



<b>SECTION:</b>	<b>General School Administration</b>	<b>APPROVAL DATE:</b>
<b>SUBSECTION:</b>	<b>School Building Administration</b>	<b>June 26, 1995</b>
<b>POLICY NAME:</b>	<b>Violence-Free Schools</b>	<b>LAST REVISED:</b>
<b>POLICY NUMBER:</b>	<b>R.GSA.E.3</b>	<b>April 6, 1999</b>

1. PREAMBLE

The Wellington Catholic District School Board recognizes that violence in society, including the activities of youth gangs and groups in its schools and the presence or use of weapons, impedes the educational process and impairs the health and welfare of its students and staff.

1.1 Administrative Detail

- a) It is the responsibility of the appropriate Superintendent to administer this policy and review it on an annual basis.
- b) It is the responsibility of principals to implement this policy, in accordance with the Violence in Schools Regulations.
- c) It is the responsibility of principals to publicize this policy with staff, students and parents at least on an annual basis. A copy of the policy may be sent to local police departments and the Crown Attorney.
- d) The Board, through its senior officials, principals and appropriate personnel, will cooperate fully with community agencies in the administration of this policy.
- e) This policy will be administered in conjunction with other appropriate policies, including "Emergency Preparedness GSA. E.11", "Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity", "Pupil Suspension SMW. E.1", "Pupil Expulsion SMW. E.2", "Alcohol and Drugs GSA. E.5", and "Child Abuse SMW. G.1".

1.2 Objectives

- This policy specifies three ways in which the Board will address the issue of violence in schools:
- a) the establishment of preventive procedures designed to encourage a positive school climate, thereby discouraging violent activities;
  - b) the establishment of procedures to assist staff to intervene in situations involving potentially violent situations and activities; and,
  - c) the administration of fair and consistent disciplinary action in response to violent activities.

1.3 Explanation of Terms

- a) A violent incident is characterized by verbal or written threats; physical, emotional, sexual abuse/harassment/assault; racial or ethnocultural harassment; robbery; extortion; or bullying by an individual or group of individuals which has the effect of impairing or might have the effect of impairing the health and welfare of any student or staff member.
- b) Bullying is considered a violent activity. It is defined as an unprovoked, aggressive behaviour that can inflict both physical and/or psychological injury upon a victim.
- c) Vandalism is defined as willful damage to property.

- d) A youth gang/group is comprised of three or more persons who, while acting or congregating together display a pattern of delinquent behaviour, which may result in violent activities.
  - e) Weapons are defined under the Criminal Code in two categories:
    - i) anything used, designed to be used or intended for use in causing death or injury to any person, or
    - ii) anything used, designed to be used or intended for use for the purpose of threatening or intimidating any person and, without restricting the generality of the foregoing, includes any firearm as defined in subsection 84(1);
- 1.4 Issues Related to Violence in Schools  
 In addition to the violent activities specified in this policy, the Board recognizes the potentially harmful influence of violent, degrading, and/or sexually exploitive materials upon students and will not tolerate their presence in its schools.

## 2. PREVENTION ACTIVITIES

- 2.1 Promoting and Ensuring a Positive School Environment
- a) Staff, under the leadership of principals and vice-principals, will design activities to promote a positive atmosphere and pride in the school, including the development of strategies to improve individual self-esteem and the encouragement of student participation in co-curricular activities.
  - b) School staff will encourage participation in activities that will promote an image of their school as having a safe environment.
  - c) At the beginning of each school year, principals will develop and review annually a procedure to facilitate the implementation of this policy.
  - d) Principals will ensure that entry doors and foyers provide a welcoming atmosphere as well as clear directional signs and displays.
  - e) Principals will encourage all staff to be highly visible in the school.
  - f) Students with a history of violence or who have been found in possession of weapons and who wish to transfer from one school to another will be identified by Principals; this information will be communicated to the appropriate Superintendent of Schools and to the students so identified.
  - g) All schools will have a Code of Behaviour that will be communicated to staff, students, parents and community on an annual basis.
  - h) School Administrators will provide support for teachers and staff to ensure a violent student under their supervision does not negatively affect the safe learning environment.
- 2.2 Student Programs
- a) Violence prevention curricula will be offered from Junior Kindergarten to grade 12/OAC. in all appropriate curriculum areas. Violence prevention programs will be integrated into Family Life Programs and Religious Education Programs in the elementary and the secondary panels.
  - b) Schools, in cooperation with police and other community partners, should provide training in the awareness of youth violence and in emergency response skills for grade six to grade eight students, including information about whom to contact in emergencies and/or where help can be obtained.
  - c) Conflict resolution and peacemaking programs will be included as a component of the violence prevention curricula in junior kindergarten to OAC.
  - d) Schools in consultation with the Counseling and Skill Development Teachers, will be encouraged to develop programs (i.e. Anger Management, Social Skills ) to meet the needs of specific students and/or groups of students.
- 2.3 Supervision of School-Sponsored Activities
- a) Guidelines for supervision will be developed by each school to ensure the safety of staff and students at school-sponsored activities. At the senior levels, these guidelines will be consistent with the school's Code of Student Behaviour,

- b) Principals may deny access to school-sponsored activities to students whom they know have a record of violence or who have been found in possession of weapons.
- 2.4 Staff Awareness and Training
- a) In cooperation with various community organizations, system-wide in-service programs will be offered on an ongoing basis to employees on the variety and complexity of violence related problems in schools. To maintain a safe school environment, this in-service will include: the causes of youth violence and methods of dealing with it; emergency response skills for students and staff; directions on how to handle trespassers or intruders in the school, and models for conflict management and resolution.
- 2.5 Community Assistance/Liaison
- a) Schools will be responsible for the development, maintenance and strengthening of their working relationships with various community partners in an effort to promote a positive school-community climate.
  - b) Schools will be encouraged to develop and maintain parent, student, staff, and community partnerships to share responsibility for maintaining a safe school environment.
3. INTERVENTION PROCEDURES
- 3.1 Emergency Procedures
- a) All staff and students are responsible for contributing to the provision of optimum safety and security for the school. To achieve this objective, all staff and students will co-operate in communicating issues, problems and incidents promptly and efficiently to the principal, vice-principal or designate.
  - b) In an emergency situation where staff believes that the behaviour of a student or visitor represents imminent danger, they will immediately contact the principal, vice-principal or designate who will take appropriate action.
  - c) In circumstances where the principal, vice-principal or designate, is unavailable, staff may, if deemed necessary, contact the police. The principal must be notified that the report was made.
  - d) Immediately after the occurrence of any violent incident committed by any student, including students less than 12 years, the principal/vice-principal or designate, will investigate and document this incident in the OSR. Parents will be notified and appropriate agencies contacted.
  - e) All schools will be encouraged to develop mediation/conflict resolution teams. Teams should respond to an incident in the shortest possible time.
  - f) Immediately after the occurrence of a violent incident committed by a student, resulting in a suspension or expulsion, a Violent Incident Report Form must be completed by the principal, vice principal or designate and placed in the student's OSR. A copy of the Violent Incident Report Form must be sent to the appropriate Superintendent of Schools.
  - g) When a staff member has been the victim of a violent incident, he/she shall report the incident to the principal, vice-principal or designate and complete an Employee Incident/Accident Report.
  - h) When a staff member has been the victim of a violent incident, the principal, vice principal or designate shall complete a Violent Incident Report.
- 3.2 School Response Plan
- Principals, in consultation with staff, students, and parents will develop a plan and review it annually to respond to situations involving incidents of violence on school property, including the use of weapons and/or presence of adolescent youth gangs or groups on school property. This plan will include the following:
- a) a trained response team organized within each school to respond to incidents involving violence;
  - b) a designated team member to deal with the media;

- c) a reporting protocol using the Violent Incident Report Form when violence is involved;
- d) an after-care program to support staff or students who may have been traumatized by the incident; this may involve the use of the Crisis Support Team.

4. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The following disciplinary actions are intended to apply to students 12 years of age or older. For students under the age of 12 years or students identified with behavioural and/or developmental needs, similar actions may apply or the principal, in consultation with the parent/guardian and the appropriate Superintendent of Schools, may select an alternative disciplinary action.

4.1 Violent Incidents

- a) When the school principal deems that a student uses verbal or written threats and/or inflicts physical, emotional, and/or sexual violence, racial or ethnocultural harassment, or bullying towards other individuals, the principal shall:
  - i) communicate as soon as possible with the student's parent/guardian
    - a) if student is under 18 years of age;
    - b) if prior written permission to contact the parent/guardian is received from a student 18 years of age or older.
  - ii) suspend the student for a minimum of 3 days to a maximum of 20 days depending upon the severity of the situation.
- b) In addition to the above, and depending on the nature and severity of the situation, the principal in consultation with the appropriate Superintendent, together may decide to:
  - i) contact the police; and/or
  - ii) consider an alternative learning placement for the student with the approval of the Director of Education;
  - iii) recommend the student participates in a counseling program, such as an After Care School-Based Program; and/or
  - iv) recommend the student be expelled.

4.2 Mandatory Reporting

- a) The following categories of serious violent incidents **MUST** be reported to the police:
  - i) possession of weapons
  - ii) threats of serious physical injury
  - iii) physical assaults causing serious bodily harm
  - iv) sexual assault
  - v) robbery and extortion
  - vi) hate motivated violence (including incidents involving racism and homophobia)
  - vii) vandalism causing extensive damage to school property or property located on school premises
- b) For the above mentioned categories, the school principal shall:
  - i) contact police
  - ii) communicate as soon as possible with the student's parent/guardian
    - a) if student is under 18 years of age;
    - b) if prior written permission to contact the parent/guardian is received from a student 18 years of age or older.
  - iii) contact the appropriate superintendent;
  - iv) suspend student for a minimum of 5 days and up to a maximum of 20 days depending upon the severity of the situation.
- c) In addition to the above, and depending on the nature and severity of the situation, the principal in consultation with the appropriate Superintendent, together may decide to:
  - i) consider an alternative placement for the student with the approval of the Director of Education and /or
  - ii) recommend the student be expelled.

4.3 Weapons

- a) When a student is found to be in possession of, threatens to use, or uses a weapon, the principal shall:
  - i) contact police;
  - ii) communicate as soon as possible with the student's parent/guardian
    - a) if student is under 18 years of age;
    - b) if prior written permission to contact the parent/guardian is received from a student 18 years of age or older.
  - iii) contact the appropriate Superintendent;
  - iv) suspend the student as follows:

POSSESSION OF WEAPONS - minimum of 5 days and up to a maximum of 20 days depending on the severity of the situation.

THREAT TO USE WEAPONS - minimum of 10 days and up to a maximum of 20 days, depending on the severity of the situation.

USE OF WEAPONS - a minimum of 15 days and up to a maximum of 20 days depending on the severity of the situation.

- b) In addition to the above, and depending on the nature and severity of the situation, the principal in consultation with the appropriate Superintendent, together may decide to:
  - i) determine an alternative learning placement for the student with the approval of the Director of Education; and/or
  - ii) recommend that the student participates in a counselling program;
  - iii) recommend the student be expelled.

5. STAFF ASSAULT

- a) When a staff member has been assaulted, the principal, vice-principal or designate will advise the staff member:
  - i) of their right to inform police of the incident, notwithstanding any investigation or action by the Board.
  - ii) to obtain advice and assistance from the member's affiliate.
  - iii) of the free and confidential counseling available through the Employee Assistance Program
- b) When the alleged offender is not enrolled in the school or employed by the Board, an attempt will be made to identify the alleged offender and a report would be made to the police.
- c) When a staff person is assaulted by a student, procedures under 4.0 of this policy may apply after consultation with: the appropriate Superintendent, the assaulted staff member, the member's affiliate, and the principal.
- d) If injured as result of an assault, a staff member will retain salary and benefits as if he/she were ill and in accordance with the provisions as determined by Board Policy, Legislation, the respective Collective Agreements and the contract with the Benefit Carrier.