



AP 367 – STUDENT HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING

BACKGROUND

Saskatoon Public Schools recognizes its responsibility to provide safe, caring and accepting learning environments in our schools. This administrative procedure is directed toward the conduct of students in their interactions with other students. Harassment, intimidation, and bullying are behaviours that can disrupt students' ability to learn and interfere with the school's ability to maintain an appropriate learning environment.

These behaviours may be expressed through intentional written, verbal, or physical acts which can harm a student, damage their property, or are so severe, persistent, or pervasive that they create an intimidating educational environment. Harassment, intimidation, and bullying constitute serious misconduct that warrants appropriate intervention and the implementation of educational programs and administrative measures designed to prevent them.

School personnel and communities need to be especially sensitive to situations facing students whose racial or cultural background, sexual orientation, gender identity, appearance, religion, socio-economic status, or ability might make them targets of harassment, intimidation, bullying, and discrimination.

Each school will have a plan that establishes a culture for learning and addresses incidents of student harassment, intimidation, bullying, racism, discrimination, and violence. This plan will consist of proactive and responsive components and procedures. A classroom environment based on respect and rapport is created by teachers through their interactions with students and by the interactions they encourage and model among students. In a respectful learning environment, all students feel safe, valued, and accepted.

DEFINITIONS

Harassment, intimidation, and bullying are separate but related behaviours that require timely and adequate responses in order to be addressed appropriately. The behaviours can be interconnected; therefore, it is important to consider that it is possible for cases that involve one behaviour to also include others.

1. **Harassment:** Any unwelcome behaviour, physical, verbal, written, or digital directed at an individual's race, religion, sex, gender, age, disability or any other of the grounds of discrimination. The intent or perceived intent is to threaten, intimidate, instill fear, alarm, annoy or belittle a person and could include any unwelcome or uninvited sexual or gender-directed behaviour. Harassment may include but is not limited to, unwelcome remarks, jokes, innuendoes or taunting about a person's body, attire, gender, sexual orientation, racial or ethnic background, place of birth, citizenship, ancestry, age, physical size or weight, religion, marital status, family status or ability. Persistent or repeated harassment is particularly concerning, especially when it continues after clear indications that it is unwelcome.
2. **Intimidation:** Any behaviour, whether physical or verbal/written (including the use of technology), which instills fear in someone as a means of controlling that person. It can include but is not limited to, threats, defacing or stealing property, coercing an individual to do



something dangerous or illegal, extortion (demanding payment or goods for an individual's safety), inciting hatred, or manipulating situations to shift blame to others.

3. **Bullying:** Any willful, repeated behaviour, whether physical, verbal, written, or digital that is used by an individual to maintain power over another individual. It can include, but is not limited to physical, emotional, relational, and psychological bullying. Bullying behaviour can take many forms and can be direct (e.g., hitting, throwing things, verbal taunts, teasing or threats) or indirect (e.g., gossiping, spreading malicious rumours, social isolation, or exclusion from the group). Bullying is persistent behaviour that continues even when it causes harm or is clearly unwelcome.

PROACTIVE EDUCATIONAL PROCEDURES

Student safety in Saskatoon Public Schools is a priority for all stakeholders. School and division policies, procedures and protocols are in place to ensure that learning and work environments are safe, caring, and accepting.

A school environment based on respect and rapport is created by school staff through their interactions with students, staff, and the community and by the interactions adults encourage and model among students. In a respectful learning environment all students feel safe, valued, and accepted.

Positive school climates are created through the following practices:

- Embedding Saskatchewan curriculum outcomes and indicators related to the development of healthy and respectful relationships.
- Using curriculum and other resources to support digital citizenship and promoting digital citizenship as a key component to address cyberbullying.
- Implementing proactive strategies that co-construct, teach, and reinforce appropriate student behaviours.
- Implementing a continuum of positive behaviour supports for all students, taught in classroom and non-classroom settings.
- Using provincial curriculum and recommended resources to teach students how to negotiate disagreements and manage conflict.
- Encouraging all staff members to help stakeholders understand the definitions of harassment, intimidation, and bullying in order to work as partners to help students develop healthy and respectful relationships.
- Maintaining partnerships with parents/guardians/caregivers, the Ministry of Education, Saskatoon Police Service, Restorative Action Program (RAP) and other community agencies to provide support in creating safe, caring and accepting schools.

All Saskatoon Public Schools strive to be naturally open schools. Naturally open schools facilitate the appropriate sharing of information among administrators, staff, students, parents/guardians/caregivers and community partners. It is important that schools use a variety of communication tools to reinforce the shared responsibility of developing safe, caring and accepting classroom and school climates. Students and parents/guardians/caregivers are encouraged to contact the classroom teacher, school counsellor, school administrator or other school staff regarding concerning behaviour.



RESPONSIVE ACTIONS AND PROCEDURES

Saskatoon Public Schools believes that all students have the right to learn and interact in a safe, caring, and inclusive environment. Harassment, intimidation, or bullying behaviour will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in a serious and timely manner that respects the dignity and privacy of students at all times. All members of the school community have a “Duty to Report” incidents and school staff have a “Duty to Respond” to resolve incidents of harassment, intimidation or bullying.

Duty to Report

All members of the school community - including students, staff, parents/guardians/caregivers – have a duty to report any act of harassment, intimidation or bullying.

- Student and parents/guardians/caregiver should report concerns to teachers, school counsellors, school administrators or other school staff.
- Staff should report any act of harassment, intimidation or bullying to school administration immediately.

Duty to Respond

Acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying are not tolerated in Saskatoon Public Schools. Every school has a Safe School Team that will investigate and respond to acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying. This team includes the principal, vice-principal, school counsellor(s) and a member of Saskatoon Police Service, the School Resource Officer.

- Staff will support the student who experienced the act by centering and prioritizing their feelings, needs, and voice.
- Parents/guardians/caregivers of the students involved will be notified.
- Responses will emphasize taking responsibility and accountability for actions.
- Restorative and collaborative approaches to responding will be emphasized after responsibility has been taken.
- School staff will extend efforts to provide learning for the student who committed the act to understand the impact of their actions.
- The views of the student who committed the act must be given due weight in context of the student’s age and maturity, or special considerations such as any formal diagnoses impacting the student.
- The school-based administrator will follow division discipline procedures in accordance with Administrative Procedure 354 – Discipline when implementing any consequences required.
- When incidents of harassment, intimidation, or bullying involve violent behaviour, threats of violence, or behaviour that poses a risk to safety, the school administrator must follow Administrative Procedure 357 – Violence Threat Risk Assessment: Students in addition to this procedure.

Reference: Administrative Procedure 354: Discipline
Administrative Procedure 357: Violence Threat Risk Assessment: Students
PrevNet: Canada’s authority on research and resources for bullying prevention

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