



1. **Rationale**

The Simcoe County District School Board recognizes that every school should be a place that promotes responsibility, civility, and academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment. All students, parents, teachers, and staff members have the right to be safe, and to feel safe, in their school community. With this right comes the responsibility to contribute to a positive school climate (The Provincial Code of Conduct). A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, comfortable and accepted. The promotion of strategies and initiatives such as student success and character development, along with the use of prevention and intervention strategies to address inappropriate behaviour, fosters a positive climate that supports academic achievement for all students. The Provincial Code of Conduct sets clear provincial standards of behaviour.

2. **Policy**

The Simcoe County District School Board shall endeavor to provide safe, violence-free, positive, inclusive, learning environments that are free from bullying and harassment.

3. **Definitions**

3.1 **Bullying** is typically a form of repeated, persistent, aggressive behaviour that is directed at an individual(s) that is intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear, distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is real or perceived power imbalance.

3.2 **Harassment**, for the purposes of this policy, is defined as all forms of communication that involve negative attitudes, beliefs or actions towards a person that are known or ought to be known to be unwelcome to that person.

3.3 **Violence** shall refer to an act or expression which can be physical, verbal, (oral or written), emotional, sexual, racial or ethnocultural, which can be expressed against an individual or a group of individuals, and which has the effect, or might have the effect of impairing their health and/or welfare.

4. **Guidelines**

4.1 All participants involved in the Simcoe County District School Board - students, parents, guardians, volunteers, staff and visitors - are included in this Policy whether they are on school property, on school vehicles or at school authorized events or activities or in other circumstances that could have an impact on the school climate.

4.2 All members of the school community are to be treated with respect and dignity.

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- 4.3 All members of the school community are to respect the need of others to work in an environment that is conducive to learning and teaching.
- 4.4 Responsible citizenship involves appropriate participation in the civic life of the school community. Active and engaged citizens are aware of their rights, but more importantly, they accept responsibility for protecting their rights and the rights of others.
- 4.5 Members of the school community are encouraged to use non-violent means to resolve conflict.
- 4.6 Members of the school community have a responsibility to maintain an environment where conflict and differences can be addressed in a manner characterized by respect and civility.
- 4.7 The safety of people in the schools is promoted.
- 4.8 Alcohol and illegal drugs present a health hazard. Simcoe County District School Board schools will work cooperatively with police and other agencies to promote prevention strategies and, where necessary, will take appropriate action in response to those who are in possession of, or under the influence of, alcohol or illegal drugs.
- 4.9 The Board Code of Conduct and School Codes of Conduct will be reviewed every three years. The Board will consult with School Councils as well as a variety of stakeholders. In developing or reviewing School Codes of Conduct, the principal will consult with the School Council as well as a variety of stakeholders.

5. Administrative Procedures

The Director of Education is authorized to establish administrative procedures to implement this policy, which shall be considered guidelines pursuant to the Education Act.

Procedures may include but are not limited to the following:

- 5.1 code of conduct;
- 5.2 student harassment;
- 5.3 police/school protocol;
- 5.4 violent incident emergency response plan;
- 5.5 elementary safe-arrival;
- 5.6 access to schools;
- 5.7 reporting child abuse;

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- 5.8 opening and closing exercises;
- 5.9 appropriate dress;
- 5.10 safe and caring schools procedures;
- 5.11 reporting violent incidents.

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