



SECTION 6: OPERATIONS

POLICY CODE: 6.49.03

TITLE: **BULLYING PREVENTION AND
INTERVENTION POLICY**

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Supporting Policies:

- 6.49 Safe Schools Policy
- 6.49.01 Board Code of Conduct Policy for Safe Schools (*Currently being reviewed and renumbered*)
- 6.49.02 Progressive Discipline Policy Including Suspension and Expulsion
- 6.49.04 Electronic Devices Policy

Policy Statement

The schools of the Algoma District School Board are committed to establishing a positive school climate characterized by positive personal relationships founded in mutual acceptance and inclusion, and modeled by all. A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, comfortable, and accepted.

Given that:

- Bullying adversely affects students' ability to learn;
- Bullying adversely affects healthy relationships and the school climate;
- Bullying adversely affects a school's ability to educate its students.

Bullying will not be accepted on school property, at school-related activities, on school buses, or in any other circumstance (e.g. online/through technology or other electronic means) where engaging in bullying will have a negative impact on the school climate.

Definition(s)

For the purposes of developing and implementing Board policy and school-level plans on bullying prevention and intervention, the following definition of **bullying** will apply:

“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.” (Ministry of Education, Policy/Program Memorandum No. 144)

Bullying is a dynamic of unhealthy interaction that can take many forms including, but not limited to:

- Physical (e.g., hitting, pushing, tripping);
- Verbal (e.g., name calling, mocking or making sexist, racist, or homophobic comments);
- Social (e.g., excluding others from a group, spreading gossip or rumours);
- Technological (e.g., spreading rumours, images, or hurtful comments through the use of e-mail, cell-phones, text messaging, Internet websites, or other technologies).



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1.0 Prevention Strategies

All members of the school community shall uphold the Standards of Behaviour as outlined in the Provincial Code of Conduct and Board Policy.

Daily classroom and school-wide teaching strategies will include a focus on developing healthy relationships, bullying prevention, and promoting the 12 attributes identified in the ADSB Character Development Initiative.

2.0 Intervention Strategies

Intervention and support should be consistent with a progressive discipline approach. The strategies could range from early interventions to more intensive interventions in cases of persistent bullying, with possible referral to community or social service agencies. Ongoing intervention and support may be necessary to sustain and promote positive student behavior. 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 his or her Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Board employees who work directly with students – including administrators, teachers, and non-teaching staff (including staff in social work, child and youth work, psychology, and related areas, and educational assistants) – must respond to any student behavior that is likely to have a negative impact on the school climate. Such behavior includes all inappropriate and disrespectful behavior at any time at school and at any school-related event if, in the employee's opinion, it is safe to respond to it, in accordance with subsection 300.4 of Par XIII of the Education Act and Ontario Regulation 472/07. Such inappropriate behavior may involve bullying.

Schools shall establish a School-Level Plan outlining procedures that:

- allow students to report bullying incidents safely and in a way that will minimize the possibility of reprisal;
- define the responsibilities and roles of the principal, teachers, parents and students;
- address incidents of bullying in a timely manner;
- provide support for students who have been bullied, who have bullied others or who have been affected by observing bullying;
- incorporate teaching strategies that focus on healthy relationships by including bullying prevention throughout the curriculum in daily classroom/school teaching;
- a process for parents to follow if they feel their child is being bullied.

Schools may reference the ADSB Bullying Prevention School Level Plan template located in the Administrative Procedures.

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INTERVENTION POLICY****PAGE: 3 OF 4****3.0 Training Strategies for Members of the School Community**

The Algoma District School Board will provide training opportunities for all administrators, teachers, and educational assistants on bullying prevention and intervention, including ways of responding to gender-based and homophobic bullying that are consistent with equity training on cultural sensitivity, respect for diversity, and on special education needs.

Schools will be encouraged to make training available to other individuals who have significant contact with students (e.g., other school staff, school bus operators, volunteers).

4.0 Communication and Outreach Strategies

The Algoma District School Board will openly communicate its policy, intervention and prevention strategies as well as the definition of bullying to students, parents, teachers and other school staff, school councils, volunteers, and school bus operators/drivers.

5.0 Reporting of Incidences

Any employee of the board and other non-board employees who come into direct contact with students on a regular basis (i.e. bus drivers, community agency representatives, parent volunteers, coaches etc.) who become aware that a student is engaging in bullying will respond to the behavior, if in the employees' opinion it is safe to do so, and shall report the matter to the principal as soon as reasonably possible using the reporting procedures established by the board.

6.0 Monitoring and Review

Every school will conduct a school climate survey on a two-year cycle. The survey will be used to provide data for the school to conduct an analysis of school climate as well as to provide indicators for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of the school's bullying prevention plan.



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7.0 Safe Schools Teams and School-Level Bullying Prevention Plans

Each school must establish a safe schools team comprised of at least one student (where appropriate), one parent, one teacher, one support staff member, one community partner and the principal. The school team is chaired by a staff member. An existing school committee (e.g. healthy schools committee) can assume this role.

The school team must complete a school-wide bullying prevention and intervention plan as part of their School Improvement Plan. Components of these plans must include the following:

- The definition of bullying
- Prevention and awareness-raising strategies
- Intervention and support strategies, including plans to protect victims
- Reporting requirements
- Training strategies for members of the school community
- Communication and outreach strategies
- Monitoring and review processes

The School-Level Plan must be reviewed on a yearly basis and a copy of each school's plan is to be submitted to the appropriate Superintendent.