

# SUPERIOR-GREENSTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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Section                   SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS

Procedural  
Guideline                Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocol

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Review By: December 2028

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## **PURPOSE**

- 1.1. Superior-Greenstone District School Board (SGDSB) is committed to providing a safe, equitable and respectful working and learning environment. Superior-Greenstone District School Board promotes and supports human rights as articulated in the Workplace Harassment and Human Rights Policy, 717. There is a strong commitment to safety, human rights and equity for student well-being and success. Superior-Greenstone District School Board has an important role to play in keeping all students including those who identify as Indigenous, Black, racialized (people of colour), having disabilities, members of Two Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex and Asexual (2SLGBTQIA+) communities and other marginalized groups, safe from sex trafficking and sexual exploitation.
- 1.2. Welcoming and engaging school environments lead to positive student experiences, especially when families and communities are intentionally involved in the students' learning (Ministry of Education, 2021, Parent Engagement: Encouraging Parent Involvement in Schools). Safe Schools, both physically and psychologically, are a critical element to successfully nurturing positive student experiences. Due to almost daily contact with students, teachers and other education staff are well placed to educate on prevention and promote healthy relationships, notice troubling changes in behaviour, and connect with students as caring adults. By training staff to recognize the signs of sex trafficking, they will be better equipped to identify the cues and safely intervene if they suspect a student is being trafficked or involved in trafficking. Education can also serve as a key factor in helping survivors of trafficking heal and rebuild their lives, helping to prevent re-victimization and resetting students on a healing trajectory towards positive outcomes.
- 1.3. The Policy/Program Memorandum 166 Keeping Students Safe: Policy Framework for School Board Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocols sets a strong foundation for this protocol. This Anti-Sex Trafficking protocol supports schools taking a key role in fostering a safe and caring climate for students and establishes principles for taking coordinated action with community partners to prevent, identify and recognize sex trafficking and develop responses to facilitate early and appropriate intervention. It has been established to guide SGDSB's response to sex trafficking and includes actions to be taken in cases of suspected or actual occurrences of sex trafficking involving students. The Protocol covers all SGDSB schools and all board activities including school sponsored activities such as field trips, either in person or online.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**“Culturally Responsive”** refers to and extends beyond language to include a much larger set of professional attitudes, knowledge, behaviours and practices, and organizational policy to ensure responsiveness to the diversity of students at SGDSB.

**“Sex trafficking”** is a form of sexual exploitation and is a crime under the Criminal Code of Canada. It can include recruiting, harbouring, transporting, obtaining or providing a person for the purpose of sex. It involves the use of force, physical or psychological coercion or deception. Most individuals who are trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation are women and girls, but all people may be targeted. Indigenous and racialized individuals are especially vulnerable to experiencing sex trafficking. The intersections of colonization, intergenerational trauma, systemic discrimination and barriers to accessing services compound, which increases the vulnerability of being targeted by traffickers for Indigenous women and girls – of whom comprise a disproportionate number of trafficked persons for the purpose of sexual exploitation, in Canada.

**“Survivor”** is used to refer to an individual who has escaped a trafficking situation, whereas victim is used to refer to an individual who is in the process of being recruited or is being trafficked. The term survivor may also be used to refer to an adult with lived experience of being trafficked. This approach is used for clarity and not intended to label or define an individual's experience. Individuals who have experienced sex trafficking may prefer one term over another to describe their experiences. Staff should confirm how an individual impacted by trafficking prefers to be referenced.

**“Trauma-informed”** approaches recognize the connections between violence, trauma, negative health outcomes and behaviours. These approaches increase safety, control and resilience for people who are seeking services in relation to experiences of violence and/or have a history of experiencing violence. (Government of Canada, 2018, February, Trauma and Violence-informed Approaches to Policy and Practice)

## **PRINCIPLES**

- 2.1 Superior-Greenstone District School Board strives to provide a safe, caring and supportive environment for all students including those who identify as Indigenous, Black, racialized (people of colour), having disabilities, members of 2SLGBTQIA+ communities and other marginalized groups. Students face a multitude of diverse and intersecting factors and can be at risk of violence and harm.
- 2.2 Superior-Greenstone District School Board recognizes that parents, guardians and caregivers are key partners and will seek their input regarding this protocol. Care will be taken when reaching out to parents, families and caregivers to endeavour to determine they are safe adults, prior to engaging with them on matters regarding the student/s. Outreach to Indigenous parents and guardians, as well as outreach to Black and racialized parents and guardians, needs to be trauma-informed and recognize barriers that may impact their participation. Efforts will be made to reduce cultural and/or linguistic barriers when reaching out to parents, guardians and caregivers about this work.
- 2.3 Superior-Greenstone District School Board recognizes that students are at the center of this work and will seek input from students regarding this protocol. Students with lived experience are experts and, if willing and appropriately supported through trauma-informed approaches, could share their story and insights as part of efforts to build awareness and empower students.
- 2.4 Superior-Greenstone District School Board values consultation and engagement with community groups/agencies that support members of the school community and are essential to supporting anti-sex trafficking approaches that are responsive to diverse students and the needs of the local school community. The school board will seek input

from community organizations and partners such as Dilico, Tikinagan and Children's Aid Society (CAS).

- 2.5 Superior-Greenstone District School Board appreciates that caring adults and students within schools can promote a sense of student belonging, increase protective factors, help to reduce risk factors associated with sex trafficking, and support early intervention through identification and appropriate response, including connecting impacted persons to supportive services. School board staff will be provided training to identify the signs of sex trafficking, respond to disclosures, to be culturally relevant and responsive to the needs of diverse student populations, and regarding supporting the immediate physical and emotional safety needs of students. Training will be suitable to the role of staff and emphasize how to respond to immediate dangers and the need to avoid actions that will make an individual's situation worse or unsafe.
- 2.6 Superior-Greenstone District School Board will promote a human rights-based, non-judgmental, culturally responsive, survivor-centred and trauma-informed approach to raising awareness, identify and respond to sex trafficking as well as when engaging in prevention efforts.
- 2.7 Superior-Greenstone District School Board supports prevention activities at schools, including existing efforts such as the teaching of consent, healthy relationships and healthy sexuality. It is important for staff to understand the historical and social context of sex trafficking and implement prevention strategies that are responsive to the needs of students and members of the local school community.
- 2.8 Superior-Greenstone District School Board treats students with respect and with due regard for confidentiality and privacy in accordance with applicable legal requirements. In addition, the Protocol supports developing and maintaining referral relationships with community service organizations while adhering to applicable legal requirements, including those under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act; the Ontario Human Rights Code; the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005; the Education Act; and the Child, Youth and Family Services Act (CYFSA), 2017

### **STRATEGIES TO RAISE AWARENESS**

- 3.1 This Protocol will be posted on the board's website.
- 3.2 A plan to raise awareness about sex-trafficking among students, parents, guardians and caregivers will be developed and implemented.

### **RESPONSE PROCEDURES**

- 4.1 These procedures will be implemented to respond to situations where a student:
  - may be at risk of or is being sex trafficked
  - may be targeting, luring, grooming or recruiting children and youth for the purpose of sex trafficking
  - is returning to school after they have been trafficked or involved in trafficking others
- 4.2 At each school the principal or their designate will respond when they learn about possible sex trafficking or receive a report of sex trafficking.
- 4.3 Staff members who receive a disclosure or identify signs of sex trafficking will report the matter to their school principal or designate and must also report in accordance with the duty to report when children are in need of protection. Staff must fulfil the duty to report

and share necessary information in accordance with SGDSB policy 510, Suspected Child Abuse.

- 4.4 Students are strongly encouraged to bring forward concerns about luring, grooming, recruitment or exiting sex trafficking, to their school principal or to any school staff. It should be communicated that they can do so without fear of reprisal. Where necessary, students can raise concerns anonymously.
- 4.5 The school principal or their designate will determine the course of action. The school principal or their designate may inform their Superintendent. The school principal or their designate will consider the following steps, as needed.
  - 4.5.1 Assess the situation including immediate safety and well-being needs.
  - 4.5.2 Ascertain the specific needs of the student/s and possible barriers they may face. Carefully consider barriers to participation faced by students including those who identify as Indigenous, Black, people of colour, having disabilities, members of 2SLGBTQIA+ communities and other marginalized groups.
  - 4.5.3 Act with due regard for the needs of:
    - (a) students with special education needs, mental health needs, social or emotional needs or language/cultural barriers, and international students;
    - (b) students who are in care, receiving care or in customary care arrangements;
    - (c) students who are being trafficked and who may be involved in the recruiting of other victims, including students who are returning to school after they have been involved in a trafficking situation;
    - (d) parents/guardians/caregivers, including those who may in remote communities or live overseas and/or may not speak English or French; and
    - (e) students 18 years or older or who are 16 or 17 years old and have withdrawn from parental control.
  - 4.5.4 Contemplate safety, privacy and confidentiality needs.
  - 4.5.5 Identify, consult and connect with support/s and resources in the school and community.
  - 4.5.6 Determine the duty to report in accordance with the CYFSA, 2017 and SGDSB Policy 510, Suspected Child Abuse, and 520 Management Guidelines – Police and School Board Response Protocol.
  - 4.5.7 Notify appropriate persons such as parent/guardian or caregiver, where applicable and as appropriate.
  - 4.5.8 Weigh the effect of the situation on other students and school staff.
  - 4.5.9 Take necessary action/s.
  - 4.5.10 Follow-up and monitor impact on affected individuals in school.

## **RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS**

- 5.1. In cases of immediate danger/emergency call 911 (Police/OPP).
- 5.2. Caring adults in school:

The principal can identify individuals such as school staff, a social worker, a member of the special education team, a member of the mental health team to support the student/s.

- 5.3 Counselling services may be made available through agencies such as Dilico Mental Health, North of Superior Counselling Program and the Mental Health and Addictions Nurse.
- 5.4 Kids help line, is a 24/7 e-mental health service, call 1-800-668-6868 or Text 686868.
- 5.5 Canada Trafficking Hotline (is available 24/7) - 1-833-900-1010. The Hotline connects victims and survivors of human trafficking to specialized anti-human trafficking services and supports, emergency shelters, transition housing, long-term supports, counselors, and a range of other trauma-informed services and where applicable, law enforcement. The Hotline is also an entry-point for individuals interested in learning more about specialized human trafficking restraining orders. Services offered in 200+ languages and are accessible to the deaf, hard-of-hearing and non-verbal.
- 5.6 School Resource Officer/s as identified by the school principal.

### ***EDUCATION AND TRAINING***

A plan for ongoing professional learning for staff members including new staff that is related to their roles and responsibilities, will be developed and implemented. Participation in training and education will be tracked. The following groups will receive training.

- 6.1 Staff (includes support staff, custodians and secretaries at schools) who need to identify signs of grooming, trafficking and report the matter to the school principal.
- 6.2 Administrators (school principals, system leaders and superintendents) who will learn about or receive reports of sex trafficking or involvement in sex trafficking.
- 6.3 Educators who play a key role with engaging student learning, support and provide referral.

### ***ACCOUNTABILITY***

- 7.1 The Director of Education is responsible for this Procedural Guideline Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocol. The Director engages the Superintendents to manage this protocol.
- 7.2 The Superintendents will monitor implementation of this protocol.
- 7.3 The protocol will be reviewed and revised at least once every five years.

### **REFERENCES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS**

*Education Act*

510 Suspected Child Abuse

717 Workplace Harassment and Human Rights

520 Management Guideline – Police and School Board Response Protocol