



KAWARTHA PINE RIDGE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

POLICY STATEMENT

Policy Name: Safe and Caring Schools
Section: Educational Services

Policy Code: ES-1.1

Established: April 16, 1998

Revised or

Reviewed: March 25, 1999; January 23, 2001; May 24, 2001; May 25, 2006;
January 31, 2008; January 28, 2010; October 25, 2012; June 21, 2018;
June 20, 2023

1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board (KPR) is committed to creating and sustaining safe and caring schools for the purpose of promoting learning, achievement and well-being.

Welcoming and engaging school environments lead to positive student experiences, especially when families and communities are intentionally involved. Safe and caring schools, both physically and psychologically, are a critical element to successfully nurturing positive student experiences. Schools must create a positive school climate and foster a culture of mutual respect. This policy promotes student safety by building a culture of caring and by taking meaningful, culturally responsive, culturally competent and consistent approaches.

The Board values the dignity and humanity of each individual while fostering the development of character traits in support of ongoing student success.

Behaviour occurs in context, is learned, serves a function and can change over time. All students benefit from clear, concise behavioural expectations as outlined in the Board's Code of Conduct. The Board acknowledges that students' individual identities may be impacted differently by historical and current systemic biases and oppression. To enhance safe and caring school climates, supports are provided, and inappropriate behaviour is addressed taking into account mitigating and other factors using a progressive discipline approach. A clear focus on developing healthy relationships using trauma-informed, culturally responsive approaches, and the timely reporting of inappropriate behaviours, allows for appropriate action to be taken. This may include a variety of supports and consequences up to and including suspension and expulsion.

2. OBJECTIVE

This policy authorizes the creation of administrative regulations with respect to safe and caring schools. This includes, but is not limited to, bullying prevention and intervention, student incident reporting, progressive discipline, suspensions, expulsions, critical incidents, substance use, sexual misconduct by students, anti-sex trafficking prevention

and intervention, safe arrival, and children in need of protection. These regulations provide comprehensive guidance and procedures to follow regarding safety for students and school communities.

The Board is required to adhere to all applicable legislation including the Education Act, the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the Child and Family Services Act, the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

3. DEFINITIONS

Administrative Regulation

A document issued through the Director of Education, governing the implementation of a Board policy, or required to coordinate and control certain aspects of system operations.

Board

The corporate Board which maintains the daily operation of the system; Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board; a reference specifically pertaining to Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board as a legal entity; also referred to as KPR or KPRDSB.

Board of Trustees

The elected governance branch of the Board.

Bullying

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behaviour that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

Critical Incident

A critical incident refers to a crisis or traumatic event that is considered serious and out of the ordinary for a school or school community. Such events can trigger overwhelming emotional responses and can disrupt the emotional well-being of students and staff members.

Critical Incident Response Team

A school-based team that is supported by the Board's Central Leadership, Communications, and Professional Services staff when responding to a critical incident. The team will support in the assessment of the unique needs of students, staff, and administration and determine an appropriate, therapeutic response that aligns with best practices for addressing a crisis or traumatic event.

Culturally Responsive

An approach that intentionally nurtures the uniqueness of each student in background, language, family structure, and social and cultural identity, integrating the student's background and identity into curriculum, teaching and school life to create effective conditions for learning and well-being.

Expulsion

The removal of a student from school for an indefinite time. An expulsion does not have a time limit. Students who are expelled from school must be: provided with opportunities to continue their education, and offered non-academic supports, such as counselling, to help promote positive behaviours.

Harassment

Based on any prohibited ground(s) identified in the Human Rights Code, engaging in a course of vexatious comments or conduct that is known or reasonably known to be unwelcome, unwanted, offensive, intimidating, hostile or inappropriate and includes sexual harassment.

Human Rights

Human Rights pertains to Ontario law that grants every person with a right to equal treatment with respect to services, goods, and facilities without discrimination where one or more of the 17 protected grounds (as stipulated in the Human Rights Code) is applicable. Human Rights pertain specifically to Code-based complaints and will always be handled according to Board Policy B-3.3, Human Rights: Code-Based Discrimination and Harassment and corresponding administrative regulation.

Mitigating and Other Factors

Circumstances that must be considered by the Board and school principals in situations involving suspension and/or expulsion of a student, as required by the Education Act and as set out in Ontario Regulation 472/07.

Physical Assault

When a person directly or indirectly applies force intentionally to another person, or who attempts or threatens to do so, without that person's consent.

Policy

A statement of intent, governing principle or end result, adopted by the Board of Trustees in open public session; it is intended to articulate what must be done, the rationale for it and a framework for the system.

Positive School Climate Team

A school-based team whose focus is on building and maintaining a positive school climate and raising student and staff well-being using data-informed and evidence-based strategies.

PPM

Policy and Program Memorandum

Progressive Discipline

Progressive discipline is an approach that makes use of a continuum of interventions, supports, and consequences, building upon strategies that promote positive behaviours.

Restorative Practice

Restorative practice is an overall approach where conflict and tensions are managed by repairing harm and strengthening relationships as a way of building school community.

School Climate

School climate relates to the learning environment and relationships in a school and school community. A positive school climate exists when:

- everyone in the school community feels safe, included and accepted,
- everyone actively promotes positive behaviours and interactions,
- equity and inclusive education are embedded in the learning environment, and
- there is a culture of mutual respect.

Sexual Assault

Any type of unwanted sexual act done by one person to another that violates the sexual integrity of the victim. The term refers to a range of behaviours that involve the use of force or control over the victim. In some cases, no overt physical force is used – instead, the victim may be threatened with words or pressured into doing something they do not want to do.

Sex Trafficking

A form of sexual exploitation that is a crime under the Criminal Code of Canada. It is defined by the use of force, physical or psychological coercion that is facilitated by a third party for the purposes of profiting from someone. It may include recruiting, harbouring, transporting, obtaining or providing a person for the purpose of sex.

Suspension

A suspension means a student is removed from school temporarily for up to 20 school days. During this time, the student cannot attend or take part in regular school activities or events and has other opportunities to continue learning to help them stay on track with their education.

Trauma-Informed Practices

Trauma-informed practices are those that recognize the connections between violence, trauma, negative health outcomes and behaviours.

4. APPLICATION

This policy applies to all members of the Board community which includes, but is not limited to, students, staff, trustees, parents/guardians, volunteers, visitors, service providers, and community agencies.

5. RESPONSIBILITY

Responsibility for safe and caring schools must be assumed by all members of the school community. It requires supportive leadership, effective instructional practices, healthy relationships, trauma-informed, culturally responsive approaches to addressing

behaviour, and the involvement of parent(s)/guardian(s) and the broader community. All Board employees shall respond to incidents that may have a negative impact on school climate.

- 5.1 The Board of Trustees is responsible for establishing and approving Board policies.
 - 5.1.1 Board Policy B-2.2, Annual Meetings and Committees of the Board will be followed with respect to the Suspension Committee and Expulsion Committee.
- 5.2 The Director of Education has oversight and jurisdiction in determining the parameters of this policy and the associated administrative regulations.
- 5.3 The Superintendent of Safe and Caring Schools, or designate, is responsible for the guidelines and directives within this policy and related administrative regulations.
- 5.4 The family of schools superintendent, or designate, is responsible for:
 - 5.4.1 providing advice and guidance to principals, or designates, in carrying out their responsibilities under this policy.
 - 5.4.2 taking the initiative to seek appropriate guidance from Safe and Caring Schools, whenever necessary, when implementing this policy and associated administrative regulations.
- 5.5 The principal, or designate, is responsible for:
 - 5.5.1 implementing this policy and associated administrative regulations and taking the initiative to seek appropriate guidance from their family of schools Superintendent and the Safe and Caring Schools department, whenever necessary.
 - 5.5.2 reaching out to the appropriate Board-level department (e.g., Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, Indigenous Education, Mental Health and Well-Being and/or Special Education) for support and guidance based on the nature and extent of the concern being addressed.
 - 5.5.3 ensuring that school staff are carrying out their responsibilities under this policy and associated administrative regulations.
 - 5.5.4 establishing a Positive School Climate Team each year.

6. POLICY

6.1 Positive School Climate Team

Each school must have a Positive School Climate Team whose primary function is to lead a safe and inclusive school environment. An existing committee such as the School Council may take on this role and should meet at least four times per year.

6.2 Code of Conduct for Students

The Board's Code of Conduct for Students (see Administrative Regulations ES-1.1.1, Discipline/Promoting Positive Student Behaviour/Code of Conduct and ES-1.1.1A, Appendix A: Discipline/Promoting Positive Student Behaviour/Code of Conduct) sets clear standards of behaviour that are firm and fair. These standards of behaviour apply to all individuals involved in the school system, including parents/guardians, volunteers, employees, whether they are on school property, on school buses, at school-related events, in the community, or in any other circumstances that may have an impact on the school climate. This includes, but is not limited to, online conduct and social media use.

The Board and its school staff will address actions that may have a negative impact on school climate, or a student's ability to learn or maintain healthy relationships. Actions that may be considered are outlined in Administrative Regulations:

- ES-1.1.1, Discipline/Promoting Positive Student Behaviour/Code of Conduct,
- ES-1.1.1A, Appendix A: Discipline/Promoting Positive Student Behaviour/Code of Conduct,
- ES-1.1.2, Suspension, and
- ES-1.1.3, Expulsion.

6.3 Restorative and Trauma-Informed Practices

The use of restorative, culturally responsive, trauma-informed practices is a means of building relationships, strengthening school communities, and maintaining safe, inclusive school cultures.

Restorative practice focuses on repairing the impact caused by harmful behaviour while holding individuals accountable for their actions. It provides an opportunity for the parties directly affected – victim, perpetrator and community – to express how they are affected and identify and address their needs that result from the behaviour in question. It seeks a resolution that affords reparation, healing, reintegration, and prevents future harm. Interventions occur along a continuum of restorative practices.

Trauma-informed practices increase safety, control and resilience for people in relation to experiences of violence and trauma that have resulted in negative health outcomes and behaviours.

6.4 Progressive Discipline

The range of interventions, supports, and consequences used by the Board and all schools must be culturally responsive, developmentally appropriate, consistent in expectations, and fair in approach. Interventions must include learning opportunities for students in order to reinforce positive behaviours and help students make good choices. The Board supports consequences for unacceptable behaviour up to and including suspension and expulsion. For students with special education needs, interventions, supports and consequences must be consistent with the expectations in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). The Board and school administrators must consider all mitigating and other factors as required by the Education Act and Regulations.

6.5 Mitigating and Other Factors

The Board, school administrators and school staff must consider all mitigating and other factors, as required by the Education Act and as set out in Ontario Regulation 472/07. The mitigating factors to be considered are outlined in Administrative Regulations:

- ES-1.1.2, Suspension, and
- ES-1.1.3, Expulsion.

6.6 Bullying

Bullying may be intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect. It can take many forms, including physical, verbal, and social. Physical forms of bullying may include, but are not limited to, hitting, pushing, slapping, and tripping. Verbal forms of bullying may include, but are not limited to, name calling, mocking, insults, threats, and sexist, racist, homophobic, or transphobic comments. Social bullying is more subtle and may involve such behaviours as gossiping, spreading rumours, excluding others from a group, humiliating others with public gestures or graffiti, and shunning or ignoring. Social bullying may also occur through the use of technology (e.g., images or hurtful comments through the use of email, cell phones, text messaging, Internet websites, social media or other technology). Instances of bullying and cyber bullying will result in the application of progressive discipline and may possibly lead to suspension or consideration for expulsion.

Factors to be considered with respect to bullying are outlined in Administrative Regulations:

- ES-1.1.1, Discipline/Promoting Positive Student Behaviour/Code of Conduct,
- ES-1.1.1A, Appendix A: Discipline/Promoting Positive Student Behaviour/Code of Conduct, and
- ES-1.1.2, Suspension.

6.7 Suspension

Suspension must be considered by the principal if they believe a student has engaged in any of the activities outlined in Administrative Regulation ES-1.1.2, Suspension, while at school, at a school-related activity or in other circumstances where engaging in the activity will have an impact on the school climate as outlined under section 306(1) of the Education Act.

6.8 Expulsion

A principal shall suspend a student and shall conduct an investigation to determine whether to recommend to the Board that the student be expelled if they believe that the student has engaged in any of the activities outlined in Administrative Regulation ES-1.1.3, Expulsion, while at school, at a school-related activity or in other circumstances where engaging in the activity will have an impact on the school climate as outlined under section 306(1) of the Education Act.

6.9 Critical Incidents

Principals are responsible for establishing a school-based Critical Incident Response Team each September, and shall forward, using the School-Based Critical Response Team form, the list of members of that team to the Senior Manager, Professional Services. Additional information regarding the response to Critical Incidents is available to all Board employees in the Critical Incident Response Protocol.

7. RELATED POLICIES, ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS OR PROCEDURAL DOCUMENTS

Board Policies:

[B-2.2, Annual Meetings and Committees of the Board](#)

[B-3.2, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion](#)

[B-3.3, Human Rights: Code-Based Discrimination and Harassment](#)

[ES-2.1, Emergency Preparedness](#)

Administrative Regulations:

[ES-1.1.1, Discipline/Promoting Positive Student Behaviour/Code of Conduct](#)
[ES-1.1.1A, Appendix A: Discipline/Promoting Positive Student/Behaviour/Code of Conduct](#)
[ES-1.1.2, Suspension](#)
[ES-1.1.3, Expulsion](#)
[ES-1.1.4, Child in Need of Protection](#)
[ES-1.1.8, Procedures in the Event of a Bomb Threat](#)
[ES-1.1.9, Substance Use](#)
[ES-1.1.10, Safe Arrival Program](#)
[ES-1.1.12, Sexual Misconduct by Students](#)
[ES-1.1.12A, Appendix A: Police/School Board Protocol](#)
[ES-1.1.13, Anti-Sex Trafficking](#)

Procedural Documents (internal):

[Anti-Sex Trafficking Guide](#)
[Critical Incident Response Protocol](#)
[Emergency Response Plan Template](#)
[Ensuring Student Safety and Protection Together Protocol, 2019](#)
[Police/School Board Protocol \(2016\)](#)
Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA)

8. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Legislation:

[Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act](#)
[Child and Family Services Act](#)
[Education Act](#)
[Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)
[Occupational Health and Safety Act](#)
[Ontario Human Rights Code](#)
[Ontario Regulation 440/20 – Suspension of Elementary School Pupils](#)
[Ontario Regulation 472/07 – Behaviour, Discipline and Safety of Pupils](#)
[Ontario Safe Schools Act](#)

Other Documents:

[Caring and Safe Schools in Ontario](#)
[Ministry of Education, Policy and Program Memoranda 9: Duty to Report Children in Need of Protection](#)
[Ministry of Education, Policy and Program Memoranda 120: Reporting Violent Incidents to the Ministry of Education](#)
[Ministry of Education, Policy and Program Memoranda 123: Safe Arrivals](#)
[Ministry of Education, Policy and Program Memoranda 128: The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Conduct](#)
[Ministry of Education, Policy and Program Memoranda 141: School Board Programs for Students on Long-Term Suspension](#)

[Ministry of Education, Policy and Program Memoranda 142: School Board Programs for Expelled Students](#)

[Ministry of Education, Policy and Program Memoranda 144: Bullying Prevention and Intervention](#)

[Ministry of Education, Policy and Program Memoranda 145: Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour](#)

[Ministry of Education, Policy and Program Memoranda 166: Keeping Students Safe: Policy Framework for School Board Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocols](#)

[Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action](#)

[United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)