



Policy: Student Discipline

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Rationale

The Superior North Catholic District School Board values:

- the presence of God in each person;
- an inclusive Catholic culture that instills compassion;
- hope, integrity, faithfulness, respect and self-worth;
- Catholic-based spiritual development; and student success.

In accordance with these values, we recognize that it is important that all pupils have a safe, caring and accepting school environment in order to maximize their learning potential and to ensure a positive school climate for all members of the school community. The Provincial Code of Conduct, the Superior North Catholic District School Board Code of Conduct and the Education Act, Ontario Regulation 472/07, Policy Program Memorandum (PPM) 128 (Provincial and School Board Codes of Conduct), 141 (Program For Long Term Suspension), 142 (Expulsion Programs), 144 (Bullying Prevention), 145 (Progressive Discipline), Bill 13, Bill 157 and PPM120, together with the Board's discipline policies, create expectations for behaviour for all persons on school property and outline strategies to be taken to address incidents, including imposing appropriate consequences for pupils.

This policy outlines the expectations for the process to be used by the Board when imposing appropriate consequences for pupils.

The process set out in this policy shall be informed by and implemented in accordance with the principles of equity and inclusion articulated in PPM 119 (Equity and Inclusive Education).

The Human Rights Code of Ontario has primacy over provincial legislation and policies, as well as school board policies and procedures, such that the Education Act, regulations, Ministry of Education Program Policy Memoranda, and Board policies and procedures are subject to, and shall be interpreted and applied in accordance with the Human Rights Code of Ontario.

Policy Statement

Pursuant to the Education Act, Principal/Vice-Principals are required to maintain proper order and discipline in schools, and pupils are responsible to the Principal/Vice-Principal for their conduct and are required to accept such discipline as would be exercised by a reasonable, kind, firm and judicious parent. A Principal may delegate some disciplinary responsibilities to a Vice-Principal and/or teacher of the school in accordance with the Education Act, Ministry of Education policies and Board procedures. In such circumstances, the delegation of authority and the authority delegated, will be clearly identified in Board procedures, as will the supports available to individuals in receipt of the delegated authority.

In order to meet the goal of creating a safe, caring and accepting school environment, the Superior North Catholic District School Board supports a whole school approach involving all members of the school community. The whole school approach includes ensuring the school climate is a learning environment which is based on a culture of mutual respect, the use of positive practices, as well as consequences for inappropriate behaviour including progressive discipline, which includes suspension and expulsion, where necessary.

The Board considers homophobia, gender based violence, and harassment on the basis of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, colour, ethnicity, culture, citizenship, ancestry, origin, religion, creed, family status, socio-economic status, disability and/or any other immutable characteristic or ground protected by the Human Rights Code, as well as inappropriate sexual behaviour unacceptable and supports the use of positive practices to prevent such behaviour and authorizes Principals/Vice-Principals, or their delegates, to impose consequences in appropriate circumstances, up to and including a referral to the Discipline Committee of the Board (See Section 12.0) for expulsion from all schools.

Schools are encouraged to implement proactive positive practices and corrective supportive practices when necessary. However, before applying disciplinary measures, the Principal/ Vice-Principal/designate and Discipline Committee of the Board shall consider the discriminatory impacts of disciplinary decisions on pupils protected by the Human Rights Code, including but not limited to race and disability, and whether or not accommodation is required.

This policy authorizes the creation of procedures for implementation, which might include requirements described in Ministry of Education PPM's as matters of policy, and any such procedures shall be considered guidelines pursuant to the Education Act and other relevant and/or related Ministry of Education materials and all of which will be sufficient for the purposes of implementing the requirements of Ministry of Education Policy Program Memoranda.

Progressive Discipline (A Whole School Approach)

The goal of this policy, with respect to progressive discipline, is to support a safe learning and teaching environment in which every pupil can reach his or her full potential. Appropriate action must consistently be taken by schools to address behaviours that are contrary to provincial, Board and school Codes of Conduct, which includes, but is not limited to, inappropriate sexual behaviour, gender-based violence, homophobia, and harassment on the basis of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, colour, ethnicity, culture, citizenship, ancestry, origin, religion, creed, family status, socio-economic status, disability and/or any other immutable characteristics or ground protected by the Human Rights Code.

Progressive discipline is an approach that makes use of a continuum of prevention programs, preventative actions, interventions, supports, and consequences, building upon strategies that promote positive behaviours. The range of interventions, supports, and consequences used by the Board and all schools, must be clear and developmentally appropriate, and must include learning opportunities for pupils in order to reinforce positive behaviours and help pupils make good choices. For pupils with special education and/or disability related needs, interventions, supports and consequences must be consistent with the expectations in the student's IEP and/or his/her demonstrated abilities.

It is the expectation of the Board that, provided that there is no immediate risk of physical harm to any individual, staff members who work directly with pupils on a regular basis, including administrators, teachers, educational assistants, social workers,

child and youth workers, psychologists, and speech and language pathologists, shall, in accordance with Board procedures, respond to any such inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour or any other behaviour that causes a negative school climate or for which a suspension or expulsion may be imposed, which they have observed or heard during the course of their duties or otherwise while on school property or during a school related event.

The Board, and school administrators, must consider all mitigating and other factors, as required by the Education Act, set out in Ontario Regulation 472/07 and reflected in student discipline settlements with the Human Rights Commission.

Guidelines

Positive Practices

In order to promote and support appropriate and positive pupil behaviours that contribute to creating and sustaining safe, caring and accepting learning and teaching environments that encourage and support students to reach their full potential, the Board supports the use of positive practices for: (1) prevention, and (2) positive behaviour management. The Board also encourages Principals/Vice-Principals to review and amend, as appropriate, Individual Education Plans, Behaviour Management Plans and Safety Plans at regular intervals and following an incident to ensure that every student with disability related needs, is receiving appropriate accommodation up to the point of undue hardship.

Preventative Practices

- Human Rights strategy pursuant to PPM 119
- anti-bullying and violence prevention programs
- mentorship programs
- student success strategies
- character education
- citizenship development
- student leadership
- promoting healthy student relationships
- healthy lifestyles

Positive Behaviour Management Practices

- program accommodation or modifications
- classroom placement
- positive encouragement and reinforcement
- individual, peer or group counselling
- conflict resolution/dispute resolution
- mentorship programs
- promotion of healthy student relationships
- sensitivity programs
- safety plans
- school, board and community support programs
- student success strategies

The Board recognizes that, in some circumstances, positive practices might not be effective or sufficient to address inappropriate pupil behaviour. In such circumstances, the Board supports the use of consequences.

In circumstances where a pupil will receive a consequence for his/her behaviour, it is the expectation of the Board that the principle of progressive discipline, consistent with the Human Rights Code, Ministry of Education direction and PPM 145, will be applied, if appropriate.

Progressive Discipline Consequences

Progressive discipline may include early and/or ongoing intervention strategies, such as:

- contact with parent(s)/guardian(s)
- oral reminders
- review of expectations
- written work assignment with a learning component
- volunteer service to the school community
- peer mentoring
- referral to counselling
- conflict mediation and resolution
- consultation

Progressive discipline may also include a range of interventions, supports and consequences when inappropriate behaviours have occurred, with a focus on improving behaviour, such as one or more of the following:

- meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s), pupil and Principal/Vice-Principal
- referral to a community agency for anger management or substance abuse counselling
- detentions
- withdrawal of privileges
- withdrawal from class
- restitution for damages
- restorative practices
- transfer

Progressive discipline is most effective when dialogue between the school and home regarding student achievement, behaviour and expectations is open, courteous and focused on student success.

When addressing inappropriate behaviour, school staff should consider the particular pupil and circumstances, including any mitigating and other factors as set out in the Student Discipline Administrative Regulation, the nature and severity of the behaviour, and the impact on the school climate.

The Board also supports the use of suspension and expulsion as outlined in Part XIII of the Education Act where a pupil has committed one or more of the infractions outlined below on school property, during a school-related activity or event, and/or in circumstances where the infraction has an impact on the school climate.

An exclusion from the school pursuant to Section 265(1)(m) of the Education Act, shall only be effected in accordance with the Education Act, the Board's Exclusion Policy and Exclusion Procedures and consistent with the Human Rights Code. A pupil shall not be excluded from the school pursuant to Section 265(1)(m) of the Education Act, as a disciplinary measure.

PPM 145 (page 4) states that if a Principal/Vice-Principal does decide that it is necessary to exclude a student from the school, he or she is expected to notify the student's parents of the circumstances of the exclusion as soon as possible, and to inform them of their right to appeal under Clause 265(1)(m).

Suspension

The infractions for which a suspension may be imposed by the Principal/Vice-Principal include:

- uttering a threat to inflict serious bodily harm on another person
- possessing alcohol, illegal or restricted drugs
- being under the influence of alcohol
- swearing at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority
- committing an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to school property at the pupil's school or to property located on the premises of the pupil's school
- bullying
- any act considered by the Principal/Vice-Principal to be injurious to the moral tone of the school
- any act considered by the Principal/Vice-Principal to be injurious to the physical or mental well-being of members of the school community
- any act considered by the Principal/Vice-Principal to be contrary to the Board or School Code of Conduct

A pupil may be suspended only once for an infraction and may be suspended for a minimum of one (1) school day and a maximum of twenty (20) school days. Any such infractions about which a board staff member or transportation provider becomes aware must be reported to the Principal/Vice-Principal or designate in accordance with Board administrative regulations at the earliest, safe opportunity and no later than the end of the school day, or end of a transportation run, if reported by a transportation provider. A written report in accordance with Board administrative regulations must be made when it is safe to do so.

A Principal/Vice-Principal who suspends a pupil under Section 306, shall make all reasonable efforts to inform the pupil's parent/guardian of the suspension within 24 hours of the suspension being imposed, unless the pupil is at least 18 years old, or is 16 or 17 and has withdrawn from parental control and where the Principal/Vice-Principal is NOT aware that informing the parent/ guardian would put the pupil at risk of harm and would not be in the pupil's best interests. The Principal/Vice-Principal may inform a parent/guardian of a student 18 years or older or who is 16 or 17 and has withdrawn from parental control, if that student consents to the disclosure of information.

Mitigating and Other Factors

Before imposing a suspension, the Principal/Vice-Principal, as required by the Education Act, must consider any mitigating and other factors and their application for the purpose of mitigating the discipline to be imposed on the pupil. For the purpose of the Student Discipline Policy and Administrative Regulations, the Board interprets the provisions of the Education Act and Regulations in a broad and liberal manner consistent with the Human Rights Code. The Principal/Vice-Principal, or designate in consultation with the Principal/Vice-Principal, shall consider whether or not the discipline will have a disproportionate impact on a pupil protected by the Human Rights Code and/or exacerbate the pupil's disadvantaged position in society.

Mitigating Factors

The mitigating factors to be considered by the Principal/Vice-Principal are:

- Whether the pupil has the ability to control his or her behaviour.
- Whether the pupil has the ability to understand the foreseeable consequences of his or her behaviour.
- Whether the pupil's continuing presence in the school does or does not create an unacceptable risk to the safety of any other individual at the school

Other Factors To Be Considered

1. The pupil's academic, discipline and personal history.
2. Whether other progressive discipline has been attempted with the pupil, and if so, the progressive discipline approach(es) that has/have been attempted and any success or failure.
3. Whether the infraction for which the pupil might be disciplined was related to any harassment of the pupil because of race, colour, ethnic origin, place of origin, religion, creed, disability, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation or harassment for any other reason.
4. The impact of the discipline on the pupil's prospects for further education.
5. The pupil's age.
6. Where the pupil has an IEP or disability related needs:
 - a. Whether the behaviour causing the incident was a manifestation of the pupil's disability.
 - b. Whether appropriate individualized accommodation has been provided.
 - c. Whether a suspension is likely to result in aggravating or worsening the pupil's behaviour or conduct, or whether a suspension is likely to result in a greater likelihood of further inappropriate conduct.

7. Whether or not the pupil's continuing presence at the school creates an unacceptable risk to the safety of anyone in the school.

Expulsion

Under the safe schools changes that came into effect since February 1, 2008, the Principal/Vice-Principal is required to suspend a student for up to 20 school days if the Principal/Vice-Principal believes that the student has engaged in an activity for which the student might ultimately be expelled by the school board. This clause provides for the removal of the student from the school while allowing the Principal/Vice-Principal to investigate the incident and decide whether to recommend to the board that the student be expelled.

The infractions for which a Principal/Vice-Principal may consider recommending to the Board that a pupil be expelled from the pupil's school or from all schools of the Board include:

- possessing a weapon, including possessing a firearm
- using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person
- committing physical assault on another person that causes bodily harm requiring treatment by a medical practitioner
- committing sexual assault
- trafficking in weapons, illegal or restricted drugs
- committing robbery
- giving alcohol to a minor
- an act considered by the Principal/Vice-Principal to be significantly injurious to the moral tone of the school and/or to the physical or mental well-being of others
- a pattern of behaviour that is so inappropriate that the pupil's continued presence is injurious to the effective learning and/or working environment of others
- activities engaged in by the pupil on or off school property that cause the pupil's continuing presence in the school to create an unacceptable risk to the physical or mental well-being of other person(s) in the school or Board
- activities engaged in by the pupil on or off school property that have caused extensive damage to the property of the Board or to goods that are/were on Board property
- the pupil has demonstrated through a pattern of behaviour that he/she has not prospered by the instruction available to him or her and that he/she is persistently resistant to making changes in behaviour which would enable him or her to prosper
- any act considered by the Principal/Vice-Principal to be a serious violation of the Board or School Code of Conduct

The Principal/Vice-Principal and/or Discipline Committee of the Board (Section 12.0) shall consider whether or not the discipline will have a disproportionate impact on a pupil protected by the Human Rights Code and/or exacerbate the pupil's disadvantaged position in society.

Any such infractions about which a board staff member or transportation provider becomes aware must be reported to the Principal/Vice-Principal or designate in accordance with Board administrative regulations at the earliest, safe opportunity and no later than the end of the school day, or end of a bus run, if reported by a transportation provider. A written report in accordance with Board procedures must be made when it is safe to do so.

The Principal/Vice-Principal or designate in consultation with the Principal/Vice-Principal, is required to provide information, in accordance with Board administrative regulations, to the parent/guardian of a pupil who is less than 18 years of age, is not 16 or 17 and withdrawn from parental control and where the Principal/Vice-Principal is NOT aware that informing the parent/guardian would put the pupil at risk of harm and would not be in the pupil's best interests. The Principal/Vice-Principal may inform a parent of a student 18 years or older or who is 16 or 17 and has withdrawn from parental control, if that student consents to the disclosure of information.

Mitigating Factors and Other Factors

The Education Act requires the Principal/Vice-Principal to consider mitigating and other factors in determining the length of the suspension and in determining whether to recommend expulsion.

For the purpose of the Student Discipline Policy and Administrative Regulations, the Board interprets the provisions of the Education Act and Regulations in a broad and liberal manner consistent with the Human Rights Code. The Principal/Vice-Principal and/or Discipline Committee of the Board shall consider whether or not the discipline will have a disproportionate impact on a pupil protected by the Human Rights Code and/or exacerbate the pupil's disadvantaged position in society.

If, on concluding the investigation, the Principal/Vice-Principal decides not to recommend to the Board that the pupil be expelled, the Principal/Vice-Principal shall,

1. Confirm the suspension and the duration of the suspension.
2. Confirm the suspension but shorten its duration, even if the suspension has already been served and amend the record of the suspension accordingly. OR

3. Withdraw the suspension and expunge the record or the suspension, even if the suspension has already been served.

For the purpose of the Student Discipline Administrative Regulations, the Board interprets the provisions of the Education Act and Regulations in a broad and liberal manner consistent with the Human Rights Code.

Principal/Vice-Principal Investigation

Before recommending an expulsion from the pupil's school or from all schools of the Board, the Principal/Vice-Principal must complete an investigation, consistent with the expectations of the Human Rights Code and as required by the Education Act, which is consistent with the expectations for Principal/Vice-Principal investigations outlined in the Board's Student Discipline Administrative Regulations.

Appeal

Where a pupil's parent/guardian or the pupil, if 18 or older or 16 or 17 and has removed him/herself from parental control, disagrees with the decision of a Principal/Vice-Principal to suspend the pupil that pupil's parent/guardian or the pupil, if 18 or older or 16 or 17 and removed from parental control, may appeal the Principal's/Vice-Principal's decision to suspend the pupil, in accordance with the Human Rights Code, the Board's Student Discipline Administrative Regulations and Suspension Appeal Guidelines.

Suspension appeals will not be conducted in accordance with or be subject to the Statutory Powers Procedure Act.

Superintendent Responsible For Student Discipline

The Superintendent responsible for Student Discipline shall have the powers and duties outlined in the Student Discipline Administrative Regulations.

Discipline Committee

The Board authorizes the creation of a Discipline Committee of no fewer than three (3) Trustees to decide appeals of Principal/Vice-Principal suspensions and Principal/Vice-Principal recommendations for expulsion. For these purposes, the Discipline Committee will conduct the suspension appeals and expulsion hearings in accordance with the

Student Discipline Administrative Regulations, Suspension Appeal Guidelines, Expulsion Hearing Guidelines and Rules.

In all cases where consequences might be imposed, teachers, administrators and the Board will consider the safety and dignity of all pupils and the impact of the activity on the school climate.

The Discipline Committee shall have the powers as set out in the Education Act and any other powers necessary and shall consider the Human Rights Code of Ontario prior to implementing any appropriate Order.

Victims of Serious Student Incidents

The Board supports pupils who are victims of serious incidents of pupil behaviour causing harm contrary to the provincial, Board and school Codes of Conduct. The Principal/Vice-Principal or designate in consultation with the Principal/Vice-Principal, is required to provide information, in accordance with Board administrative regulations, to the parent/guardian of a pupil who is less than 18 years of age, is not 16 or 17 and withdrawn from parental control and where the Principal/Vice-Principal is NOT of the opinion that informing the parent/guardian would put the pupil at risk of harm and would not be in the pupil's best interests. The Principal/Vice-Principal may inform a parent of a student 18 years or older or who is 16 or 17 and has withdrawn from parental control, if that student consents to the disclosure of information. The Board shall develop appropriate plans to protect the victim and will communicate to parents/guardians of victims, information about the plan and a method of identifying dissatisfaction with steps taken to provide support to the victim.

Reporting Requirements For Board Employees

All Board employees and those contracted to the Board (ie. bus drivers) are to report to the Principal/Vice-Principal if they become aware that a student may have engaged in an activity for which the student must be considered for suspension or expulsion. When reporting, Board employees must:

- Consider the safety of others and the urgency of the situation in reporting no later than the end of the school day.
- Confirm all reports to the Principal/Vice-Principal, in writing, using the Ministry form >Safe Schools Incident Report – Form I'.

After a report is submitted, the Principal/Vice-Principal must:

- Provide a written acknowledgment of the receipt of the report using Ministry form Safe Schools Incident Report -- Form II'. Information that could identify the students involved, must not be part of the acknowledgment.
- Identify if the investigation is completed or in progress.
- If no further action is taken by the Principal/Vice-Principal, there is no requirement to retain the report and it should be destroyed.
- If action is taken, the form and documentation must be kept in the Student's Ontario Student Record (OSR) for a minimum of one year. The names of the other students appearing on the form (aggressors and victims) must be removed B except the name of the student in whose OSR it is going.
- Nothing about the incident is to go in the victim's OSR unless the victim/parent(s) of the victim, specifically request that it be done.

Programs for Pupils on Long-Term Suspension and Expelled Pupils

The Board will provide programs and services for pupils on long-term suspension and for pupils who have been expelled as set out in the administrative regulations.

Administrative Regulations

The Director of Education is authorized to establish administrative regulations to implement this policy, which shall be considered guidelines pursuant to the Education Act.

Approval and Review Dates

Prior Date Approved: October 21, 2013

Revised Date Approved: January 14, 2016

Review Prior To: January, 2018

Reviewed by: Policy Committee, Administrative Council