



*"Inspire learners, Integrate sustainability,
Involve community"*

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 64

POLICY 212

Violence and Harassment Free District

Section: Learning and Working Environments

Dates of Revisions: March 12, 2014, June 13, 2018, May 8, 2019

Date of Adoption and

Resolution Number: November 10, 2021 - 98/21

The School District No. 64 Board of Education believes that safe, caring and orderly schools are characterized by learning and working environments free from violence, discrimination, bullying/cyber-bullying, harassment and intimidation.

Healthy schools require that the relationships between the adults involved in the education of children (employees, parents, and members of the public having contact with schools) are governed by courtesy, respect, and consideration. The board recognises that issues of violence and harassment (both broadly defined) are best addressed through local solutions based on widely held understanding of best practice. Therefore, the board is committed to

1. creating and maintaining respectful learning and working environments in which people respect one another regardless of their roles or levels of responsibilities and are treated and treat each other respectfully and professionally in their interactions;
2. promoting and sustaining such environments through education and skill-building.

It is the purpose of this policy and guiding procedure to address the issue of violence and harassment for all School District employees, parents and members of the public who have contact with the schools and the District.

The Board of Education believes everyone has a role to play in promoting a violence- and harassment-free district where diversity is accepted and understood (Policy 215 Diversity). It is therefore important to the board to ensure that interactions between its employees, parents, and the public at large are marked on all sides by respect and consideration.

Parents and the public who have contact with the District share the same responsibilities and enjoy the same protections as employees in terms of their experience in our schools. The board expects the relations between employees and all those they come in contact with to be free from any behaviour that can be identified as being violent, discriminating, harassing, or intimidating in nature. Such behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Policy:

1. The board
 - a. defines **violence** as improper behavior that includes the attempted or actual exercise of any physical force so as to cause injury, and includes any threatening statement or behaviour which causes a person to perceive risk of personal injury.
 - b. uses the term **violence** in its broadest sense, to indicate a range of behaviours including physical and verbal violence and abuse, discrimination, bullying/cyberbullying, harassment and intimidation.
 - c. defines **bullying** as intentional and repeated behaviour that makes others feel uncomfortable, scared, or hurt.
 - d. defines **harassment** as any inappropriate conduct or comment by a person who knows or reasonably ought to know that this would cause another person to be humiliated or intimidated.
 - e. defines **discrimination** as the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people based on their race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, family status, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender/gender identity, political belief or conviction of a criminal or summary conviction offence unrelated to their employment. In this policy, all references to “sexual orientation or gender identity/minority/expression” persons (SOGI) will include, but are not limited to, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, two-spirit, intersex, queer or questioning persons, persons who are labeled as such whether they are or not, and persons with immediate family members who identify as a sexual or gender minority.
Gender nonconforming: A term that often refers to those who express gender in ways that differs from societal expectations of the sex and gender assigned to them at birth.
2. The board expects that all students, employees and others associated with the district will treat each other fairly, equitably and respectfully.
3. Violence in any of its forms is neither acceptable nor tolerated in the learning and working environments of School District No. 64.
4. Reasonable actions taken by a person in a supervisory role (for example, a school principal, teacher, or workplace supervisor) are not, when consistent with the expectations placed on a person in that role, acts of violence in any of its forms.
5. Expressing differences of opinion, offering constructive feedback, guidance, or advice about behaviour and performance, and making a legitimate complaint about someone’s conduct through established procedures does not, when done respectfully and within the role expectations placed upon a person doing so, constitute bullying/cyberbullying, or harassment.

6. The district will, as a whole, take a proactive, educational approach to preventing violence in any form, by addressing root causes at the earliest possible stage.
7. The district endorses the use of constructive, restorative means to resolve conflicts by encouraging and supporting positive role modeling and leadership among students and employees.
8. All district schools will, under the direction of school principals, develop and enforce Codes of Conduct in support of this policy.

References:

- The BC Human Rights Code [RSBC 1996] Chapter 210.
- Ministry of Education. Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools: A Guide (2008)
- Government of British Columbia: erase (expect respect & a safe education)
- Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, Violence in the Workplace (2014)
- Worksafe BC
- School Act sections 85(1.1), 168 (2) (i)
- Human Rights in British Columbia: Discrimination based on gender identity or expression (PDF)
- SOGI 123
- Policies 210 and 215