

Workplace Violence Prevention Policy **# FBC.B.11.**

Adopted: October 5, 2009
Last Reviewed/Revised: November 2, 2020

Purpose

The Board recognizes that violence and the threat of violence in the workplace is a serious hazard to its employees which can cause physical harm, as well as erode the mutual trust and confidence that are essential to the well-being of employees. The Board believes in the prevention of workplace violence and promotes a violence-free workplace in which all people respect one another to achieve common goals. This procedure sets out the guidelines to deal with violence in the workplace.

References

- School Climate Survey Policy: SMW.E.6
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)*
- *Education Act*
- Policy/ Program Memorandum (PPM) 120
- Incident/Accident Investigation Procedure (HSP-003)
- Health and Safety Procedure: HRG.C.2

Forms

- WCDSB School/Worksite Risk Assessment

Appendices

Policy Statement

The Wellington Catholic District School Board (herein referred to as “the Board”) is committed to providing a respectful, supportive, healthy, and safe environment for all of its employees, students and volunteers who are entitled to work in an environment free from violence, threats of violence, harassment, intimidation and other disruptive behaviour. The Board has adopted this policy which prohibits violence and threats of violence, and encourages employees to take affirmative steps to identify, report and investigate potentially violent situations.

Policy Regulation

1. Scope

This procedure applies to all employees at all schools and locations under the Board’s umbrella and to anyone that may encounter the risk of violence at the workplace.

2. Definitions

Workplace

The Workplace is any place where employees perform work or work-related duties or functions in conjunction with any other member of the school community. Schools and school-related activities such as extra-curricular activities and excursions, comprise the workplace, as do Board offices and facilities, and sanctioned workplace social events. Conferences and training sessions fall within the scope of this policy.

Workplace Violence

As defined by the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, workplace violence is:

- The exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker;
- An attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to a worker, or
- A statement or behaviour that is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to a worker.
- Workplace violence also includes any aggressive action or threat sent in writing or by electronic messaging.

Sexual Violence

Any sexual act or act targeting a person's sexuality, gender identity or gender expression, whether the act is physical or psychological in nature, that is committed, threatened or attempted against a person without the person's consent and includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, indecent exposure, voyeurism and sexual exploitation.

Domestic Violence

When domestic violence enters the workplace it is workplace violence. As defined by the Ontario Safety Association for Community and Healthcare: "Domestic violence is a pattern of behaviour used by one person to gain power and control over another with whom he/she has or has had an intimate relationship. It may include physical violence, sexual, emotional and psychological intimidation, verbal abuse, stalking, and use of electronic devices to harass and control."

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 takes on different forms and contexts with age. It can be physical, verbal, social/emotional or through the use of technology. Bystanders contribute to bullying by doing nothing to prevent it or by becoming actively involved in supporting it.

Gender Identity

One's sense of oneself as male, female, or transgender. When one's gender identity and biological sex are not congruent, the individual may identify as transsexual or as another transgender category.

Gender Expression

The way in which a person acts to communicate gender within a given culture; for example, in terms of clothing, communication patterns and interests. A person's gender expression may or may not reflect his or her gender identity.

Site Supervisor

The Site Supervisor is defined as the Principal, Vice-Principal, Superintendent or Manager responsible for the workplace.

External Investigator

An impartial person possessing such knowledge, experience or qualifications to conduct an investigation.

3. Workplace Violence Risk Assessment

3.1. An assessment of the risks of workplace violence including the nature of the workplace, type of work or conditions of work and taking into consideration the circumstances of the workplace, circumstances common to similar workplaces, and other elements prescribed in regulation.

3.1.1. Nature of the workplace - refers to the physical aspects of the workplace that could be used to hurt workers.

3.1.2. Type of work - refers to the activities workers perform and people with whom workers interact.

3.1.3. Conditions of work – refers to other aspects such as hours worked, the surrounding neighbourhood and whether workers move from location to location, work alone or in isolation.

3.1.4. Circumstances specific to the workplace – refers to unique risks of workplace violence in addition to the common risks.

3.2. The Site Supervisor shall ensure that a Workplace Violence Risk Assessment is conducted annually based on site characteristics to identify the risks of workplace violence. Refer to the WCDSB School/Worksite Risk Assessment form (Form 1).

3.3. Rating

A rating scale shall rate the risk of workplace violence as low, moderate, or high, and shall rely on a combination of frequency and severity.

Category of Risk	Activity Condition Description
Low	<p>One or more potential risks rarely place the employee at risk and/or the risk is minimal.</p> <p>Rarely – Not a part of the work routine or rarely exposed to the condition.</p> <p>Minimal – Potential to result in a first aid injury.</p>
Moderate	<p>One or more potential risks occasionally place the employee at risk and/or the risk is moderate.</p> <p>Occasionally - Recognized part of work activities occurring on an infrequent basis or occasionally exposed to the condition.</p> <p>Moderate – Potential to result in a lost time or health care injury</p>
High	<p>One or more potential risks regularly place the employees at risk and/or the risk is severe.</p> <p>Regularly - Part of the normal work routines/assignment or regularly exposed to the condition.</p> <p>Severe – Potential to result in a fatal or critical injury.</p>

3.4. Once a Workplace Violence Risk Assessment (Form 1) has been completed, the site supervisor has a responsibility to recommend and apply procedures, measures and controls to protect workers from workplace violence, control risk and prevent re-occurrences including but not limited to the following:

- Physical environment controls such as good lighting, removing barriers, securing movable objects and providing quiet safe rooms.
- Developing and updating Safety Plans.
- Ensuring appropriate measures and procedures for student transitions.
- Providing Personal Protective Equipment.
- Establishing response teams and Police/School Board protocols to

summon help.

3.5. The Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Form (Form 1) shall be maintained on file at the workplace location. A copy shall be forwarded to the appropriate Superintendent and Health and Safety Officer or designate. A copy of the assessment forms will be made available to the Joint Health and Safety Committee.

3.6. Additional Assessment Resources

In addition to the Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Form (Form 1), the following resources can be utilized to conduct the Workplace Violence Risk Assessment:

- **Employee Risk Assessment Surveys** – The Board shall develop an Employee Risk Assessment Survey to determine the extent to which employees feel their workplace is safe. Surveys shall be conducted when necessary and at least when workplace conditions substantially change. *School Climate Survey Policy: SMW.E.6* may be reviewed as part of an Employee Risk Assessment.
- **Incidents/Accidents** – Accident and incident reports involving violent incidents towards employees are reviewed to assist with identifying violent incident causes and trends and to determine the effectiveness of prevention strategies/measures taken.

4. Investigations and Disposition

4.1. The Principal/Supervisor or designated external investigator shall ensure that a thorough investigation of all incidents/accidents is conducted in accordance with the *incident/accident investigation procedure (HSP-003)*.

4.1.1. Workers shall report all incidents of Workplace Violence immediately to the Supervisor/Principal (*HSP-003*).

- 4.1.2. Supervisors/Principals shall report all incidents of workplace violence to the Disability and Wellness Coordinator within 24 hours of occurrence and all incidents of a serious nature to the Health and Safety Officer or designate immediately. The JHSC will be informed of incidents that result in the person being disabled from performing his or her usual work or requiring medical attention within four (4) working days of the occurrence of the incidents and critical injuries.
- 4.1.3. If the Principal/Supervisor is party to the violent incident, the investigation may be conducted by the appropriate Superintendent or designated external investigator.
- 4.1.4. Where a student is involved, the Protocol for Managing Unsafe Student Behaviour shall be initiated in consultation with Student Support Services Personnel.
- 4.2. The investigation needs to be fair, unbiased, and conducted in a confidential manner to the extent possible under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)*.
- 4.3. The Principal/Supervisor, in consultation with the appropriate Superintendent and Human Resources shall ensure that the perpetrator(s) of the violent incident(s) are held accountable for their behaviour according to the applicable legislation, policies and guidelines and which may include discipline up to and including termination of employment, suspensions or other. If the Principal/Supervisor is party to the violent incident, this task will be completed by the appropriate Superintendent and Human Resources.

5. Domestic Violence

- 5.1. The Board shall take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of its employees if it becomes aware or ought reasonably to be aware, of domestic violence that would likely expose a worker to physical injury that may occur in the workplace.

- 5.1.1. Employees who have information that they or a fellow employee is subject to domestic violence that may expose them or their fellow workers to physical injury in the workplace, have a duty to inform their supervisor. Where the supervisor may be party to the domestic violence, the employee shall inform the appropriate Superintendent.
- 5.1.2. The supervisor or superintendent shall treat all such reports as confidential information, and only disclose to Human Resources or others who need to know, information that is necessary for the protection of workers in the workplace.
- 5.1.3. Investigations and Dispositions, as per section 7, shall also apply to reports of Domestic Violence with due consideration given to the sensitivity of the issue.
- 5.1.4. The supervisor or superintendent shall seek direction from Human Resources, and Superintendent on how to proceed.

6. Bullying

Bullying will not be tolerated. Reported incidents must be investigated by the site supervisors and or Superintendent of Human Resources. Appropriate measures shall be taken to prevent re-occurrence.

7. The Role of the Joint Health and Safety Committee

7.1. The Joint Health and Safety Committee has the same powers and responsibilities for workplace violence as it does for other Occupational Health and Safety hazards under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

7.2. The Board's Joint Health and Safety Committee shall:

- 7.2.1. Receive information on the Board's Violence and Harassment Prevention Training Program;

7.2.2. Be advised of the results of the Board's workplace violence risk assessments, and

7.2.3. Receive reports, of all incidents of workplace violence that result in the person being disabled from performing his or her usual work or requiring medical attention, within four (4) working days of the occurrence of the incident.

8. Summoning Immediate Assistance

8.1. The Board's Violence and Harassment Prevention Training Program shall include measures and procedures for staff on summoning immediate assistance when workplace violence occurs or is likely to occur, including when a threat of workplace violence is made.

8.2. Depending on the nature, location and level of risk, an employee may seek assistance:

- From the site supervisor including the Principal or Vice-Principal.
- From members of the site's emergency response team.
- By calling community authorities (dialing 911).
- By using various communication devices (school wide PA system, classroom phone/PA systems, individual cell phones).

8.3. Each Board site shall develop methods of summoning immediate assistance and include this in the site's Emergency Response Plan.

9. Work Refusals

The Work Refusal Process and relevant form for documentation is included in *Health and Safety Procedure: HRG.C.2*.

9.1. Employees have the right to refuse to work if workplace violence is likely to endanger them.

Note: A teacher cannot refuse to work where the circumstances are such that the life, health or safety of a pupil is in imminent jeopardy (*O. Reg. 857 under the Occupational Health and Safety Act*).

- 9.2. An employee shall report the circumstance of the work refusal to his/her Principal/Supervisor if he or she is refusing to work.
- 9.3. The Health and Safety Officer or designate shall be notified of the work refusal.
- 9.4. The Principal or Supervisor, with the Manager of Health and Safety or designate, shall investigate forthwith in the presence of the worker and the Joint Health and Safety Committee worker representative.
- 9.5. At the outset of the investigation, the Principal/Supervisor shall:
 - 9.5.1. Take necessary steps to ensure the safety of students and employees;
 - 9.5.2. Provide a safe place for the worker where he/she shall be available to the investigator(s). This may include assigning the worker other work.
 - 9.5.3. Document the work refusal;
 - 9.5.4. Contact the appropriate superintendent, and
 - 9.5.5. Provide details of the work refusal, including the reasons for refusal to any replacement worker in the presence of the Joint Health and Safety Committee worker representative.
- 9.6. When the investigation has been completed, if necessary, steps shall be taken to rectify the situation so that it is safe for the worker to return to work.
- 9.7. The worker shall be notified of the steps taken.

9.8. If the worker believes the situation has been resolved, the worker shall return to the work area.

9.9. If the worker continues to refuse to return to the work area, the worker, the Manager of Health and Safety or designate or the Joint Health and Safety Committee worker representative shall contact the Ministry of Labour.

9.10. The Ministry of Labour Inspector:

- Investigates in the presence of the worker, Principal/Supervisor, Joint Health and Safety Committee worker representative, and the Manager of Health and Safety or designate and;
- Issues a written decision, which is to be posted in the workplace.

9.11. The Ministry of Labour's decision is implemented, unless appealed.

9.12. There will be no reprisal towards employees exercising their right to refuse work or requesting the Board to follow the *OHSA* with regards to workplace violence.

10. Workplace Violence Prevention Training Program

10.1. It is the duty of the Board to establish a Workplace Violence and Harassment Prevention Training Program for all employees which includes information, training, reporting and investigation procedures.

10.2. The Board shall develop and provide specific training for Site Supervisors, including Principals, to effectively manage the issue of workplace violence at their work sites.

10.3. The Board, in conjunction with Site Supervisors/Principals, shall ensure that all staff are:

10.3.1. Trained to recognize the nature and extent of the risk in their workplace, and;

- 10.3.2. Knowledgeable in procedures and measures necessary to minimize the risk of violence in their specific workplace.
- 10.4. The level of risk to which individual employees are exposed (low, medium, or high) as determined by the Board and the Site Supervisor, may, where circumstances dictate, determine the extent of the training required by individual employees.
- 10.5. In sites where the level of risk is moderate to high, training shall, where circumstances dictate, include:
 - 10.5.1. Behaviour Management Training (e.g. BMS);
 - 10.5.2. Procedures and safety measures specific to the employee's assignment;
 - 10.5.3. The need for and use of Board-provided personal protective equipment;
 - 10.5.4. Individual physical analysis to ensure an employee has the physical well-being to carry out procedures and safety measures to minimize their risk of injury.
- 10.6. Where necessary, Employee Safety Plans shall be developed and updated accordingly.
- 10.7. Replacement staff (short or long term) shall be made aware of the risks, and shall, where circumstances dictate, be trained or supported by additional staff with the appropriate training.
- 10.8. Training shall be updated and/or refreshed as required.

11. Monitoring, Documentation, Reporting and Reassessment

- 11.1. To ensure that the Board's Policy and procedures and its Workplace Violence and Harassment Prevention Training Program

continue to protect workers from workplace violence, the Board shall:

11.1.2. Monitor the levels of workplace violence;

11.1.3. Document all incidents of workplace violence;

11.1.4. Review and reassess the risks of workplace violence as often as is necessary, or at least when workplace conditions substantially change.

11.2. Workers shall report all incidents of workplace violence immediately to the Supervisor/Principal or designate.

11.3. Supervisors/Principals shall report all incidents of workplace violence immediately to the Health and Safety Officer or designate who shall report to the Joint Health and Safety Committee those incidents that result in the person being disabled from performing his or her usual work or requiring medical attention within four (4) working days of the occurrence of the incident.

12. Related Documents

Staff are directed to the following for reporting incidents relating to safe and harassment-free workplaces and learning environments:

- Incident/Accident Investigation Procedure and Form (use this form to report all incidents including violence)
- Protocol for Managing Unsafe Student Behaviour and Forms
- *Education Act. Policy/ Program Memorandum PPM 120*
- OSBIE Online Incident Reporting
- Safe Schools Reporting Forms (Policy/Regulation P/R.SMW.E.6)
- WCDSB School/Worksite Assessment form
- Notification and Acknowledgement of Risk of Workplace Violence and Forms

WCDSB School/Worksite Risk Assessment

***Risk Rating Scale**

Low

One or more potential risks rarely place the employee at risk and/or the risk is minimal.

Rarely – Not a part of the work routine or rarely exposed to the condition.

Minimal – Potential to result in a first aid injury.

Moderate

One or more potential risks occasionally place the employee at risk and/or the risk is moderate.

Occasionally - Recognized part of work activities occurring on an infrequent basis or occasionally exposed to the condition.

Moderate – Potential to result in a lost time or health care injury

High

One or more potential risks regularly place the employees at risk and/or the risk is severe.

Regularly - Part of the normal work routines/assignment or regularly exposed to the condition.

Severe – Potential to result in a fatal or critical injury.

Section A - Location Data

1 School/Building Name

2 Supervisor Name

3 Site Representative Name

4 Regular Daytime
School/Business Hours

Open

Close

5	Evening Hours of building operations
6	Are you completing this questionnaire as a location committee chaired by the Principal / Supervisor?
7	Date the questionnaire was completed

Section B - Location of the School/Building	Yes /No	Risk Level L/M/H	Comments
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8	Is your workplace within 1 km of any known locations that may increase the risk of violence to the community (e.g. gang clubhouse, drug house, safe injection site, etc.)?			
9	Is your workplace within 1 km of any buildings or businesses that are at risk from violent crime (bars, banks, etc.)?			
Rating				

Section C - History of Incidents	Yes /No	Risk Level L/M/H
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Have there been any incidents in the past 3 years of the following (interview staff and worker representatives):

10	Workplace violence from a non-Board employee or student such as intruders, parents, community members, visitors, contractors, etc.			
11	Workplace violence as a direct result of the building location i.e. robbery and or injury at a building nearby			
12	Workplace violence as a direct result of the location being shared with another program (i.e. child care Centre)			
13	Workplace violence or threat of violence where the exterior shape/design of the building, physical features of the parking lot or landscaping around the building were a contributing factor i.e. vegetation around the building and hidden areas			
14	Workplace violence or threat of violence as a result of portables (e.g. hiding spots, staff in isolation, building doors left open for portable access)			
15	Theft, workplace violence or threat of violence as a direct result of community use and or construction			

Have there been any incidents in the past 12 months of the following (interview staff and worker representatives):			
16	Workplace violence or threat of violence incidents as a result of domestic violence. Provide details.		
17	Hold and Secure incidents at this location. Provide details.		
18	Lockdown incidents at this location. Provide details.		
19	Incidents of violence or threats of violence from non-students. Provide details.		
20	Incidents of violence or threats of violence from students. Provide details.		
21	Have there been any medical aids or critical injuries related violence in the workplace?		
22	Have there been any incidents involving weapons? Provide details.		
23	Which employee group has been affected by incidents of workplace violence?		
24	Has the school / work site ever been vandalized?		
25	Have there been any identified risks or issues with staff who regularly work in non-Board locations e.g. TA/EA travelling on school buses, field trip / sporting events, staff at conventions / off-site meetings, home-school visits, Co-op placement visits, etc.?		
	Rating		

**Section D - Access to Building
- Daytime Hours**

**Yes /No Risk Level
L/M/H**

Comments

26	Is the building exclusively used by the Board?		
27	Are building keys distributed with a tracking system? Describe.		
28	Does your location have any location-specific access challenges, procedures or equipment? E.g. - script for buzzer entry, doors frequently left propped open, access code pads, etc.		

29	For schools that are fully secured, where doors are unlocked for operational reasons (e.g., recess, nutrition breaks, etc.) are the doors monitored?		
30	Are posters/signs at the main doors/entrances requiring visitors to report to the main office when they arrive at the location posted?		
31	Is the sign-in log for visitors enforced and followed up on		
32	Are visitors and occasional staff (parents, service providers, etc.) in the building wearing a visitor/volunteer badge/staff badge/ID?		
33	Is the sightline from the main office to the main entrance unobstructed?		
34	If students perform office duties, are they supervised?		
35	Does the school /work site has security cameras?		
36	If applicable, are security cameras in good working condition and placed appropriately? Provide details.		

Rating

Section E - Access to the Building - Evening / Weekend Hours

Yes /No Risk Level L/M/H

Comments

37	Can non-custodial staff access the school/building after hours and/or weekends?		
38	Are after hours access procedures in place?		
39	Are there after-hours permits or other activities held at the workplace not involving Board staff (E.g., Community Use)?		
40	Are doors unlocked during this time and are staff working alone or in isolation?		

41	Are there procedures in place for staff who access parking lots, during early morning/evening/weekend hours?		
42	Are procedures being followed?		
43	Are there afternoon custodial staff at this location who work alone (no other board staff in the building)?		
44	Is there a means to summon immediate assistance (e.g. phone, walkie-talkie, fire alarm)?		
Rating			

Section F - Handling Cash / Valuables	Yes /No	Risk Level L/M/H	Comments
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45	Is there a clear protocol for handling cash collected at the location (e.g. from fundraising, school supplies) to ensure it is tracked and secure?		
46	Is there a clear protocol for valuables, such as electronics, fundraising prizes, staff personal valuables, etc., stored in the school building to ensure they are secure?		
Rating			

Section G - Outside / Parking Lots and Portables	Yes /No	Risk Level L/M/H	Comments
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47	Have cars been broken into or vandalized while in the parking lot?		
48	Are there any areas outside the school where a person could hide due to e.g. overgrown vegetation, pathways, alcoves, building design, outbuildings, etc.?		
49	Are there portables at your school / building?		
50	Are there any concerns at the portables i.e. lighting, location, vegetation, communication to the main office or other?		
51	Is the parking lot adequately lit when staff / community use are accessing the building?		

52	Is the outside of the school / building adequately lit at night (specifically around main entrance / exit doors, garbage bins, outdoor storage areas, equipment)?			
		Rating		

Section H - Co-Located Facility/Child Care Program	Risk Level L/M/H	Comments
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53	Is there a child Centre or program in or attached to the school / building?			
54	Does the daycare or program have its own entrance door?			
55	Does the daycare or program have security measures in place for intruders?			
56	Does the daycare or program have controlled access to the school?			
57	Are the daycare or program staff familiar with the school emergency plan?			
		Rating		

Section I - Classrooms and Work Areas	Risk Level L/M/H	Comments
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58	Do all classrooms have operating communication systems? Describe which type and where are they located?			
59	Are emergency numbers posted?			
60	Are staff able to communicate with the front office and other classrooms to summon assistance?			
61	Are staff able to hear PA system communications while inside/outside the building (e.g. in the play yard) and in the portables?			
62	Is furniture arranged in classrooms and other work areas as not to impede or block the exit?			
63	Is there a room for children with special needs at the school?			

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64	Has the room had a safety review?		
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65	Is there a process in place for staff to hold parent meetings in locations other than portables and isolated areas?		
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Rating

Section J - Interactions with Students

Risk Level
L/M/H

Comments

66	Are there students who currently exhibit aggressive behaviours that would pose a risk of injury for staff at your school / building		
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67	Are staff aware of who these students are (Notification and Acknowledgement of Risk of Workplace Violence Process)?		
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68	Is there specific information regarding sources of violence, triggers and safety measures available to all staff, including occasional staff?		
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69	Are staff trained on BMS or other coping strategies to deal with undesirable behavior?		
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Section K - Procedures

70	Is the Workplace Violence Policy and procedures reviewed annually?		
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71	Is training conducted annually as per Board Procedure?		
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72	Are staff trained on how to report violent incidents?		
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73	Are there procedures in place to respond to a violent situation at the school? Please explain.		
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Rating

Section L - Final Comments

74	Add any additional comments you may have including suggestions for improvement		
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