policy.

5.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

[United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

[Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom](#)

[Ontario Human Rights Code](#)

[Education Act, Ontario Regulations 472/07 and 474](#)

[Provincial Model for a Local Police/ School Board Protocol, 2015](#)

[Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memoranda \(PPM\) 119](#)

[Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memoranda \(PPM\) 120](#)

[Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memoranda \(PPM\) 128](#)

[Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memoranda \(PPM\) 141](#)

[Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memoranda \(PPM\) 142](#)

[Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memoranda \(PPM\) 144](#)

[Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memoranda \(PPM\) 145](#)

[Caring and Safe Schools in Ontario: Supporting Students with Special Education Needs Through Progressive Discipline, Kindergarten to Grade 12](#)

[Supporting Bias-Free Progressive Discipline in Schools: A Resource Guide for School and System Leaders, MOE and OHRC, 2013](#)

[OCDSB P.022.SCO Appeals Hearing Panel \(Student Suspension\)](#)
[OCDSB P.023.SCO Expulsion Hearing Panel \(Students\)](#)
[OCDSB P.125.SCO School District Code of Conduct](#)
[OCDSB PR.512.SCO Appeals Hearing Panel \(Student Suspension\)](#)
[OCDSB PR.513.SCO Expulsion Hearing Panel \(Students\)](#)