

SUPERIOR-GREENSTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Section SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS

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 Procedural Guideline Applies 520

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POLICY

Superior-Greenstone District School Board is committed to establishing and maintaining a safe and secure environment for its students, staff and community where all members of the school community are to be treated with respect and dignity, especially persons in positions of authority.

This policy is written in accordance with the Education Act, Ontario Regulation 472/07, Policy Program Memorandum (PPM): 119 (Equity and Inclusion), 128 (Provincial and School Board Codes of Conduct), 145 (Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour) 144 (Bullying Prevention), *Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017*, and the Superior Greenstone District School Board Code of Conduct.

RATIONALE

1. Superior Greenstone District School Board is committed to the success of every student. A school is a place that promotes responsibility, respect, civility, and academic excellence in a safe, nurturing and welcoming learning environment. All members of the school community, especially people in positions of authority, are treated with respect and dignity.
2. A positive school climate exists when all members of the community feel safe, comfortable and accepted. Staff, students, parents/guardians, school councils and community members work in a cooperative partnership and must share the responsibility for creating and maintaining such an environment that includes civic life of the school community.
3. The promotion of strategies and initiatives such as Student Success and character development, along with the employment of prevention and intervention strategies to address inappropriate behavior, fosters a positive school climate that supports student achievement and the well-being of all students through respect and civility. In addition to Provincial and Board standards, the Code of Conduct is informed by the following principles:
 - i. Effective schools support the development of a safe and positive school environment through leadership, school climate, high expectations for learning, instructional and curriculum focus, assessment and evaluation of student success, parent/ guardian/ community involvement, restorative means to resolve conflict and support and staff development.
 - ii. A positive school climate is a key component of prevention and must be modeled by everyone connected to the school and community creating a culture of respect and dignity. Responsibility for a safe learning environment must be assumed by all members of the school community.

- iii. Improving learning outcomes for all students; develop the skills needed for all students to be positive leaders and self-directed life-long learners.
- iv. The fair treatment of others, regardless of their race, ancestry, place of origin, ethnicity, colour, citizenship, religion/creed, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, family status, marital status, or age, sex, ability and/or any other immutable characteristic or ground protected by the Human Rights Code is an expectation from all school members. Superior-Greenstone District School Board promotes inclusion for students experiencing barriers due to socio-economic status.

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

Overall Expectations

1.0

1.1 Purpose

- Ensures that all members of the school community, especially people in positions of authority, are treated with respect and dignity.
- Promotes responsible citizenship by encouraging appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community,
- Maintains an environment where conflict and difference can be addressed in a manner characterized by respect and civility,
- Encourages the use of respectful dialogue and non-violent means to resolve conflict,
- Promotes the safety of people in the schools,
- Discourages the use of alcohol, illegal drugs, and, except by a medical cannabis user, cannabis.
- Promotes the prevention of bullying in schools.

1.2 Where Applied

- on school property
- on school buses
- at school-related events or activities
- in other circumstances that could have an impact on the school climate
- in a virtual learning environment

1.3 Standards of Behaviour (Respect, Civility, and Responsible Citizenship) All students of the school community **must:**

- Respect and comply with all applicable federal, provincial and municipal laws,
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity,
- Respect differences in people, their ideas and opinions,
- Treat one another with dignity and respect at all times, and especially when there is disagreement,
- Respect and treat others fairly, regardless of, for example, race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability,
- Respect the rights of others,
- Show proper care and regard for school property and the property of others,
- Take appropriate measures to help those in need,
- Respect all members of the school community, especially persons in positions of authority,
- Respect the need of others to work in an environment that is conducive to learning and teaching, including by ensuring that cellphones and other personal mobile devices are only used during instructional time for educational purposes (as directed by an educator), for health and medical purposes and/or to support special education needs.

- Seek assistance from a member of the school staff, if necessary, to resolve conflict peacefully,
- refrain from using discriminatory language, abusive language, or swearing at another person. Accept responsibility for one's own actions and
- Not use personal mobile devices during instructional time except under the following circumstances
 - for educational purposes, when approved by the Teacher
 - or health and medical purposes
 - to support special education needs

1.4 Standards of Behaviour (Safety)

All students of the school community **must not**:

- Engage in bullying behaviours, including cyberbullying
- Be in possession of any weapon, including firearms,
- Cause injury to any person with an object,
- Use any object to threaten or intimidate another person,
- Be in possession of, or under the influence of, or provide others with, alcohol, cannabis or illegal or restricted drugs,
- Inflict or encourage others to inflict bodily harm on another person,
- Commit sexual assault,
- Traffic weapons or illegal or restricted drugs,
- Commit robbery or theft,
- Engage in hate propaganda and other forms of behaviour motivated by hate or bias,
- Commit an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to school property or to property located on the premises of the school, or the property of a member of the school community
- Utter threats.
- Record, take or share non-consensual recordings or photos of members of the school community (including and not limited to virtual or in-person environments)

2.0 Individual Expectations

Principals

It is expected that Principals:

- will develop a School Code of Conduct that aligns with the board and provincial codes.
- demonstrate care for the school community and a commitment to student achievement and well-being in a safe, equitable, inclusive, and accepting learning environment
- hold everyone under their authority accountable for their own behaviour and actions
- empower students to be positive leaders in their school and community
- communicate regularly and meaningfully with all members of their school community
- model the standards of respect, civility and responsible citizenship.

Teachers and other school staff

It is expected that teachers and staff:

- help students work to their full potential and develop their sense of self-worth
- empower students to be positive leaders in their classroom, school, and community
- communicate regularly and meaningfully with parents
- maintain consistent and fair standards of behaviour for all students
- demonstrate respect for one another, all students, parents, volunteers, and other members of the school community
- prepare students for the full responsibilities of citizenship, in particular the skill of respectful communication, both in person and online

- model the standards of respect, civility, and responsible citizenship. This includes modeling appropriate use of personal mobile devices. Educators are not to use personal mobile devices during instructional time, unless explicitly for work-related purposes.

Students

It is expected that students:

- come to school prepared, on time, and ready to learn
- show respect for themselves, and for others, and for those in positions of authority
- contribute to creating learning environments that are safe, equitable, inclusive, and fair
- refrain from bringing anything to school that may compromise the safety of others
- follow the established rules and take responsibility for their own actions

Parents

It is expected that parents:

- are engaged in their child's schoolwork and progress
- communicate regularly with the school
- help their child be appropriately dressed and prepared for school
- ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time
- promptly report to the school their child's absence or late arrival
- become familiar with the Provincial Code of Conduct, the Board's Code of Conduct, and, if applicable, the school's Code of Conduct
- encourage and assist their child in following the rules of behaviour
- assist school staff in dealing with disciplinary issues involving their child

Community partners

Partnerships with members of the community and community-based service providers should be developed and enhanced. Community-based service providers are resources that boards can use to deliver prevention or intervention programs. These partnerships must respect all applicable collective agreements.

Police

The police play an essential role in making our schools and communities safer. The police investigate incidents in accordance with the protocol developed with the local school board and applicable legislation. These protocols are based on the *Provincial Model for a Local Police/School Board Protocol, 2015*, developed by the Ministry of the Solicitor General and the Ministry of Education.

3.0 School Environment

The school environment must be safe so that learning can take place. It is the responsibility of all members of the school community to establish a safe and secure school environment.

The school environment is both physical and social. It includes the school building, its surroundings, the people in it and the way they interact, the material resources, and the extensions of this environment that are necessary for the delivery of the program (e.g., appropriate use of technology, field trips, school buses and extracurricular activities).

3.1 Violence Prevention

Violence prevention must be integrated into the curriculum for all students. It is the joint responsibility of the school, home and community to work together to guide students to become good citizens in a society

that promotes an equitable, safe environment for all.

The Prevention component is guided by the following principles:

- Prevention is the most humane and efficient way to deal with violence, conflict, and acts of aggression,
- The board is committed to promoting appropriate methods of resolving conflict that are safe, culturally responsive (where applicable), and respect the rights of others (e.g. restorative practices, peer mentoring).

3.2 Bullying Prevention and Intervention

Bullying adversely affects healthy relationships and the school climate. Bullying adversely affects the school's ability to educate students and it adversely impacts the student's ability to learn.

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.

Students may attain or maintain power over others in the school through real or perceived differences. Some areas of difference may be size, strength, age, intelligence, economic status, social status, solidarity of peer group, religion, ethnicity, ability, need for special education, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, and race.

Bullying is a dynamic of unhealthy interaction that can take many forms. It can be physical (e.g. - hitting, pushing, tripping), verbal (e.g. name calling, mocking, or making sexist, racist or homophobic comments), or social (e.g. excluding others from a group, spreading gossip or rumours). It may also occur through the use of digital communications. This includes but is not limited to spreading rumours, images, or hurtful comments through the use of e-mail, text messaging, messaging applications, phone conversations, chat rooms, sharing of pictures social media sites (e.g. Facebook Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat etc.) or any other method that allows one person to communicate with another person.

The Education Act defines "bullying" as 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 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, for the purposes of the definition of "bullying" in subsection (1), behaviour includes the use of any physical, verbal, electronic, written or other means.

Cyber-bullying, 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.

Bullying is not accepted in any environment associated with SGDSB. It is not accepted on SGDSB property, at school related activities, on busses, in any online capacity such as social media bullying of cyber bullying, or in any other circumstances that impact student well-being and where there is a negative impact on school climate. Intervention and support will utilize a progressive discipline approach and restorative practices.

3.3 Smoking/Electronic Cigarettes/Tobacco, Cannabis, Nicotine Products

- 3.3.1 The *Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017* prohibits smoking (tobacco and cannabis) and the use of electronic cigarettes (vaping) at schools, on school grounds, and all public areas within 20 metres of these grounds. Anyone smoking or vaping on school property is guilty of an offence and if convicted may result in a fine under the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017*.
- 3.3.1 The *Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017* also prohibits the sale and supply of tobacco or e-cigarettes to anyone under 19 years of age. Anyone who sells or supplies tobacco or an e-cigarette to a student under 19 years of age is guilty of an offence and if convicted may result in a fine under the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017*.
- 3.3.2 SGDSB is committed to honoring and respecting the cultural and spiritual practices of all our community members. In recognition of the significance of traditional ceremonies that incorporate tobacco, we permit its use on school property strictly for ceremonial purposes.
- 3.3.3 Students who are found to be in possession of tobacco, cannabis, electronic cigarettes and nicotine products will be required to surrender items immediately.

3.4 Social Media Using School Equipment

- 3.4.1 access is restricted for all social media platforms on school networks and school devices.
- 3.4.2 Social media platforms can only be used by students at school for educational purposes, directed by an educator.

4.0 Progressive Discipline

Progressive discipline is a non-punitive, whole-school approach that uses a continuum of corrective and supportive interventions, supports and consequences to address inappropriate behaviour and to build upon strategies that promote positive behaviours.

Consequences include learning opportunities for reinforcing positive behaviour and assisting pupils to make good choices.

To meet the goal of creating a safe, nurturing, caring and accepting school environment Superior-Greenstone District School Board supports the use of positive practices as well as consequences for inappropriate behaviour including progressive discipline which includes suspension and expulsion where necessary.

Prevention and early intervention are important for assisting pupils to achieve their potential and for maintaining a positive school environment and are effected through programs and activities that focus on building healthy relationships, character development, and civic responsibility and encourage positive participations of the school community in the life of the school. The range of interventions and supports and consequences must be clear, and developmentally appropriate and include learning opportunities for student in order to reinforce positive behaviours. For students with special education needs interventions, supports and consequences must be consistent with the expectations in the student's IEP and /or his or her demonstrated abilities.

The Board does support the use of suspension and expulsion as appropriate consequences. The Board and school administrators must include all mitigating and other factors as required by the Education Act and set out in Ontario Regulation 472/07 as contained in the Board's policies and procedures for suspensions and expulsions. A student's parent/guardian or the student if 18 or older or 16 or 17 and has removed themselves from parental control disagrees with the decision of a principal to suspend, the student may appeal the principal's decision in accordance with the *Human Rights Code* and the Board's Progressive Discipline and School Safety Procedures and Suspension Appeal

Guidelines. To support students who have been suspended or suspended pending an expulsion hearing, Superior Greenstone DSB requires Principals to create a Student Action Plan for these students that can include an academic and/or non-academic component depending on the length of the suspension.