

Algoma District School Board Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

Bullying adversely affects healthy relationships, the school climate, and a school's ability to educate its students. Bullying prevention and intervention requires a whole school approach where everyone has a role. All members of the school community have responsibility for bullying prevention and for addressing bullying when it occurs. All members of the school community shall uphold the Standards of Behaviour as outlined in the Provincial Code of Conduct and Board Policy.

All schools must implement the Board's bullying prevention and intervention plan. In developing school-level procedures, the principal will clearly define the role of school administration, teachers, staff, parents/guardians and students in bullying prevention and intervention.

1.0 Roles and Responsibilities

1.1 Board:

The Algoma District School Board will develop confidential school climate surveys for students, staff and parents/guardians to be utilized by schools that incorporate questions related to bullying. Data will be shared with schools.

The ADSB will provide annual and ongoing training for all teachers and other staff including:

- bullying prevention and strategies for promoting a positive school climate;
- curriculum-linked culturally responsive and relevant pedagogy strategies to provide resources and support needed to disrupt and dismantle systemic barriers and to address all forms of bullying;
- resources to support pupils who have been bullied;
- strategies to support pupils who witness incidents of bullying;
- resources to support pupils who have engaged in bullying;
- procedures that allow pupils to report incidents of bullying safely and in a way that minimizes the possibility of reprisal;
- procedures that allow parents/guardians and other persons to report incidents of bullying;
- the use of disciplinary measures in response to bullying;
- procedures for responding appropriately and in a timely manner to bullying; and
- matters to be addressed in bullying prevention and intervention plans.

1.2 Staff:

All staff members of the Algoma District School Board will:

- model caring, respectful interactions;
- raise awareness of bullying behavior and its long-term effect on all students;
- recognize and promote that creating a positive school climate is key in the prevention of bullying behaviours in schools;
- develop and share a clear and developmentally appropriate definition of bullying behavior, based on ADSB policy;
- provide support to new students to ensure that they understand expectations and routines;
- provide opportunities for positive student leadership for all students;
- encourage students to report bullying behaviours;
- teach students the difference between tattling/ratting (getting someone in trouble) and telling (helping someone who is in trouble);
- develop a safe and anonymous way for students to report bullying;

- take every report of bullying seriously;
- respond to all incidents of bullying, if it is safe to do so in their opinion, by labelling and intervening quickly to any bullying behavior of which they are aware;
- engage bystanders – teach skills needed to deal with bullying situations positively and safely;
- work with students and parents/guardians to resolve bullying issues in a timely and developmentally appropriate manner;
- teach students pro-social behaviours and prompt and reinforce them throughout the school day;
- provide intervention and support to assist students who engage in bullying behaviours to change their behaviours;
- communicate to students and parents/guardians that a student who is engaged in bullying conduct will be subject to a range of interventions, including suspension or expulsion;
- develop a safe intervention plan for students who are victims of bullying;
- report incidents of bullying to the principal or vice-principal;
- assist in the administration of the confidential student school climate survey (e.g. ADSB Well-Being Survey).

1.3 Students:

All students within the Algoma District School Board will:

- treat everyone with dignity and respect;
- raise their awareness and understanding of bullying behavior and its long-term effects;
- realize that bullying behavior is never acceptable;
- report incidents of bullying behavior whenever they see it;
- engage in positive leadership opportunities;
- provide support to new students or students who are alone/friendless;
- endeavor to disengage from being a bystander to bullying behaviours;
- actively support their school's bullying prevention and intervention programs;
- support a positive school climate; and
- be ambassadors of good character.

1.4 Parents / Guardians:

All parents/guardians of students within the Algoma District School Board are expected to:

- treat everyone with dignity and respect;
- report incidents of bullying behavior whenever they see it;
- raise their awareness and understanding of bullying behavior and its long-term effects;
- in partnership with school staff, work to address and rectify incidents of bullying behavior (whether the parent/guardian of the student who is victimized, who engaged in bullying behavior, or who acted as a bystander to bullying incidents);
- create awareness among their children/youth that bullying is never acceptable;
- endeavor to get appropriate social/emotional help for their child if necessary;
- support their school's anti-bullying initiatives;
- encourage their children/youth to report incidents of bullying behavior;
- model caring and respectful interactions; and
- teach their children/youth to be respectful and caring individual(s).

2.0 Prevention and Intervention Strategies

2.1 School Prevention Strategies

The Algoma District School Board is committed to providing learning opportunities that promote social and emotional learning, as well as academic and physical growth.

- a) The principal is responsible for ensuring the implementation of bullying prevention strategies that include, but are not limited to:
 - i) anti-bullying professional learning for school staff and volunteers (e.g. responsibilities, definition, prevention, intervention, reporting);
 - ii) include bullying prevention as an item on staff meeting agendas;
 - iii) anti-bullying sessions for students and parents/guardians;
 - iv) cyber-bullying awareness sessions for students and parents/guardians;
 - v) character development programs based on the 12 attributes identified in the ADSB Character Education Initiative;
 - vi) restorative practices; and
 - vii) positive school discipline strategies.
- b) A positive school climate is essential to the prevention of bullying behaviour. A positive climate is developed when administrators and teachers:
 - i) Promote the development of supportive and inclusive relationships among the staff and student body and with parents/guardians and the broader community;
 - ii) provide and support training for students and staff members that raises awareness of issues related to bullying;
 - iii) know and follow Board policies and administrative procedures related to safe and inclusive schools;
 - iv) reinforce bullying prevention messages through programs addressing discrimination based on such factors as age, race, sexual orientation, gender, faith, disability, ethnicity, and socio-economic disadvantage;
 - v) post, communicate, and enforce clear codes of student conduct;
 - vi) assess the awareness and scope of bullying at the school through school climate surveys;
 - vii) ensure that students are supervised in all areas of the school and on the school grounds, with particular attention being given to any areas where bullying has been identified as a problem in a particular school setting;
 - viii) find a variety of ways to reward students for positive, inclusive behaviour and to support them in being positive leaders in their school community;
 - ix) encourage parents/guardians to participate and become engaged in the life of the school and to volunteer to assist in school activities and projects; and
 - x) involve school councils in the development of anti-bullying initiatives and the ongoing implementation of prevention programs.
- c) When communicating with parents/guardians and school councils, staff members will provide information about bullying, including ways to support a child who reports being bullied or witnessing bullying.
- d) The staff and parents/guardians can work together to teach children, not only about the dangers of being aggressive and striking back at a bully, but also about the need to be assertive and to develop age-appropriate independence. This independence can contribute to self-confidence and may deter bullies who often seek out timid victims.

- e) Administrators and teachers must regularly reinforce the message that bullying will not be tolerated in the school and that everyone must work together to create a positive learning environment.

2.2 Classroom Prevention Strategies

- a) Teachers will incorporate teaching strategies that focus on healthy relationships by including bullying prevention throughout the curriculum in daily classroom/school teaching.
- b) Teachers will provide opportunities for students to talk about bullying. They will involve students in defining unacceptable behaviours and the harm they cause, and in establishing classroom rules against bullying and peer harassment.
- c) Teachers will provide and regularly reinforce clear expectations for appropriate student behaviour.
- d) Teachers will promote cooperation by assigning projects that require collaboration. Such cooperation teaches students how to compromise and how to assert without demanding. Teachers will vary the grouping of participants in these projects and monitor the treatment of participants in each group.
- e) Teachers will ensure that students know what to do when they experience or observe a bullying confrontation. Knowing the process to follow gives the students confidence and a feeling of security.
- f) Students are encouraged to report any incidents of bullying to school staff members as soon as these incidents are witnessed. In addition, students are expected to make contributions to maintain a positive school climate.

2.3 School Intervention Strategies

- a) School administrators and teachers will encourage students to make a confidential report if they are the victims of bullying or are aware of another victim or victims. Reporting methods are designed to minimize the possibility of reprisal. Such reports are investigated and resolved as soon as possible, consistent with administrative procedures related to student discipline.
- b) Principals will establish and communicate a process for parents/guardians to follow if they feel their child is being bullied.
- c) Interventions are conducted in ways that are consistent with a progressive discipline approach. The strategies will range from early and ongoing interventions to more intensive interventions and consequences in cases of persistent bullying.
- d) Teachers are expected to report any incidents of bullying to the principal in a timely manner.
- e) School intervention strategies include, but are not limited to:
 - review of expectations
 - oral reminders
 - written work assignment with a learning component
 - detention
 - contact with parents/guardians
 - mediation/conflict resource including restitution and/or other restorative measures
 - referral to community agency for counseling, anger management, substance abuse program
 - withdrawal from class
 - meeting with parents/guardians
 - short-term suspension or long term suspension
 - expulsion

- f) Bullying is one of the infractions for which a principal may, or must in some circumstances, consider suspension or expulsion from school. The principal will take into account any mitigating or other factors, which may apply.
- g) The school will assist in providing access to programs, interventions or other supports for pupils who have been bullied, pupils who have witnessed incidents of bullying and pupils who have engaged in bullying. Programs, interventions and other supports may be provided by social workers, psychologists or other professionals who have training in similar fields, as determined by the board.
- h) For a student with special education needs, interventions, supports, and consequences must be consistent with the student's strengths, needs, goals, and expectations contained in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). Ongoing intervention and support may be necessary to promote and sustain positive student behaviour.
- i) Principals are required to inform parent/guardian of students who have been harmed as a result of any serious incident for which suspension or expulsion must be considered. Communication will include the nature of the activity and harm to the student, steps being taken to protect the student's safety, and supports being provided to the student.
- j) Principals are required to inform the parent/guardian of students who have engaged in serious student incidents. Communication will include the nature of the activity and harm caused to the other student, disciplinary measures taken in response to the activity, and supports being provided in response to the student's activity.

2.4 Classroom Intervention Strategies

- a) Teachers will take immediate action when bullying is observed. Teachers will let students know that they care and will not allow anyone to be mistreated. By taking immediate action in dealing with the bully, educators support both the victim and the witness or witnesses.
- b) Dealing with a bully does not necessarily mean confronting the bully in front of his or her peers. Teachers will usually confront the bully in private. Challenging a bully in front of his or her peers may actually enhance the bully's status and lead to further aggression.
- c) Teachers or the principal, as appropriate, will notify the parents/guardians of both victims and bullies when a confrontation occurs, and seek to resolve the problem quickly at school. They will refer both victims and aggressors to counselling whenever appropriate.
- d) Teachers provide protection and support for bullying victims whenever necessary, including creating a buddy system whereby students have a particular friend or older buddy on whom they can depend.
- e) Teachers listen receptively to parents/guardians who report bullying, and investigate reported circumstances so that immediate and appropriate action can be taken.
- f) Teachers avoid attempts to mediate a threatening bullying situation alone if they are uncomfortable. They will inform the principal who will address the situation as appropriate, including contacting police services.

3.0 Ongoing Monitoring and Review

- a) System administrators will monitor and review the prevention and intervention strategies to determine their effectiveness. This process will include a regular cycle of analysis of reported bullying and violent incidents and the school climate through anonymous surveys of the students, staff, and parents/guardians.
- b) Schools must develop and implement school-wide bullying prevention and intervention strategies, including strategies for training, communication and outreach, and monitoring and review processes.

4.0 School Well-Being Team

- a) The principal is responsible for the establishment of a School Well-Being Team, formerly called the Safe Schools Team, which will be composed of at least one student (where appropriate), one parent/guardian, one teacher, one support staff member, one community partner, and the principal. The team will have a staff chair.
- b) The responsibility of the School Well-Being Team is to foster a safe, inclusive and accepting school climate by advising the principal on the development and annual review of strategies related to well-being issues, including monitoring of prevention and intervention programs and procedures related to bullying.
- c) Other school teams and committees (e.g. healthy schools, equity, safe schools, etc) may be incorporated into the School Well-Being Team.