

AVON MAITLAND DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE
NO. 352

**SUBJECT: PROMOTING POSITIVE STUDENT BEHAVIOUR
INCLUDING PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE AND
BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION**

Legal References: *Education Act: Section 265; Part XIII Behaviour, Discipline and Safety; Bill 157 - Education Amendment Act, 2009 "Keeping Our Kids Safe at School"; The Human Rights Code of Ontario; Regulation 181/98-Identification & Placement of Exceptional Students; Ontario First Nation, Metis & Inuit Education Policy Framework, 2007; English Language Learners: ESL and ELD Programs and Services, 2007; P/PM 128 - Provincial Code of Conduct; P/PM 145 - Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour; P/PM 144- Bully Prevention and Intervention; P/PM 149-Protocol for Partnerships with External Agencies; P/PM 119-Equity and Inclusive Education*

Related References: *Board Policy No. 13 Appeals and Hearings Regarding Student Matters; AP 120 External Collaboration Protocol; AP 138 Positive Workplace Environment; AP 142 Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity; AP 160 Access to School Premises; AP 175 Accidents, Incidents and Occupational Illnesses; AP 266 Field Trips and Excursions; AP 351 Code of Conduct; AP 353 Student Suspension; AP 354 Student Expulsion; AP 355 Student Dress Code; AP 356 Substance Abuse by Students; AP 357 Violence Free Schools; AP 364 Search and Seizure Guidelines; AP 467 Delegation of Authority; AP 495 Volunteer Programs in the Schools; AP 589 Transportation; Police/School Board Protocol (Appendix B, AP 351)*

It is important that all students 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 Avon Maitland District School Board (AMDSB) is committed to building and sustaining a positive school climate for all students in order to support their education and assist them in reaching their full potential.

A positive "school climate is a crucial component of prevention; it may be defined as the sum total of all of the personal relationships within a school. When these relationships are founded in mutual acceptance and inclusion, and modeled by all, a culture of respect becomes the norm." A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, comfortable, and accepted. To help achieve a positive environment, the AMDSB and its schools actively promote and support positive behaviours that reflect our student success, equity and inclusive education, and character development initiatives.

To meet the goal of creating a safe, caring, and accepting school environment the AMDSB supports the use of positive practices, interventions and progressive discipline for inappropriate behaviour. The board considers bullying behaviour, harassment, 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 other grounds as protected by the *Human Rights Code*, as well as inappropriate sexual behaviour, to be unacceptable. The AMDSB authorizes principals, or their delegates, to use progressive discipline consequences in appropriate circumstances, up to and including a referral to the Student Matters, Appeals and Hearings Committee of the Board for expulsion from all schools.

Schools are encouraged to implement proactive positive practices and corrective supportive practices when necessary. Before applying disciplinary measures, the principal/designate and Student Matters, Appeals and Hearings 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.

The following AMDSB documents should be used in conjunction with the *Promoting Positive Student Behaviour Policy*:

- AP 353 Suspension
- AP 354 Expulsion
- AP 467 Delegation of Authority / Teacher-in-Charge

The following documents may also be considered in reference to the *Promoting Positive Student Behaviour Policy*:

- AP 351 Code of Conduct
- AP 357 Violence Free Schools

Definitions

Administrator – includes a superintendent, principal or vice principal with responsibility for the school in question.

Adult Student – is a student who is 18 years of age or older, or 16 or 17 years of age who has removed him/herself from parental control.

Board Employees who work directly with Students - is defined to include administrators, teachers, educational assistants, and technical resource assistants.

Bullying Section 1(1) of the Education Act RSO 1990 states "bullying" means aggressive and typically repeated behaviour by a pupil where,

- 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; ("intimidation")

Bullying

(1.0.0.1) For the purposes of the definition of "bullying" in subsection (1), bullying 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.

Delegate – is the vice principal or a teacher-in-charge delegated authority by the principal to undertake specified duties with respect to pupil discipline in the absence of administration.

Student Matters, Appeals and Hearings Committee – a committee of three (3) or more Trustees designated to determine suspension appeals and recommendations for expulsion.

Harassment – is words, conduct, or action that is directed at an individual and serves no legitimate purpose and which may include remarks, jokes, threats, name-calling, the display of material(s), touching or other behaviour that an individual knows or ought to know insults, intimidates, offends, demeans, annoys, alarms or causes that individual emotional distress and may constitute discrimination when related to grounds protected by the *Human Rights Code*.

Non-board employees who work directly with students on a regular basis- is defined to include external partner employees such as cafeteria staff, public health nurse, police officer, addiction counselor, third party daycare providers and other professional and para-professional service providers who have regular and direct duties with the board's students.

Parent/guardian – where there is a reference to involving or informing a parent/guardian it means the custodial parent or guardian of a minor child who is not an adult-student.

School Community - the school community is composed of staff, students, and parents of the school and feeder schools / family of schools, as well as the community of people and businesses that is served by or located in the greater neighborhood of the school.

Undue Hardship – is the standard for the provision of accommodation, or point to which accommodation must be provided, for a specific pupil by the Board.

1. Promoting and Supporting Positive Student Behavior

- 1.1 In order to support a safe learning and teaching environment in which every student can reach his or her full potential, appropriate action must consistently be taken to address behaviours contrary to the provincial, board, and school codes of conduct. Bullying behaviour, harassment, homophobia, gender-based violence, sexual harassment, and inappropriate sexual behaviour must be addressed.
- 1.2 Prevention and early intervention are important for maintaining a positive school climate. A positive school climate is effected through programs and activities that focus on building healthy relationships, character development, and civic responsibility, and which encourage positive participation of the school community in the life of the school
- 1.3 Each school shall develop and implement a school-wide progressive discipline plan within their school Code of Conduct consistent with the AMDSB policies and procedures and the *Human Rights Code*.
- 1.4 Bullying is a serious matter with wide-ranging ramifications for both individuals and schools in that:
 - Bullying adversely affects a student's ability to learn;
 - Bullying adversely affects healthy relationships and the school climate; and
 - Bullying adversely affects a school's ability to educate its students.
- 1.5 Harassment and bullying will not be accepted on school property, at school-related activities, on school buses, or in any other circumstance (e.g. online) where engaging in harassment or bullying will have a negative impact on the school climate.
- 1.6 Each school will incorporate bullying and harassment prevention and awareness-raising strategies in its school handbooks and code of conduct.
- 1.7 Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan
 - 1.7.1 The board's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is found in Appendix A
 - 1.7.2 The board's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will be posted on the board's website.

- 1.7.3 The board plan will be reviewed every two years in consultation with the Parent Involvement Committee, the Special Education Advisory Committee, the Student Senators, community partners, and school staff.
- 1.7.4 Each school will develop and implement a plan that incorporates the key components of the board plan and share said plan with staff, students and parents via the school website.
- 1.7.5 School plans will be reviewed every two years in consultation with the School Council, staff, and students.

2. Prevention and Awareness Raising

- 2.1 Board employees who work directly with students are expected to support all students in a timely, sensitive and supportive manner and must take seriously all allegations of bullying behaviour, harassment, gender-based violence, homophobia, sexual harassment, and inappropriate sexual behaviour.
- 2.2 Students who disclose or report such incidents shall be supported by the school with the provision of contact information about professional supports, such as community agencies, public health facilities, and telecommunications forums, such as a help-phone-line or website, that the pupil may access directly for information, assistance and/or support in an effort to promote and/or develop healthy relationships (Appendix B)
- 2.3 Procedures must be in place in every school for students to safely report incidents of harassment and bullying in ways that will minimize the possibility of reprisal.
- 2.4 Procedures must be in place in every school for parents (and others) to report incidents of bullying to the school administration.
- 2.5 The board provides opportunities for all members of the school community to increase their knowledge and understanding of such issues as:
 - Development of a human rights strategy
 - Implementation of human rights policies and procedures
 - Bullying and harassment
 - Homophobia
 - Gender-based violence
 - Sexual harassment
 - Inappropriate sexual behaviour
 - Human rights, harassment and discrimination
 - Critical media literacy; and
 - Safe Internet use
- 2.6 The board assists school staff in giving support to students who wish to participate in gay-straight alliances and in other student-led activities that promote understanding and development of healthy relationships. Schools must also engage their school councils and student councils to support these student-led activities.
- 2.7 The board encourages schools and staff to use teaching strategies and to develop and implement curricula to increase student knowledge and understanding, raise awareness and assist in the prevention and intervention of harassment, bullying behavior, gender-based violence, homophobia, sexual harassment, inappropriate sexual behaviour, and any other actions that may have a negative impact on the school community and school climate. Ontario's curriculum provides many opportunities for students to develop an understanding of these topics.

- 2.8 The board supports the use of positive practices for (1) prevention and (2) positive behaviour management. Positive behaviour management practices may include:
- Program modifications or accommodations
 - Class placement
 - Positive encouragement and reinforcement
 - Individual, peer and group counseling
 - Conflict resolution / dispute resolution
 - Mentorship programs
 - Promotion of healthy student relationships
 - Sensitivity programs
 - Safety plans
 - School, board and community support programs; and
 - Student success strategies
- 2.9 Preventative Practices used in our board and schools may include:
- Equity and inclusive education strategies
 - Bullying prevention programs
 - Mentorship programs
 - Peer mediation
 - Conflict resolution
 - Student success strategies
 - Character education
 - Citizenship development
 - Student leadership opportunities and initiatives
 - Promoting healthy student relationship; and
 - Promoting healthy lifestyles
- 2.10 The board recognizes that in some circumstances positive practices might not be effective to address inappropriate student behavior. In such circumstances, the board supports the use of progressive discipline consequences up to and including expulsion from all schools in the board.

3. Progressive Discipline

Progressive discipline is a whole-school approach that utilizes a continuum of prevention programs, interventions, supports, and consequences to address inappropriate student behaviour and to build upon strategies that promote and foster positive behaviours.

- 3.1 Progressive discipline includes the use of prevention and early and ongoing intervention strategies and supports to address inappropriate behaviour. The adult student or the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) are to be actively engaged at every step of the progressive discipline approach.
- Note: The 16 or 17 year old student who has removed himself from parental control must put in writing they are no longer under the control of their parent. The parent/guardian should be contacted to verify the student no longer resides in the same residence as the parent/guardian. The documentation should be placed in the student's OSR.
- 3.2 The range of interventions, supports, and consequences used must be clear and developmentally appropriate, and must include learning opportunities for students in order to reinforce positive behaviours and help students make good choices.

- 3.3 The teacher, principal, or delegate should select the most appropriate response to address the student's behaviour. Where a student has special education and/or disability-related needs, the interventions, supports, and consequences must be consistent with the expectations for the student, including those in the student's Individual Education Plan, Behaviour Management Plan and/or Safety Plan.
- 3.4 The board does not support discipline measures that are solely punitive, or the use of exclusion as a disciplinary measure. Exclusion from the school pursuant to section 265(1)(m) of the Education Act is not acceptable for discipline purposes or as an alternative to discipline, and may only be effected following consultation with the superintendent, in accordance with the Education Act, and consistent with the Human Rights Code.
- 3.5 A teacher, the principal or the vice principal, should utilize early and/or ongoing intervention strategies as appropriate to prevent unsafe or inappropriate behaviours. These may include:
- Oral reminders
 - Review of expectations
 - Contact with pupil's parent(s)/guardian(s)
 - Written work assignment addressing the behaviour that includes a learning component
 - Referral to counseling
 - Consultation between two or more of the parties
 - Peer mentoring
 - Conflict mediation and resolution; and
 - Assigning the student to volunteer services in the school community
- 3.6 The teacher, principal or vice principal should keep a record for each student with whom intervention strategies are used. The record should include the date and nature of the incident, the progressive discipline approach used, the outcome, and the contact made with the parent/guardian unless the student is an adult.
- 3.7 If a student persists to engage in inappropriate behaviour, the principal or delegate may choose to use further progressive discipline strategies to address the infraction. Strategies may include:
- Meeting(s) with the student, parent(s).and principal
 - Referral of student to a community agency for anger management, substance abuse, counseling/intervention
 - Detentions
 - Withdrawal of privileges
 - Withdrawal from class
 - Restitution for damages
 - Restorative justice practices; and
 - Transfer to another class or school
- 3.8 When determining the most appropriate progressive discipline strategies, the following are to be taken into consideration:
- The particular student and circumstances, including consideration of mitigating and other factors, such as impact on a student protected by the Human Rights Code, and whether accommodation to the point of undue hardship is required
 - The nature and severity of the behaviour; and
 - The impact of the inappropriate behaviour on the school climate (e.g., relationships within the school community).

- 3.9 The board and school must consider all mitigating and other factors as required by the Education Act and as set out in Ontario Regulation 472/07. The mitigating factors to be considered to address inappropriate behaviour are:
- Whether the student has the ability to control his or her temper
 - Whether the student has the ability to understand the foreseeable consequences of his or her behaviour; and
 - Whether the student's continuing presence in the school does or does not create an unacceptable risk to the safety of any other individual at the school.
- 3.10 Other factors to be considered are:
- The student's academic, discipline and personal history
 - Whether other progressive discipline has been attempted with the student;
 - Whether the infraction for which the student might be disciplined was related to any harassment of the student because of race, colour, ethnic origin, place of origin, religion, creed, disability, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation or any other harassment
 - The impact of the discipline on the student's prospects for further education;
 - The student's age; and
 - In the case of a student who has an IEP or disability related needs
 - ♦ Whether the behaviour causing the incident was a manifestation of the student's disability
 - ♦ Whether appropriate individualized accommodation has been provided to the point of undue hardship
 - ♦ Whether a suspension is likely to result in aggravating or worsening the student's behaviour or conduct or whether a suspension is likely to result in a greater likelihood of further inappropriate conduct
- 3.11 In all cases where progressive discipline strategies are used, the student's parents/guardians are to be consulted, unless in the opinion of the principal providing the information would put the student at harm and would not be in the student's best interests, or if the student is an adult. Communication with the parent(s)/guardian(s) should include dialogue regarding student achievement and behaviour at every step of the progressive discipline continuum.
- 3.12 The principal or vice-principal should document the progressive discipline strategies used for each student with whom they are utilized. Documentation should include:
- Name of the student
 - Date of the incident or behaviour
 - Nature of the incident or behaviour
 - Considerations taken into account
 - Progressive discipline approach used
 - Outcome; and
 - Contact with the student's parent/guardian (unless the student is an adult).
The *Progressive Discipline Tracking Sheet* (Form 352A) may be used for this purpose
- 3.13 When it is determined by the board that it is necessary to separate students to preserve school safety or to protect a student, it is preferable that the victim not be moved. To support students who are moved to another school:
- A meeting will be coordinated between the schools involved to put in place a transition strategy to identify any additional support(s) and resources that the student may require (e.g. referral to community agency)
 - This meeting should include the receiving teacher(s), and appropriate non-teaching staff who will be working directly with the student

- Staff must be advised of the board policies regarding the confidentiality of the information shared at the transition meeting
- The parent/guardian(s) of the student being moved should be consulted. The parent/guardian of the victim, or in the case where the parent/guardian are not notified, the victim; may be informed the disciplined student is being transferred
- The transfer meeting will occur prior to the day of or on the day the student is transferred (before the student attends class) and the receiving school must be in possession of the student's OSR prior to the transfer meeting taking place

4. Responding to Incidents

- 4.1 The purpose of responding to incidents of inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour is to stop and correct it immediately so that the students involved can learn that it is unacceptable. Behaviour that is not addressed becomes accepted behaviour.
- 4.2 Inappropriate behaviour includes any behaviour that is contrary to provincial, board, and school Codes of Conduct, which disrupts the positive school climate and/or has a negative impact on the school community.
- 4.3 Board employees who work directly with students – administrators, teachers, educational assistants, and technical resource assistants – must respond to any inappropriate and/or disrespectful behaviour that causes a negative impact on the school climate that they have observed or heard during the course of their duties or otherwise while on school property or during a school related event, if, in the employee's opinion, it is safe to respond to the incident. Where other board employees feel it is appropriate to respond to such behaviour they will follow the same guidelines.
- 4.4 For incidents where the board employee who works with students feels it is not safe to respond, he/she is expected to:
- monitor the situation , if in the employee's opinion it is safe to do so, keeping in mind the safety of self and the school community
 - Ask a board employee or member of the school community to inform the principal or delegate of the situation and request assistance; and
 - Inform the principal or delegate in person verbally as soon as possible
- 4.5 Responses shall be made in a timely, supportive and sensitive manner and made in an effort to stop and correct the behaviour in a manner that is developmentally appropriate and takes into consideration any special and/or disability-related needs that the student might exhibit or about which the employee might be aware.
- 4.6 Responses may include one or more of:
- Asking the student to stop the behaviour
 - Identifying the behaviour as inappropriate and disrespectful
 - Explaining the impact of the behaviour on others and the school climate
 - Modeling appropriate communication;
 - Asking the student for a correction of his/her behaviour by restating or rephrasing his/her comments
 - Asking the student to apologize for his/her behaviour
 - Asking the student to promise not to repeat the behaviour
 - Asking the student to explain why and how a different choice with respect to his/her behaviour would have been more appropriate and respectful; and
 - Identifying the application of the Human Rights Code where applicable
- Appendix C gives examples of the above responses

- 4.7 Where, in the opinion of the board employee, the behaviour observed or heard must be considered for suspension or expulsion, the employee must report the behaviour to the principal or delegate at the earliest opportunity.
- 4.8 Given the obligation to respond to inappropriate student behaviour, including behaviour that could lead to a suspension or expulsion, board employees who work directly with students may need to be informed of those behaviour(s) that may present a potential risk of physical harm to school staff or students, as documented as part of progressive discipline in the student's Ontario Student Record (OSR). The principal will make a decision on the extent of information to be shared with staff to ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff. In all cases the information shared should respect the privacy rights of the student in question.

5. Reporting to Principals

The purpose of reporting incidents of inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour is to ensure that the principal is aware of any activities taking place that were observed or heard in the school, on school property or during a school related event for which suspension or expulsion must be considered.

- 5.1 Section 300.2 of Part XIII of the Education Act states that an employee of the board who becomes aware that a student at a school of the board may have engaged in an activity for which suspension or expulsion must be considered, including sexual assault, shall report the matter to the principal as soon as reasonably possible. The employee must consider the safety of others and the urgency of the situation in reporting the incident, but, in any case, must report it to the principal no later than the end of the school day.
- 5.2 In addition to employees of the board, school bus drivers must report such incidents in writing to the principal of the school by the end of the school day.
- 5.3 Other non-board employees who come into direct contact with students on a regular basis (e.g., cafeteria staff, public health nurse, police officer, third party daycare provider), as outlined in subsection 300.4 (5.3) of Part XIII of the Education Act, must be made aware of their responsibility to report such matters to the principal.
- 5.4 School board psychologists and social workers who are in a clinical relationship with a student, must report any incident that must be considered for suspension or expulsion to the principal as soon as it is, in their professional opinion, reasonably possible.
- 5.5 In cases where an immediate action is required, a verbal report to the principal shall be made. A written report must be made when it is safe to do so before the end of the school day.
- 5.6 Where two (2) or more board staff and/or school bus drivers become aware of the same incident, each staff member and/or school bus driver shall make a report to the principal or delegate.
- 5.7 All employee reports made to the principal must be confirmed in writing, using the "Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form - Part I" (Form 352B). In adherence with the Freedom of Information Act and Protection of Privacy Act, the Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form must not be copied by the person(s) reporting. The principal is

required to investigate all reports that are received.

- 5.8 In all cases, the principal must provide the employee who reported the incident with written acknowledgement of receipt of the report, using the “Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form – Part II” (in Form 352B), and must specify the results of the investigation to the teacher or other board employee who made the report, as appropriate. Information that could identify the student(s) involved must not be part of the acknowledgement.
- 5.9 Each report form, Part I and Part II, will be assigned a report number by the principal or vice principal.
- 5.10 If the principal has decided that action must be taken as a result of any incident within the progressive discipline continuum, he or she will file the reporting form with documentation indicating the action taken in the Ontario Student Record (OSR) of the student whose behaviour was inappropriate. The names of all other students that appear on the form, both aggressors and victims, must be removed from the form before it is filed in the student’s OSR.
- 5.11 The Reporting Form Part I must be kept in the OSR for a minimum of one year. If the principal has identified the incident as violent (AP 357 Violence-Free Schools section 2.5.1), the reporting form must be retained in the student’s OSR:
- For **one year** if the student’s suspension was quashed or withdrawn and the record of suspension expunged. Documentation of any other action taken (other than suspension or expulsion) must also be retained for this period;
 - For **three years** if the student was suspended for the violent incident; or
 - For **five years** if the student was expelled for the violent incident.
- 5.12 Where the principal has taken action in the case of more than one student, a copy of the reporting form and documentation indicating the action taken must be filed in the OSR of each student whose behaviour was inappropriate. The names of all other students that appear on the form, both aggressors and victims, must be removed from the form before it is filed in the student’s OSR.
- 5.13 In the case of the victim, no information about the incident must be placed in his or her OSR, unless the parent/guardian of the victim or adult-victim expressly requests that it be placed in the OSR.
- 5.14 In situations where the victim is also an aggressor and the principal has taken some action short of suspension, no information about the incident shall be placed in this student’s OSR if the principal has decided not to notify this student’s parents. However, if the principal has notified this student’s parents, information regarding the incident and the action taken will be placed in the OSR.
- 5.15 If the principal has decided no action is required, and the incident is non-violent, the principal shall retain his/her copy of the Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form - Part I for a minimum of one year, at which time it will be destroyed.

6. Notifying the Parent/Guardian of the Student Who Has Caused Harm

- 6.1 Principals are required to notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student who has caused harm that must be considered for suspension and/or expulsion, unless in the opinion of the principal providing the information would put the student at harm and would not be in the student’s best interest, or if the student is an adult-student.

- 6.2 When notifying the parent/guardian of the student who has caused harm the principal:
- Will invite the parents of the student who has caused harm to have a discussion about the supports that will be provided to their child
 - Will identify the nature of the incident and harm and impact on the victim
 - Will identify the steps taken by the school to protect the safety of the student who caused harm and protect the safety of the victim in the incident
 - Will provide contact information about appropriate support services available
 - Will communicate information about discipline of the student who caused harm
 - Will summarize the information about the support provided to the student(s) in written form; when requested, a copy of the written summary, including a copy of any Safety Plan, shall be provided to the parent/guardian and the regional superintendent; and
 - Will inform the parent/guardian that if they are not satisfied with the supports provided they may contact the regional superintendent to request a review of the supports
- 6.3 When principals decide not to notify parent/guardian(s) of the student who has caused harm they must:
- Document the rationale for the decision (see Appendix D)
 - Notify both the teacher who reported the incident and the regional superintendent of this decision and the reason for the decision
 - If appropriate, inform other board employees (e.g., staff supporting the student) of this decision and the reason for the decision; recommend and or refer the victim to the community agency(s) that will provide appropriate, confidential support; and
 - Provide contact information about appropriate support services available

7. **Notifying the Parent /Guardian of the Victim**

- 7.1 Principals are required to notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student who has been the victim of a student incident that must be considered for suspension and/or expulsion, unless in the opinion of the principal providing the information would put the victim at harm and would not be in the victim's best interest, or if the victim is an adult-student.
- 7.2 When notifying the parent/guardian of the victim the principal:
- Will invite the parents of the students who have been harmed to have a discussion about the supports that will be provided to their child
 - Will identify the nature of the incident and harm and impact on the student
 - Will identify the steps being taken by the school to protect the student's safety, including school-wide prevention and intervention initiatives
 - When appropriate, will recommend and/or refer to community agency(s) and support(s)
 - Will provide contact information about appropriate support services available;
 - May communicate whether formal discipline was or was not imposed on the student disciplined and may communicate if the disciplined student shall no longer be in attendance at the same school as the victim
 - Must say the student was suspended, if that is the form of progressive discipline applied. It is not necessary to disclose or confirm any details of the form of discipline imposed (e.g. number of days)
 - **Will not** disclose the name(s), or any personal information of the student(s) disciplined

- Will summarize the information about the support provided to the student(s) in written form; when requested, a copy of the written summary, including a copy of any Safety Plan, shall be provided to the parent/guardian and the regional superintendent; and
 - Will inform the parent/guardian that if they are not satisfied with the supports provided they may contact the regional superintendent to request a review of the supports
- 7.3 When principals decide not to notify parent/guardian(s) of victims they must:
- Document the rationale for the decision (see Appendix D)
 - Notify both the teacher who reported the incident and the regional superintendent of this decision and the reason for the decision
 - If appropriate, inform other board employees (e.g., staff supporting the student) of this decision and the reason for the decision
 - Recommend and or refer the victim to the community agency(s) that will provide appropriate, confidential support; and
 - Provide contact information about appropriate support services available

8. Communications, Monitoring and Review

- 8.1 All communication will address the fact that building a supportive, safe and caring learning environment through appropriate interactions between all members of the school community is the responsibility of all staff.
- 8.2 The Board and all schools will actively consult with and communicate the progressive discipline policies and procedures to all students, parents, staff members, the Special Education Advisory Committee, school council members, community and agency partners, and appropriate community groups, such as social service agencies, Aboriginal group(s), etc. (Appendix E).
- 8.3 Administrators must communicate to all members of their school community, volunteers, non-board staff and school council via the school Code of Conduct and/or board Code of Conduct, and through e.g. the Student Handbook, signage, presentations or other methods, that harassment and bullying are not acceptable, and appropriate and informed actions will be taken following reported incidents.
- 8.4 Schools and their Safe School Teams have an important role in assisting with the monitoring, review, and improvement of the effectiveness of safe schools policies and procedures.
- 8.5 All schools will conduct anonymous school climate surveys of their students, staff and parents annually, or at the direction of the Safe Schools Superintendent. These surveys must include questions on bullying/harassment related to homophobia, gender-based violence, and sexual harassment.
- 8.6 Principals are required to share the school climate survey results with their Safe School Teams. Issues identified through the school climate surveys are to be used to build strategies in their School Achievement Plan to improve the school climate.

9. Building Community Collaborations

Relationships that engage the whole school community promote a positive school climate and support the progressive discipline continuum.

- 9.1 To facilitate the building of community collaborations schools will:
- Work with agencies and/or organizations in their community that have professional expertise with respect to issues of bullying behavior, harassment, gender based violence, sexual assault, homophobia and inappropriate sexual behaviour; and
 - Have access to a current list of community contacts that will be created and maintained electronically by the board and made available to all schools, staff and students.
- 9.2 Schools shall provide public health units, under the responsibility of the local officer of medical health, the ability to deliver their mandated public health curriculum in consultation with board staff.
- 9.3 The board will work with the Huron-Perth Children's Aid Society to develop and implement annual training for board staff on the duty to report under the Child and Family Services Act.

10. School-Level Plans

- 10.1 Each school must have a Safe Schools Team. Safe School Teams must include at least one student, one teacher, one non-teaching staff member, one community partner, and the principal. An existing school committee can assume this role. The chair must be a staff member.
- 10.2 Each school shall develop and implement a school-wide progressive discipline plan within their school Code of Conduct consistent with the provincial and board Code of Conduct, AMDSB policies and procedures and the *Human Rights Code*.
- 10.3 Each school will revise its school-wide harassment and bully prevention and intervention plans as part of its School Achievement Plan.
- 10.4 When dealing with bullying, each school must provide programs, interventions or other supports for students:
- Who have been bullied
 - Who witness incidents of bullying; and
 - Who have engaged in bullying
- 10.5 Prevention and awareness raising strategies must be aimed at all members of the school community in areas including but not limited to:
- Homophobia
 - Gender-based violence
 - Sexual harassment
 - other forms of discrimination under the Code
 - Harassment and bullying behaviour
 - Inappropriate sexual behaviour
 - Critical media literacy; and
 - Safe Internet use



Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

The Avon Maitland District School Board is committed to working with students, parents, school staff and the broader community to ensure safe and harassment-free learning environments in our schools. Bullying and harassment is not acceptable and it must be addressed in a proactive fashion to reduce its occurrence.

1.0 Definition

Section 1(1) of the Education Act RSO 1990 states "bullying" means aggressive and typically repeated behaviour by a pupil where,

- 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; ("intimidation")

Bullying

(1.0.1) For the purposes of the definition of "bullying" in subsection (1), bullying includes the use of any physical, verbal, electronic, written or other means.

Cyber-bullying

(1.0.2) 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

2.0 Prevention

2.1 As required by legislation, the Board has developed safe schools procedures including:

- a) AP 351 Code of Conduct;
- b) AP 352 Promoting Positive Student Behaviour;
- c) AP 353 Student Suspension;
- d) AP 354 Student Expulsion; and
- e) AP 357 Violence Free Schools.

- 2.2 As outlined in AP 352 Promoting Positive Student Behaviour, the board undertakes school climate surveys every two years. The board uses the aggregate data to align supports for schools related to equity and inclusivity and bullying prevention. Safe Schools Teams use the school-based results to establish a safe schools goal each year as part of the school's Student Achievement Plan. Safe Schools Teams must also develop a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan which is reviewed every two years in consultation with School Council, students and staff.
- 2.3 The Avon Maitland District School Board supports a number of strategies for making students, staff and parents aware of issues related to bullying and harassment including, but not limited to:
- a) Tribes;
 - b) Roots of Empathy;
 - c) Positive Behaviour Support;
 - d) H.O.A.P. (Honesty, Ownership, Apology, Plan);
 - e) The 4th R – Intermediate and Senior; and
 - f) The Virtues Program.
- 2.4 In addition to these programs, schools bring in guest speakers from a variety of organizations and backgrounds to address students on equity and inclusivity, bullying, gender issues and internet safety.
- 2.5 The board has established the “Be A Verb” website as a resource for staff, students and parents on issues related to bullying and harassment.
- 2.6 Student initiated groups, including Gay Straight Alliances, exist in Avon Maitland Schools with an aim to support students in feeling safe and welcome in our schools.
- 2.7 Schools are supported through the board's Cultivating Character initiative with resources located at <http://www.cultivatingcharacter.ca/>. Schools use this information to develop a school climate founded on the board's ten attributes of character: Respect, Empathy, Courage, Compassion, Responsibility, Perseverance, Optimism, Honesty, Fairness and Integrity.
- 2.8 The board and its schools maintain close working relationships with each of the local police services, Huron Perth Centre for Children and Youth (children's mental health), the Perth District Health Unit and the Huron County Health Unit, Choices for Change (addictions counselling), and the Huron Perth Children's Aid Society to provide supports for students and staff. In addition to direct one-to-one supports from agency staff, students also benefit from whole class presentations on topics related to healthy relationships, personal safety, internet use and safety and positive problem solving techniques.
- 2.9 Schools in this board use a “whole school approach” when addressing matters of school culture and climate. The focus is on developing school cultures where positive, pro-social behaviours are expected from all members of the school community and where harassment, bullying and physical aggression is identified and dealt with through progressive discipline strategies (see AP 351). The board and its schools address issues as they arise in collaboration and consultation with students, parents, staff and community agencies when appropriate. The creation and maintenance of a positive school climate is an ongoing process that cannot be achieved by any single program or resource.

3.0 Intervention

- 3.1 AP 351 Promoting Positive Student Behaviour outlines the progressive discipline practices used by schools in this board.
- 3.2 When dealing with allegations of bullying or harassment a principal shall:
 - a) Investigate fully all allegations
 - b) Consult with the parents of the student(s) targeted by the bullying or harassment as well as the parents of the student(s) who are carrying out the bullying or harassment
 - c) Develop individualized plans to support and ensure the safety of the targeted student(s), the student(s) who witnessed the bullying or harassment and the student(s) who initiated the bullying or harassment
 - d) Where necessary, engage community-based agencies to provide additional support to students involved in the situation
 - e) In cases where the bullying or harassment warrants, apply the various levels of progressive discipline outlined in AP 351. In all cases of bullying, the principal must consider the appropriateness of suspension (AP 353) or expulsion (AP 354) as a form of discipline. Principals must consider any mitigating circumstances outlined in the Administrative Procedures before assessing disciplinary measures
 - f) Document appropriately, as outlined in the board's Administrative Procedures, bullying or harassment incidents, the intervention plans undertaken and any discipline applied; and
 - g) Reinforce with students, parents and staff the expectations for appropriate behaviour and provide to them support resources (e.g., <http://www.cultivatingcharacter.ca/> or other web resources) related to their particular situation which will help to mitigate or prevent future incidents

4.0 Communication

- 4.1 This plan shall be posted on the board website and each school website shall have a link to this plan.
- 4.2 The plan shall be communicated to principals at the beginning of each year. Principals shall use this plan as a foundation for developing school-based Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plans. A copy of the school-based plan is to be submitted to the Superintendent of School Operations each time it is reviewed and/or revised.
- 4.3 School-based Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plans shall be posted on the school website and shared with staff, students and school council.

5.0 Review of the Plan

- 5.1 The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan shall be reviewed every two years in consultation with the Parent Involvement Committee, the Special Education Advisory Committee, the Student Senators, community partners, and school staff.
- 5.2 School-based plans shall be reviewed every two years in consultation with School Council, students and staff.



Safe Schools Resources to Support School Staff and Students

- ***Registry of Resources for Safe and Inclusive Schools:***
 - ♦ Provides information about resources which may be suitable for purchase and use in elementary and secondary schools including resources to help prevent bullying/harassment and to promote safe and inclusive schools.
 - ♦ www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teachers/bullyprevention/registry.html
- ***Sample School Climate Surveys:***
 - ♦ The ministry's sample school climate surveys have been expanded to include questions on equity and inclusive education and issues such as gender-based bullying, sexual harassment and homophobia. An online tool is now available for schools to aid in the roll-up of their results.
 - ♦ www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/bullying.html
- ***Ontario Human Rights Commission ("OHRC"):***
 - ♦ The Code applies to disciplinary decisions and policies under the Education Act, and has primacy over the Education Act.
 - ♦ The OHRC has information to help schools and school boards prevent and address discrimination on its website at www.ohrc.on.ca
 - ♦ In particular, see the "Safe Schools Settlements" at www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/news/backgroundedsettlement/view, and the Guidelines on Accessible Education (2004) and the Policy and Guidelines on Race and Racial Discrimination (2005).
- ***Kids Help Phone***
 - ♦ In 2005, the Ministry entered into a 3-year partnership with Kids Help Phone (KHP) to help over 40,000 Ontario kids with "bullying-related" issues by phone and through their online counselling, information and referral services. As a result of this success the partnership has been renewed for an additional 3 years until 2011. Kids Help Phone's telephone counselling is confidential, free, open 24/7 and available throughout Canada.
 - ♦ www.kidshelpphone.ca (also provides links to other resources and supports for youth)
- ***EGALE Resources***
 - ♦ EGALE Canada is developing a web-based forum for students and educators to facilitate discussion, networking, and support those involved in creating and running Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs). Additionally, EGALE is creating a web-based, Ontario specific directory of GSAs. Web-based resources and information to facilitate the creation of and sustainability of GSAs will also be available (www.egale.ca/)
- ***Ontario's Expanded Tele psychiatry Services***
 - ♦ Ontario's tele psychiatry program is a creative solution for increasing access and reducing wait times for children and youth in rural, remote and underserved communities. It uses videoconferencing to provide children, youth and their families or caregivers with access to clinical consultations with a child psychiatrist without having to leave their local communities. (www.children.gov.on.ca/)
- ***A Resource Guide and Online Training Tool for Ontario Schools***
 - ♦ In this forthcoming ministry resource guide, information will be provided for schools on supporting students when responding to issues involving student-to-student sexual relationships, including dating violence and sexual assault.



HOW TO HANDLE HARASSMENT IN THE HALLWAYS IN THREE MINUTES

(From the Toronto District School Board)

- 1. STOP the harassment.**
 - Interrupt the comment/halt the physical harassment.
 - DO NOT pull students aside for confidentiality unless absolutely necessary.
 - Make sure all the students in the area hear your comments.
 - *It is important that all students, whether onlookers, potential targets, or potential harassers, get the message that students are safe and protected in this school.*

- 2. IDENTIFY the harassment.**
 - Label the form of harassment: “You just made a harassing comment/put-down based upon race (religion, ethnicity, abilities, gender, age, sexual orientation, economic status, size, etc.)”.
 - Do not imply that the victim is a member of that identifiable group.
 - A major goal is to take the “spotlight” off the target and turn the focus to the behaviour. Students should realize what was said, regardless of what was meant (e.g., kidding).

- 3. BROADEN the response.**
 - Do not personalize your response at this stage: “At this school we do not harass people.” “Our community does not appreciate hateful/thoughtless behaviour.”
 - Re-identify the offensive behaviour: “This name calling can also be hurtful to others who overhear it.”
 - “We don’t do put-downs at this school” specifically includes those listening, as well as the school community in general. Even if they were “only kidding”, harassers must realize the possible ramifications of their actions.

- 4. ASK for change in future behaviour.**
 - Personalize the response: “Chris, please pause and think before you act.”
 - Check in with the victim at this time: “If this continues, please tell me, and I will take further action. We want everyone to be safe at this school.”
 - Now turn the “spotlight” on the harasser specifically, asking for accountability. Again, be sure not to treat the target like a helpless victim. Rather, plainly give him/her this responsibility on behalf of others.



AP 352: Appendix D

In the event that a principal chooses not to inform the parent or guardian of a student who is the victim of an incident that must be considered for suspension or expulsion, the Principal must make a note in the victim's Maplewood file as follows:

1. Nature of event
2. Rationale for not informing the parent/guardian
3. Date of contact with the school Regional Superintendent
4. Contact, if any, with reporter and other appropriate staff as per section 6.3

Ministry of Education Safe Schools Resources for Parents

The Ministry has materials online and in print to help answer parents' questions about school safety. Schools can use these materials to reach out to parents and promote discussion on this important topic. They can be used in individual interviews with parents, at parent information nights, or other occasions when parents may have questions about various aspects of school safety.

They include:

1. **Making Ontario Schools Safer:** an overview of the changes that have come into effect with progressive discipline, suspension and expulsion.
2. **Bullying: We Can All Help Stop It:** this brochure is available in 22 languages.
3. **A Parent's Guide to the Code of Conduct:** an outline of the roles and responsibilities for school staff, parents, students and community partners.
4. **Progressive Discipline:** an overview of Ontario's new approach to discipline.
5. **Suspension and Expulsion: What Parents Need to Know:** a detailed guide to the suspension and expulsion process.

Copies of any of these documents can be ordered through the Service Ontario website at www.serviceontario.ca/publications using your EDU name and password. Schools who have forgotten or have not received their user name and password, can send an email to webpubont-EDU@ontario.ca.

These documents can also be downloaded at www.ontario.ca/safeschools as a PDF.

In addition to the above materials, schools have received an instructional DVD that enhances the training for school staff. The DVD could also be used as a resource to inform your School Council about the new Safe School policies. The training modules are also available online at bill157.apandrose.com.