

DIVISION-WIDE BULLYING PREVENTION

BACKGROUND

Grande Yellowhead Public School Division believes that all students and staff have the right to a safe and healthy school environment. The Division takes seriously its responsibility pursuant to the *School Act* to ensure that students are provided with a safe and caring environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviors. The division office, schools, and community have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance and acceptance.

Furthermore, the division prohibits acts of harassment, bullying and violence. A safe and caring environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Bullying is conduct that disrupts a student's ability to learn and the school's ability to educate its students in a safe and caring learning environment.

The Division recognizes that bullying can affect students and or adults. It also recognizes that the perpetrators of bullying can also be students or adults, and as such, the school principal must be prepared to take corrective action regardless of the age of the person being bullied or initiating the bullying.

DEFINITIONS

1. Bullying

Bullying can be defined as repeated and systematic harassment and attacks on others. Bullying can be perpetrated by individuals or groups. Bullying takes many forms, and can include many different behaviors, such as:

- physical violence and attacks
- verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs
- threats and intimidation
- extortion or stealing of money and possessions
- exclusion from the peer group
(Centre for Children and Families in the Justice System)

Bullying is not limited to physical or verbal assaults, as it is intentional and can also take the form of nonverbal or emotional threats or intimidation, the use of electronic communication devices to send embarrassing, slanderous, threatening, or intimidating messages or images and other forms.

2. Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying is intentional defamatory, harassing, threatening or intimidating communication directed toward another individual, including, but is not limited to email, telephone calls, text messaging, instant messaging, social networks, personal web sites, blogs, chat rooms and any other media or means capable of transmitting communication.

3. Bullying Prevention

This is a whole school approach that heightens expectations for a safe, caring and inclusive school climate. It includes a shared understanding about the nature and underlying causes of bullying and its effect on the lives of individual students and the school community. (Excerpt from Toronto District School Board)

4. Bullying Intervention

This is a comprehensive and effective response to the bullying incident that takes into consideration all parties involved in the bullying incident. It should provide specific supports for the student who has been bullied, intervention for the student who was bullying, and strategies for responding to students who were directly observing the bullying incident. The interventions should be a part of the school's pyramid of intervention. (Excerpt from Toronto District School Board)

5. Bystander

Bystander is defined as an individual(s) who directly observes a bullying situation, and does not immediately remove themselves from the situation and or does not report the bullying to an appropriate person in authority.

PROCEDURES

1. Students are responsible for conducting themselves in a manner that respects the rights of other students, school and division staff and community members.
2. Bystander behaviors both active and passive can support bullying, and therefore are not acceptable behaviors of students.
3. Bullying that occurs outside of the school may affect the safe and caring learning environment within the school and the principal/assistant principal may take appropriate action to receive the complaint, investigate and respond with remedial and or disciplinary response.

4. Standards for student behavior should be set cooperatively with students, school staff, parents and School Councils and reflect the intent of the division's administrative procedure.
5. Schools shall develop and implement policy at the school level to promote positive pro-social student behavior that implements procedures with appropriate consequences and remedial and or disciplinary responses for students who participate in acts of bullying. The principal/assistant principal shall ensure that at the beginning of each school year teachers review the School's Bullying Prevention Policy with students. Reference to this administrative procedure or the school's policy will be placed in the School / Student Handbook.
6. Using the school's pyramids of intervention (i.e. a framework of instructional interventions that can be provided in a learning environment to maximize student success), remedial and or disciplinary responses shall be designed to correct the problem behavior, prevent another occurrence of the behavior, and support the victim of the act of bullying. The following factors should be taken into consideration in developing and implementing appropriate consequences and remedial and or disciplinary responses:
 - 6.1 Factors for determining consequences
 - 6.1.1 Age, cognitive development, and maturity of students involved;
 - 6.1.2 Severity of the behavior;
 - 6.1.3 Previous incidences or continuing behaviors; and
 - 6.1.4 Others as deemed appropriate and identified in school policy.
 - 6.2 Factors for determining remedial response:
 - 6.2.1 Personal
 - 6.2.1.1 Life skill competency;
 - 6.2.1.2 Skills and strengths of the student;
 - 6.2.1.3 Talents of the student;
 - 6.2.1.4 Interests of the student;
 - 6.2.1.5 Participation in school activities; and
 - 6.2.1.6 Others as deemed appropriate and identified in school policy.

6.2.2 Environmental

6.2.2.1 School culture and climate;

6.2.2.2 School, family and community supports available for student;

6.2.2.3 Home environment; and

6.2.2.4 Others as deemed appropriate and identified in school policy.

7. Consequences and appropriate remedial and or disciplinary response for a student who commits acts of bullying may include positive behavioral supports and interventions or suspension, Threat Assessments and/or expulsion. In cases of severe bullying or repeated bullying of an individual, the principal may also involve the R.C.M.P.
8. In instances when an adult is reported for bullying activities, the principal or assistant principal will conduct an investigation. If the activities are deemed to be bullying activities the administrator will follow-up with appropriate remedial or disciplinary response.
9. The principal is responsible for appropriately dealing with complaints of bullying and violations of this administrative procedure.
 - 9.1 All staff is responsible for reporting bullying to the principal or assistant principal and to address bullying activities to maintain a safe and respectful school climate.
 - 9.2 Students and parents are encouraged to report acts of bullying to school staff or the principal/assistant principal.
10. Reports of bullying may be made anonymously by students, but remedial and or disciplinary responses will not be assessed based solely on the anonymous response.
11. The principal or assistant principal is responsible for determining whether the reported act of bullying is a violation of this administrative procedure. In determining this, the principal or assistant principal shall conduct a prompt, thorough and complete investigation of the reported incident.

12. The school will provide anti-bullying programs / messages and supports to students as deemed appropriate by the school principal.

Reference: Section 12, 18, 20, 22, 24, 25, 27, 45, 60, 61, 113 School Act
Administrative Procedure 310 Safe and Caring Schools
Administrative Procedure 315 Student Threat Assessment
Supporting Safe, Secure and Caring Schools in Alberta (1999)
A Safe Place: Creating Peaceful Schools (1994)

Developed: June 16, 2010