Policy on Bullying Prevention

REFERENCES
Education Act
Bill 212, An Act to amend the Education Act in respect of behaviour, discipline and safety, June 4, 2007

RELATED FORMS/PROCEDURES/DOCUMENTS
Bill 13, The Accepting Schools Act
Ministry of Education Policy and Program Memorandum (PPM) 144, December 5, 2012
Ontario First Nation, Métis, and Inuit Education Policy Framework, 2007
Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
Ontario Human Rights Code
Violence-Free Schools Policy, Second Printing, 1994
Ontario Regulation 298
Ontario Regulation 472/07
B.G.C.D.S.B. Anti-Bullying Document
BGCDSB Safe Schools Resources and Procedures Manual
BGCDSB Records Management Manual
Student Success
Religious and Family Life Education Programs
Special Education: A Guide for Educators
Safe Schools - Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour, BP: 6-44
Safe Schools - Suspension, Expulsion and Appeal, BP: 6-43
Safe Schools - Code of Conduct, BP: 6-40

POLICY STATEMENT
It is the policy of the Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board to use bullying prevention and intervention strategies which foster a positive learning and teaching environment for all students to help them achieve their full potential.

POLICY REGULATIONS

1.0   PURPOSE

The Bruce Grey Catholic District School Board is committed to maintaining Catholic schools that provide safe environments for learning and working with programs in place for bullying prevention and procedures to follow when bullying incidents are reported and/or observed. Building ans sustaining a positive school climate is a complex challenge requiring evidence informed solutions.

2.0   Positive School Climate

The school climate may be defined as the learning environment and relationships found within a school and school community. A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, included, and accepted, and actively promote positive behaviours and interactions. Principles of equity and inclusive education are embedded in the

learning environment to support a positive school climate and a culture of mutual respect. A positive school climate is a crucial component of bullying prevention.

The following are some characteristics of a positive school climate:
• Students, staff members, and parents feel safe, and are safe, included, and accepted.
• All members of the school community demonstrate respect, fairness, and kindness in their interactions, building healthy relationships that are free from discrimination and harassment.
• Students are encouraged and given support to be positive leaders and role models in their school community.
• Open and ongoing dialogue takes place between the principal,[5] staff members, parents,[6] and students. All partners are actively engaged.
• The learning environment, instructional materials, and teaching and assessment strategies reflect the diversity of all learners.
• Every student is inspired and given support to succeed in an environment of high expectations.
• Bullying prevention and awareness-raising strategies for students and staff are reinforced through curriculum-linked programs.

3.0   GUIDELINES

2.1   Bullying adversely affects students' ability to learn.

2.2   Bullying adversely affects healthy relationships and the school climate. Programs and supports for students involved inappropriate behaviour will be made available to students, including the bullied student, witnesses to the bullying and those engaged in the bullying.

2.3   Bullying adversely affects a school's ability to educate its students. Principals will consult with Catholic School Councils about bullying prevention and intervention as a shared community responsibility.

2.4   Bullying shall not be accepted on school property, at school-related activities, on school buses, or in any other circumstance (e.g. online) where engaging in bullying will have a negative impact on the school climate.

2.5   Principals must suspend a student for bullying and consider referring that student for expulsion, (1) if the student has been previously suspended for bullying and (2) the student's continuing presence in the school creates, in the principal's opinion and unacceptable risk to the safety of another person. When both of these conditions are met, the principal must suspend the student and consider referring the student for an explusion hearing.

2.6   Principal must also suspend a student, and consider referring that student for expulsion, for any incident under subsection 306(1) of the Education Act, including bullying, that is motivated by bias, prejudice, or hate based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other similar factor (e.g., socio-economic status, appearance).

2.6   The Board shall maintain and update a Safe Schools Resources and Procedures Manual which includes information and procedures on bullying prevention and intervention.

2.7   The Board shall expect students to develop healthy relationships with others which support an effective learning environment in accordance with Catholic teachings.

4.0   TERMS AND DEFINITIONS
3.1   PPM   A Program and Policy Memorandum developed by the Ministry of Education. Short form is "PPM".

3.2   BULLYING
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, self-esteem, or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance.

Bullying means aggressive and typically repeated behaviour by a pupilwhere,
(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;
Bullying
(1.0.0.1) 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
(1.0.0.2) 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.
Aggressive behaviour may be intentional or unintentional, direct or indirect. It can take many forms, including physical, verbal, and social. If aggressive behaviour is physical, it may include hitting, pushing, slapping, and tripping. If it is verbal, it may include name calling, mocking, insults, threats, and sexist, racist, homophobic, or transphobic comments. If it is social, or relational, aggression, it 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 aggression may also occur through the use of technology (e.g., spreading rumours, images, or hurtful comments through the use of e-mail, cell phones, text messaging, Internet websites, social networking, or other technology).
Harm, as used in this memorandum, means harm that can be experienced in a number of ways, including physical, mental, emotional, and psychological.

In the course of a day, there are many "teachable moments" when issues appear to arise. Prompt intervention with a few moments of coaching and support at these critical times can help all children and youth, including those who may be at risk, to develop the skills and understanding that they need to

3.3   NEXUS
The umbrella for "school behaviour" includes matters which fall under the category of "nexus". Nexus means "relevant". The student's behaviour off school property and/or outside the school day may have a relevant and related impact on the safety and well-being of the school community.