SUPERIOR-GREENSTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Section	SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS	
Policy Name	BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES *Management Guidelines Apply*	525

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POLICY

Bullying adversely affects the school's ability to educate students, their *well-being and* ability to learn but also can lead to violence and more serious social, emotional or psychological problems for those individuals who are the targets of repeated aggression. *Bullying is a serious issue that adversely affects the school climate, including healthy relationships.*

Bullying is not accepted in any environment associated with SGDSB. It is not accepted on SGDSB property, at school related activities, on busses, in any online capacity such as social media bullying of cyber bullying, or in any other circumstances that impact student well-being and where there is a negative impact on school climate. Intervention and support will utilize a progressive discipline approach and restorative practices.

RATIONALE

The Superior-Greenstone District School Board believes that it is a shared responsibility to create a safe and respectful learning environment and that every student has the right to be treated with dignity. Bullying prevention and intervention strategies foster a positive learning and teaching environment that support academic achievement and well-being for all students. At Superior-Greenstone District School Board, we believe that it is everyone's responsibility to stop bullying behaviour in our school community.

DEFINITION

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, mental health, cultural identity, self-esteem, or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance.
- Students who use bullying behaviour are learning to use power and aggression to control and distress others,
- Students who are targeted become increasingly powerless and find themselves trapped in relationships in which they are being abused,
- Students use power in many ways:
  - Size, strength, intelligence, age,
  - Social status,
  - Economic status,
  - Knowledge of another person's vulnerability.
  - Race, ability, gender or any other diversion of power possessed by the dominant culture.

Ministry Definition

The *Education Act* defines "bullying" as aggressive and typically repeated behaviour by a pupil where, (a) the behaviour is intended by the pupil to have the effect of, or the pupil ought to know that the behaviour would be likely to have the effect of, (i) causing harm, fear or distress to another individual, including physical, psychological, social or academic harm, harm to the individual's reputation or harm to the individual's property, or (ii) creating a negative environment at a school for another individual, and (b) the behaviour occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance between the pupil and the individual based on factors such as size, strength, age, intelligence, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race, disability or the receipt of special education; ("intimidation").

Bullying, for the purposes of the definition of "bullying" in subsection (1), behaviour includes the use of any physical, verbal, electronic, written or other means.

Cyber-bullying, for the purposes of the definition of "bullying" in subsection (1), bullying includes bullying by electronic means (commonly known as cyber-bullying), including, (a) creating a web page or a blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person; (b) impersonating another person as the author of content or messages posted on the internet; and (c) communicating material electronically to more than one individual or posting material on a website that may be accessed by one or more individuals.

Types of Bullying Behaviour may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Physical: Repeated hitting, kicking, shoving or beating up another person,
- Property: Repeated stealing or damaging another person's property,
- Verbal: Repeated name-calling, mocking, humiliating, teasing, threatening, racist comments, and sexual harassment,
- Social: Repeated rolling of the eyes, excluding others from the group, gossiping, spreading rumours, making another person or persons look foolish and damaging another person's friendships,
- Electronic/Cyber: The repeated use of email, texts, social media sites or any other internet sites to threaten harass, embarrass, socially exclude of damage reputations or friendships,
- Racial/Ethnicity: Repeated aggression directed to a person or persons because of their race, religious background or beliefs; repeatedly saying negative things or name calling about a person's race, religious background, beliefs,
- Sexual: Repeatedly excluding a person or persons because of their gender; repeatedly making rude comments about a persons' sexual behaviour; repeatedly making sexist comments or jokes, touching or grabbing in a sexual way; repeatedly spreading sexual rumours or name-calling using inappropriate language such a fag or gay,
- Ability: Repeatedly excluding a person or persons or treated them badly because of an ability or need for special education; repeatedly making comments (e.g. jokes) to hurt a person or persons with a disability,
- Homophobic: The repeated ill treatment of another individual based on his/her sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation, including disclosure of someone else's sexual orientation. Ill treatment may include gossiping, physical or verbal aggression, physical or mental violence, obscene or sexualized gestures, or cyber harassment.

Prevention/Intervention and Support Strategies

1.0   Prevention and Awareness Raising

   1.1   Student Leadership Development

       All students should participate in bullying prevention training and leadership initiatives within their schools. These include, but are not limited to:

- Daily classroom teaching with curricular links,
- Character Education Initiatives,
- Mentoring programs,
- Student Leadership Activities (either school based or board wide e.g. Student Senate),
- Student Voice initiatives,
- Citizen Development,
- Healthy Lifestyles Initiatives,
- Social Skills Development,
- Student Success Initiatives.

1.2   Positive School Climate

A positive school climate is defined by the Ministry of Education as "the sum total of all the personal relationships within the school". A positive school climate is founded on mutual acceptance, inclusion, and is modeled by all its members creating a culture of respect.

1.3   Equity and Human Rights Promotion

Initiatives that support marginalized populations, building understanding of identity, culture, race and difference.

2.0   Intervention and Support Strategies

2.1   School Based Bullying and Intervention Plan

All schools must review and if required revise their existing school-wide Bullying Prevention and Intervention plans and protocols **must** be referenced in the School Improvement Plan. The School Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan shall be communicated yearly to all members of the school community. Components of these plans must include the following:
- The definition of *bullying,*
- Analysis of the school climate survey,
- Prevention and awareness-raising strategies,
- Intervention and support strategies, including plans to protect targets of bullying behaviour,
- Reporting requirements,
- Training strategies for members of the school community,
- Equity and inclusive education strategy,
- Communication and outreach strategies,
- Monitoring and review processes.

2.2   Climate for Learning and Working Team (Safe School Teams)

Each school must have in place a safe schools team responsible for school safety that is composed of at least one student (where appropriate), one parent, one teacher one non-teaching staff member, one community partner and the principal. An existing school committee can assume this role. This team should consider data from surveys concerning school climate and bullying, to review the school's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan as well the school's Code of Conduct.

2.3   Intervention Strategies

Intervention strategies could range from early intervention to more intensive

interventions in cases of persistent bullying, with possible referral to community or social services.

For a student with special education needs, intervention supports and consequences must be consistent with the student's strengths, needs, goals and expectations contained in his/her Individual Education Plan (IEP).

All board employees must take seriously all allegations of bullying behavior and act in a timely manner when responding to students who disclose or report bullying incidents.

All board employees who work directly with students – including administration, teachers, educational assistants, non-teaching staff (also includes, social workers and child and youth workers) must respond to any student behaviour that is likely to have a negative impact on the school climate. Such behaviour includes all inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour at any time at school and at any school-related events even if, in the employee's opinion, it is safe to respond to it, in accordance with subsection 300.4 of Part XIII of the Education Act and Ontario Regulation 472/07.

Intervention requires appropriate and timely responses and should be done in ways consistent with a **progressive discipline approach.** This may include early and ongoing intervention strategies such as:
➢ Contact with parent(s), guardian(s),
➢ Review of expectations,
➢ Academic or non-academic activities with a learning component,
➢ Referral to counseling,
➢ Consultation with outside agencies.

3.0   Staff, Student, Parent Responsibilities

All members of the school community have responsibility for bullying prevention and for addressing bullying when it occurs. Although this responsibility rests with all member of the school community some members have responsibility to provide leadership.

4.0   Suspension

In recognition of the importance of addressing bullying, which can have a significant negative impact on student safety, learning and the school climate, bullying may result in a suspension and/or possible recommendation for expulsion.

Reference:

PPM 144: Bullying Prevention and Intervention (Revised October 19, 2009)