

## 711: HEALTH AND SAFETY: VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE (P)

Approved: 95 04 04  
Amended: 08 03 11

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### **POLICY**

**The Board of Education is committed to providing and maintaining a safe environment for its employees. Students, parents or guardians, and employees are advised that the Board of Education shall not tolerate violence of any kind in its premises, on its property, or during any school-sanctioned activity.**

**The Board believes that it is the responsibility of all employees to identify situations of risk so that appropriate planning for prevention, intervention and follow-up can be put in place. Further, the Board also recognizes its responsibility to provide appropriate services and support to those individuals whose behaviours may threaten injury or cause injury to employees of the District.**

**The District's Health and Safety Committee is to ensure that the procedures established under this policy apply to all operations within the District. This committee will report to the Board through the District Safety Officer.**

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### **REGULATIONS**

#### **1.0 DEFINITION OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE**

"...the attempted or actual exercise by a person, other than a worker, of any physical force so as to cause injury to a worker, and includes any threatening statement or behaviour which gives a worker reasonable cause to believe that the worker is at risk of injury."

(As defined in the WorkSafe BC regulations)

What it's not...

Harassing behaviour or verbal abuse that does not give a worker reasonable cause to believe that a risk of physical injury exists is not covered by the violence regulations. Violence between co-workers is also not covered, but is addressed by respective Collective Agreements and WorkSafe BC Occupational Health and Safety Regulations.

#### **2.0 RISKS IDENTIFICATION**

2.1 Identification of situations of risk of risk of violence is the responsibility of all school district employees.

- 2.2 A risk assessment must be performed in any workplace in which a risk of injury to workers from violence arising out of their employment may be present.
- 2.3 The risk assessment must include the considerations of:
- i) previous experience in that workplace
  - ii) occupational experience in similar workplaces
  - iii) the location and circumstances in which work will take place.
- 2.4 Where a risk is identified through a workplace risk assessment or through information from the police, Attorney-General or probation services, the employer must:
- i) establish procedures, policies and work environment arrangements to eliminate the risk to workers from violence
  - ii) if elimination of the risk to workers is not possible, establish procedures, policies and work environment arrangements to minimize the risk to workers.

### **3.0 ORIENTATION OF STAFF IDENTIFIED RISKS**

- 3.1 Where persons are known who may display violent behaviours, the principal/supervisor will include the following orienting staff:
- i) review of this policy
  - ii) philosophy of the District
  - iii) identity of person(s) who may display violent behaviours
  - iv) current action plans at worksite file
  - v) emergency procedures in the event of a problem
  - vi) reporting procedures
- 3.2 Principal/supervisors are to review this policy with staff at least at the beginning of each school year and as necessary thereafter.

### **4.0 INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE**

- 4.1 Situations where there is a risk of violence identified are to be reported immediately to the site principal/supervisor.
- 4.2 Investigations of risk of violence will be conducted by the principal/supervisor and a union representative from the joint site safety committee.
- 4.3 Principal/supervisors will eliminate the risk to workers from violence while an Action Plan, Instruction of Workers and student re-entry meeting take place.
- 4.4 Where the risk to employees cannot be eliminated, the Principal/supervisors will minimize the risk to workers from violence while an Action Plan, Instruction of Workers and student re-entry meeting take place.

## **5.0 ACTION PLAN: SITUATION OF RISK OF VIOLENCE**

- 5.1 Once a risk has been identified, an Action Plan will be developed by a committee under the direction of the site supervisor/principal. Committee members will include:
- i) site supervisor/principal (Chair)
  - ii) employee at risk
  - iii) support person for employee
  - iv) appropriate resource personnel as required
- 5.2 The Action Plan will include but not limited to the following:
- i) name(s) of person(s) creating the risk
  - ii) name(s) of person(s) directly at-risk
  - iii) a description of the demonstrated behaviour which is creating a risk
  - iv) a description of the expected appropriate behaviour including the rationale
  - v) efforts in the past, if any, to change behaviour
  - vi) circumstances which tend to cause at-risk behaviour, or an escalation of behavior
  - vii) procedure/strategies to affect desired behaviour
  - viii) consequence for violent behaviour – if appropriate
- 5.3 Principals/supervisors will inform other employees who may be exposed to the risk of violence from persons whom the employee is likely to encounter in the course of their work.
- 5.4 Principal/supervisors will facilitate a re-entry meeting prior to the student's return to regular classes. This meeting will outline expectations of re-entry as well as confirm the supports and services available to those individuals whose behaviours may threaten injury or cause injury to employees of the District.
- 5.5 Principals/supervisors are responsible for forwarding all Violence in the Workplace Reports, WorkSafe BC Investigation Reports, Actions Plans and Re-entry Plans to the Superintendent/designate and to the District Safety Officer. Action Plans and Re-entry Plans area to be filled in the student's file and in the Office file.
- 5.6 A designated Union representative may request a list of action plans relating to Violence in the Workplace Reports.
- 5.7 Principal/supervisors will meet with the employee at risk and appropriate resource personnel to review the Action Plan.

## **6.0 DEALING WITH AN EMERGENCY**

- 6.1 When an incident involving violence or the threat of violence occurs, the first action of employees will be to secure the safety of students, themselves, and other staff.
- 6.2 Employees will then call for assistance using their best judgment, balancing the severity of the incident with the most appropriate response. Assistance may be obtained from:
  - i) immediate supervisor
  - ii) District staff
  - iii) other employees
  - iv) Community agencies, such as:
    - a. R.C.M.P., ambulance, fire department
- 6.3 As soon as practical after an incident of violence, the Principal/Supervisor and employee(s) involved will complete a report of the incident for filing with the Superintendent/designate and the District Safety Officer.