

School District #64 (Gulf Islands)

PROCEDURE

- Procedure Number: 524
- Procedure Name: Violence Prevention
- Revised: 2008 12 03

Violence Prevention

A. Violence Prevention Education Program

Violence prevention education includes, but is not limited to, skill development for students and staff in conflict resolution, anger management, assertiveness training, developing healthy relationships, and developing self-esteem.

- (1) The Planning program may be utilized to bring violence prevention education into the classroom.
- (2) Teachers are encouraged to examine existing curriculum to try to find ways to integrate violence prevention education into learning outcomes so students have the opportunity to practice positive, non-violent social skills.
- (3) The district encourages the use of media, illustrative material, or forms of behaviour which portray healthy non-violent and non-sexist life styles.
- (4) We encourage instructional methods which reflect the diversity of the student population. Positive role models and accomplishments of both men and women should be included in teaching materials. Inclusive, gender-free language is encouraged in the classroom.
- (5) The school community is encouraged to work cooperatively with the broader community to address violence and abuse.
 - (a) Appropriate social service agents will be encouraged to work with the schools to enhance our work in violence prevention.
 - (b) The district encourages partnership projects with appropriate community agencies to prevent violence and abuse.

B. Early and Ongoing Identification for Prevention

Students at risk of being bullies and/or victims will be identified and helped at the earliest possible stage.

- (1) Following identification, early intervention will follow to help students develop positive and appropriate methods of communication and problem-solving skills.
- (2) Peer counselling and peer mediation programs are encouraged in all schools, offering students and youth the opportunity to take a leadership role in violence prevention.
- (3) Schools are encouraged to develop incentives for students, youth, and staff who do exhibit leadership and peacemaking skills in violence prevention. These may include course credit for Planning, special recognition and honours.

C. Accountability

A system of accountability will be established to oversee the ongoing implementation of the violence prevention policy, on an individual school basis and on a district-wide basis.

I. School-Based

- (1) The Principal of each school may form a violence prevention committee comprised of a minimum of two people, and could include the Principal, and staff member(s).
- (2) A school-based violence prevention committee would monitor the violence prevention program and report to the Program Delivery Task Force at least once per year, by the end of the academic year.
- (3) Information about the (local) school violence prevention program would be distributed in each school by the Principal, to staff, students, and parents or guardians.
- (4) A School Safety Suggestion box (a locked box) could be placed in each school to receive **confidential** written suggestions and concerns about school safety. (The school violence prevention committee reviews all submissions and with follow up as appropriate. When warranted, the concerns will be brought to the attention of the Superintendent.)
- (5) Each school in the district will develop a Code of Conduct that meets or exceeds the standards in the *Provincial Standards for Codes of Conduct Order (M276/07)*.
- (6) Principals will ensure that Codes of Conduct are reviewed annually and amended as needed in a manner that complies with the standards in the *Provincial Standards for Codes of Conduct Order (M276/07)*.
- (7) Either Codes of Conduct or the school-based procedures and practices that support their implementation must clearly address discrimination based on sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation. (See Policy 617 [*LGBTTIQQ Diversity*] and supporting procedures).

II. District-Based

- (1) The Program Delivery Task Force will report on what each school in the district has accomplished regarding violence prevention programs annually at a public School Board meeting and make copies of that report available to the general public.
- (2) The Superintendent or his/her designate will function as the School Safety Advocate, i.e. all concerns which contain reasonable and probable grounds of contravening Policy 524 must be brought to the attention of the Superintendent or his/her designate as School Safety Advocate.

D. Procedures for Dealing With Violent or Abusive Incidents

Procedures must be in place in each school in order to deal with incidents of violence or abuse, effectively, constructively, consistently, and fairly.

- (1) Staff, students, and parents or guardians at each school will develop a set of disciplinary procedures compatible with the district policy for dealing with the range of violent incidents that could occur in the school environment, including incidents that may involve students, staff, or visitors.
- (2) Any person who has reason to believe that a student has been or is likely to be physically harmed, sexually abused or sexually exploited, sexually harassed, or needs protection due to the specific circumstances outlined in the Child, Family and Community Services Act is **legally responsible to report** the matter to a child protection worker and the Superintendent of Schools. In British Columbia, a student is anyone under the age of 19. Joint reports, e.g. by principal and teacher discharge this responsibility for both.
- (3) The following incidents must be reported to the police and to the Superintendent of Schools:
 - Possession of weapons
 - Sexual assault
 - Stalking
 - Threats of serious physical harm
 - Physical assault causing serious bodily harm
 - Robbery and extortion
 - Hate motivated violence

- Vandalism causing extensive damage
 - Bomb threats and pulling a fire alarm without cause
- (4) Strategies for dealing with the aftermath of an incident of violence or abuse must be in place at each school.
- (a) The Principal of the school where an incident takes place will oversee district and community support services for the victim and perpetrator in consultation with the school violence prevention committee.
 - (b) Incidents which could result in a liability claim against the district must be reported to the School Protection Program, Risk Management Branch. Serious incidents need to be reported immediately.
 - (c) Wherever possible, a team-approach to safety, security, and support for the victim will be set up. Protection of the student is paramount, and can include a range of options such as a change of class or an independent review of grades.
 - (d) The Principal may need to oversee the re-entry of the perpetrator, including links with youth services, appropriate counselling services, and/or educational programs. (Underlying problems contributing to the violent incident such as abuse in the home, substance abuse, sexism or racism may need to be considered).
 - (e) Respect for a student's need for privacy and confidentiality will be maintained within the constraints of conducting an investigation.
 - (f) All schools are required to give students information on where to seek help, including local services, the Kids Helpline, and the Child, Youth and Family Advocate.