

**MOOSE FACTORY ISLAND
DISTRICT SCHOOL AREA BOARD**

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE NO. 377	
Effective	
Revision Date	

STUDENT DISCIPLINE: BULLYING

1. PURPOSE

Bullying adversely affects relationships, the school climate, and a school's ability to educate its students. It impacts negatively on students' ability to learn. Bullying will not be accepted on school property, at school-related activities, on school buses, or in any other circumstances where engaging in bullying will have a negative impact on the life of the school.

Providing students with an opportunity to learn and develop in a safe and respectful society is a shared responsibility in which the Board and the school play an important role. A school that uses bullying prevention and intervention strategies fosters a positive learning and teaching environment that supports academic achievement for all students.

This administrative procedure has been developed to provide direction to Ministik School for the prevention of bullying and for intervention when inappropriate behaviour occurs.

2. DEFINITIONS

Bullying: Bullying is typically a form of repeated, persistent, and aggressive behaviour 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.

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 the peer group, religion, ethnicity, disability, need for special education, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, and race.

Bullying is a dynamic of unhealthy interaction that can take many forms. Bullying 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, spreading rumours). It may also occur through the use of technology.

Cyber-bullying: Cyber-bullying is using electronic means to intimidate, harm, exclude or ruin a reputation. Cyber-bullying includes the use of e-mails and instant messaging, text or digital imaging sent on cell phones, web pages and web logs (blogs), chat rooms and discussion groups to spread rumours, images, or hurtful comments. Cyber-bullying

includes impersonating another individual as the author of messages posted on the internet.

Although cyber-bullying usually occurs outside the school, it can negatively affect the learning environment and student safety in the school. Where there is evidence that a student who has been intimidated is impaired in his or her ability to progress in school, or that the cyber-bullying affects school safety and security, the principal will intervene as if the inappropriate behaviour was initiated in the school setting.

Expulsion: Expelled students are removed from Ministik Public School and school activities for an indefinite time period. Students are suspended first, while a principal's investigation takes place. The board offers a program for expelled students which must be completed before the student returns to school.

Mitigating and Other Factors: Mitigating and other factors must be taken into account when discipline is being considered. These factors are described in Ontario Regulation 472/07 Behaviour, Discipline and Safety of Pupils. They are also included in Administrative Procedure 378 Student Discipline: Suspension, and Administrative Procedure 379 Student Discipline: Expulsion.

Parents: A reference to "parents" in this administrative procedure refers to one or both parents, as applicable, and to a guardian or guardians. Parent means the custodial parent or guardian of a minor child who is not an adult student.

School Climate: School climate refers to the sum total of all the personal relationships within a school. A positive climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, comfortable, and accepted.

Suspension: A suspension means students are removed from school temporarily for a specific period of time. Students may be suspended for a period of time ranging from one school day to twenty school days. Students cannot take part in school activities or events while suspended.

A. PREVENTION PROCEDURES

1. School-wide Prevention Strategies

- 1.1 A positive school climate is essential to the prevention of bullying behaviour. A positive climate is developed when administrators and teachers:
- a) promote the development of healthy and inclusive relationships among the staff and student body and with parents and the broader community;
 - b) provide and support training for students and staff members that raises awareness of the problem of bullying;
 - c) know and follow administrative procedures related to safe and caring schools;
 - d) reinforce bullying prevention messages through programs addressing discrimination based on such factors as age, race, sexual orientation, gender, faith, disability, ethnicity, and socio-economic disadvantage;
 - e) post, communicate, and enforce clear codes of student conduct;

- f) assess the awareness and scope of the bullying problem at the school through school climate surveys;
 - g) ensure that students are supervised in all areas of the school and on the school grounds, with particular attention being given to any areas where bullying has been identified as a problem in a particular school setting;
 - h) find a variety of ways to reward students for positive, inclusive behaviour and to support them in being positive leaders in their school community;
 - i) encourage parents to participate and become engaged in the life of the school and to volunteer to assist in school activities and projects; and
 - j) involve the School Council in the development of anti-bullying initiatives and the ongoing implementation of prevention programs.
- 1.2 When involving parents and the School Council, staff members will provide information about bullying, including ways to support a child who reports being bullied or witnessing bullying. Administrators and teachers must inform parents about the dangers of encouraging their children to be aggressive or to strike back. They will also provide experienced advice to parents about how to avoid rescuing their children from every challenge and creating over-dependence. Parents and the school can work together to teach children to be assertive and to develop age-appropriate independence. This independence can contribute to self-confidence and may deter bullies who often seek out acquiescent victims.
- 1.3 Administrators and teachers must regularly reinforce the message that bullying will not be tolerated in the school and that everyone must work together to create a positive learning environment.

2. Classroom Prevention Strategies

Character Education

- 2.1 Ministik School is committed to providing learning opportunities that promote social and emotional learning, as well as academic and physical growth. The school provides character education to support the development of a safe and supportive school community and to help students develop a foundation of good character.
- 2.2 Good character is modelled, taught, and practiced across the school's learning community. Ministik School actively supports and recognizes programs and activities that contribute to character development.
- 2.3 School character education provides a foundation of respect and positive behaviours upon which anti-bullying programs can build.

Classroom Instruction

- 2.4 Teachers provide opportunities for students to talk about bullying and to define unacceptable behaviours. They involve students in establishing classroom rules against bullying and peer harassment. Teachers engage students in classroom activities and discussions related to bullying and violence, including awareness of the harm that they cause and strategies to reduce them.

- 2.5 Teachers provide and regularly reinforce clear expectations for appropriate student behaviour.
- 2.6 Teachers provide integrated programs that support bullying prevention strategies. They focus on developing healthy relationships in classroom lessons and include books that deal with related issues in student reading materials.
- 2.7 Teachers promote cooperation by assigning projects that require collaboration. Such cooperation teaches students how to compromise and how to assert without demanding. Teachers vary the grouping of participants in these projects and monitor the treatment of participants in each group.
- 2.8 Teachers ensure that students know what to do when they experience or observe a bullying confrontation. Knowing the process to follow gives the students confidence and a feeling of security.

B. INTERVENTION PROCEDURES

3. School-wide Intervention Strategies

- 3.1 School administrators and teachers encourage students to make a confidential report if they are the victims of bullying or are aware of another victim or victims. Reporting methods are designed to minimize the possibility of reprisal.
- 3.2 Details of incidents are carefully recorded and tracked. Such reports are investigated and resolved expeditiously, consistent with administrative procedures.
- 3.3 Parents who report bullying are given a receptive hearing, followed by investigation and resolution of the allegations.
- 3.4 Interventions are conducted in ways that are consistent with a progressive discipline approach. The strategies will range from early and ongoing interventions to more intensive interventions in cases of persistent bullying, with possible referral to community or social service agencies. A variety of early interventions, ongoing interventions, supports and consequences are described in Administrative Procedure 376 Progressive Discipline.
- 3.5 Bullying is one of the infractions for which a principal may consider suspension or expulsion from school. The principal will take into account any mitigating or other factors which may apply.

4. Classroom Intervention Strategies

- 4.1 Teachers take immediate action when bullying is observed. Teachers let students know that they care and will not allow anyone to be mistreated. By taking immediate action in dealing with the bully, educators support both the victim and the witness or witnesses.

- 4.2 Dealing with a bully does not necessarily mean confronting the bully in front of his or her peers. Teachers will usually confront the bully in private. Challenging a bully in front of his or her peers may actually enhance the bully's status and lead to further aggression.
- 4.3 Teachers or the principal, as appropriate, will notify the parents of both victims and bullies when a confrontation occurs, and seek to resolve the problem quickly at school. They will refer both victims and aggressors to counselling whenever appropriate.
- 4.4 Teachers provide protection and support for bullying victims whenever necessary, including creating a buddy system whereby students have a particular friend or older buddy on whom they can depend.
- 4.5 Teachers listen receptively to parents who report bullying and investigate reported circumstances so that immediate and appropriate action can be taken.
- 4.6 Teachers avoid attempts to mediate a threatening bullying situation alone if they are uncomfortable. They will inform the principal who will address the situation as appropriate, including contacting police services.

C. IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

5. Training and Communication

- 5.1 Ministik School provides training on character education and bullying prevention and intervention to administrators, teachers, and educational assistants. This training includes respect for diversity and awareness of special education needs.
- 5.2 The school communicates expectations related to bullying to students, staff members, parents, the School Council, volunteers, and bus operators. Strategies for prevention and intervention will be shared with staff members, parents, and the School Council.

6. The Plan and the School Climate Survey

- 6.1 Ministik School will develop and implement a school-wide bullying prevention and intervention plan, in consultation with students, the staff, parents, and the School Council. These strategies will form part of the School Improvement Plan.
- 6.2 The school will communicate the plan to the public by posting it on the school or Board website or in another appropriate manner.
- 6.3 The school will monitor and review the prevention and intervention strategies to determine their effectiveness. This process will include a regular cycle of analysis of the school climate through anonymous surveys of the students, staff, and parents. The school climate surveys will be conducted at least once every two years.

7. Safe Schools Team

- 7.1 The school will appoint a safe schools team responsible for school safety. The team will include at least one student, where appropriate; one parent; one teacher; one support staff member; one community partner; and the principal. The team will have a staff chair. An existing school committee may assume this role.
- 7.2 The safe school team is responsible for the ongoing implementation and monitoring of prevention and intervention programs and procedures related to bullying.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS**Legal References:**

Education Act, Section 169.1(1) (a.2)—Duties and Powers of Boards: Prevention of Bullying

Education Act, Section 169.1 (2.1)—Duties of Boards: School Climate Surveys

Education Act, Part XIII Behaviour, Discipline and Safety

Education Act, Section 301 (7.1): Board training and resources to prevent bullying

Education Act, Section 306—Bullying as cause for suspension

Education Act, Section 310—Bullying as cause for expulsion

Ontario Regulation 474/00 Access to School Premises

Ontario Regulation 472/07 Behaviour, Discipline and Safety of Pupils [includes mitigating and other factors]

Ontario Student Record Guideline

PPM 119 Developing and Implementing Equity and Inclusive Education Policies 2013

PPM 120 Reporting Violent Incidents to the Ministry of Education

PPM 128 The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct

PPM 144 Bullying Prevention and Intervention

PPM 145 Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour

Ontario Human Rights Code

Youth Criminal Justice Act.

Board References:

Board Policy GOV-01 Vision, Mission, and Values

Board Policy GOV-08 Learning and Working Environment: Safe Schools

Board Policy GOV-09 Safe Schools: Board Code of Conduct

Board Policy GOV-16 Appeals and Hearings Regarding Student Discipline

Administrative Procedure 147 Staff and Student Use of the Internet

Administrative Procedure 376 Progressive Discipline

Administrative Procedure 378 Student Discipline: Suspension.

Administrative Procedure 379 Student Discipline: Expulsion