

Yukon Education

Policy Subject: Safe and Caring Schools Policy

Date Passed: January 31, 2008

Policy 1011

Legislation:

Yukon Education Act, Section 39, 41
The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989
Article 2,12,19,28,& 29
Youth Criminal Justice Act
Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Section 2, 15
Yukon Human Rights Act
General Administration Manual, Policy 3.47

Cross Reference:

Threat Assessment Protocol
Gender Equity Policy
Police Investigations in Schools Policy

Policy Statement:

Caring, respectful and safe school environments are essential for children and young people to learn and to achieve healthy personal and social development. Members of the school community commit to building a school culture that fosters respect, diversity and equity.

The Safe and Caring Schools policy is a commitment of the school community to plan, strategize and create a respectful, safe and nurturing educational environment for everyone. Incidents of bullying, harassment, discrimination, intimidation or any unwelcome behavior that degrade a person on the basis of personal characteristics, gender, sexual orientation, race or disability will be addressed in a timely, effective and consistent manner in order to maintain a safe and caring school environment.

The Department of Education, including school administrators and school staff, shares the responsibility with parents, school councils, school committees and school boards and the community to

promote caring respectful and safe school environments.

Principles:

All students and school staff have the right to be treated in a fair, respectful and equitable manner in a safe school environment free from all forms of bullying, harassment and intimidation.

The goal of the Yukon Education system is to work in cooperation with parents / guardians to develop the whole child including the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, cultural potential of all students to the extent of their abilities.

Resources:

The Department of Education provides schools with resources in order to implement this policy, through access to trained departmental staff and professional development for administrators, teachers and other school staff. Numerous material resources are available in the teacher resource library at the Department of Education.

Definitions:**School Community:**

Includes school staff, students, school councils, school committees, school boards, parents and supporting organizations.

Diversity:

Diversity encompasses such factors as age, gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, ability, religion, marital / parental status.

Equity:

Equity in education is achieved when all members of society have fair and equal opportunity to participate in and enjoy the benefits of an education, including the opportunity to experience success while developing the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to contribute as leaders and citizens in society.

The concept of equity goes beyond formal equality where everyone is treated the same, to fostering a barrier-free environment where individuals benefit equally. It recognizes that some people or groups of people may require additional and/or unique approaches in order to achieve equal benefit.

Bullying:

Bullying is a pattern of repeated aggressive behaviour, with negative intent, directed from one person to another, or from one group to another. In many cases bullying occurs when there is a power imbalance.

Repeated bullying behaviors can take many forms and are not limited to; physical (e.g. pushing, tripping), verbal (e.g. name calling, put-downs), social (e.g. social isolation, gossip), intimidation (extortion, defacing property or clothing) or cyber bullying (threats or harmful and demeaning text messages, photos or videos distributed or published to the internet).

Harassment:

Harassment consists of unwelcome comments, actions or material directed at or offensive to another person in which the harasser knows or ought to reasonably known is unwelcome.

Discrimination:

Discrimination consists of being mistreated or treated differently, unequally or unfairly on the basis of an identified group membership which may include: race, ethnic origin, colour, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, marital/family status or disability.

Sexual Harassment:

Sexual Harassment means any conduct, comment, gesture or contact of a sexual nature:

- a) that might reasonably be expected to cause offense or humiliation; or
- b) that might reasonably be perceived as placing a condition of a sexual nature on employment or on any opportunity for training or promotion.

Abuse of Authority:

Abuse of authority means an individual's improper use of power and authority inherent in the position held, by means of intimidation, threats, blackmail or coercion.

Roles and Responsibilities

Administrators, in consultation with their school communities, will develop a school based policy that includes related practices for

dealing with bullying and harassment.

This school based policy will be reviewed on a regular basis to determine what is working and to determine what needs to be strengthened in order to build a safe and caring school.

School staff will teach and model positive ways to solve problems and seek to develop the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, cultural and aesthetic potential of all students, to the extent of their abilities, so that students may become productive, responsible, caring and self reliant members of society.

Standards and Procedures:

When bullying, harassment or intimidation occurs or is reported, the following steps will be followed to deal with the issue:

1. The school administration, classroom teachers and school staff will respond by providing a clear message that bullying, harassment, discrimination and intimidation will not be tolerated.
2. The school administration or teachers will listen, investigate, offer support and determine an appropriate course of action.
3. A description of the incident including any actions taken should be documented. The teacher and the administration, in accordance with the school policy, will determine where the documentation will be stored in the school.
4. Documentation will be stored for at least one year and then will be disposed of, unless there an active investigation or formal complaint is underway.
5. If necessary, teachers will communicate with the administration and the administrator shall determine if parents need to be contacted to inform them of the incident and how it is being handled.
6. A written action plan will be developed, where necessary, and given to the concerned parties.
7. Efforts to address the situation will continue until the situation is resolved.
8. Procedures for suspension will follow the school rules and the *Education Act*, and serious cases will be discussed with the Superintendent.
9. If necessary, administration will involve the police and or

other public agencies when there is a risk to student or staff safety, in accordance with the *Policy Investigations in the Schools Policy*. In all cases the Administrators must make a decision in the best interests of all the students and staff.