



TCSA POLICY	
TITLE	Safe Schools
POLICY NUMBER	21-21-V1
PROGRAM NAME	JK-Grade 12
DOMAIN NAME	Education
EFFECTIVE DATE	11-September-2024
NEXT REVIEW DATE	11-September-2027
APPROVAL DATE	11-September-2024
ISSUING AUTHORITY	Tłıchǵo Community Services Agency
ACCREDITATION STANDARD	N/A

POLICY AND GUIDING PRINCIPLE

The regional Safe Schools policy draws its authority from the NWT Education Act, and guidance from the Territorial Code of Conduct, Promising Practices for Respectful and Harassment-Free School Communities, and the Inclusive Schooling Directive. The Tłıchǵo Community Services Agency (TCSA) is committed to ensuring a safe and effective learning environment for all students and staff. To achieve this the TCSA believes in a multi-tiered approach when attending to the behaviour, mental health, and wellness of students.

The TCSA believes in a culturally holistic approach, uses integrated service delivery models from within the community, and is strength-based, and trauma-informed. The TCSA believes all students, staff, parents, and community members must work together to promote safe and caring schools where students feel empowered to learn in a consistent and predictable environment. It is the responsibility of all to ensure the principles of safety and trustworthiness, collaboration and choice, and relationship and engagement are embedded in our practice.

PURPOSE/RATIONALE

Safe schools stem from several foundational roots: emergency response planning, relational practices, clear expectations for respectful behaviour, responsive classroom management, community involvement, and safe work practices. The Safe School Regulations require Education Bodies to establish Safe and Caring School Plans and Committees, this policy



guides TCSA schools in establishing these integrated elements of a safe and welcoming learning environment.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying - "bullying" means typically repeated and hostile or demeaning behaviour by a student, (a) that occurs while at school, at a school-related activity or in another situation where the behaviour is likely to have a negative impact on the school climate; (b) where the behaviour is intended by the student to have the effect of, or the student ought to know that the behaviour would be likely to have the effect of, (i) causing harm, fear or distress to another individual, including physical, psychological, social or academic harm, harm to the individual's reputation or harm to the individual's property, or (ii) creating a negative learning environment for another individual, and (c) where the behaviour occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance between the student and the individual based on factors such as size, strength, intelligence, peer group power, race, colour, ancestry, nationality, ethnic origin, place of origin, creed, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, family status, family affiliation, political belief, political association or social condition; (intimidation) (Taken from the *NWT Education Act* 1(1))

Cyber Bullying - Bullying by electronic means, commonly known as cyber-bullying, includes: (a) typically repeated and hostile or demeaning electronic communication by a student (i) through the use of technology including computers, other electronic devices, social networks, text messaging, websites, and electronic mail, and (ii) that is intended by the student to have the effect of, or the student ought to know that the communication would be likely to have the effect of, causing harm, fear or distress to another individual, including psychological, social or academic harm, or harm to the individual's reputation, and; (b) behaviour by a student that in any way assists or encourages communication referred to in section (a). (Taken from the *NWT Education Act* 1(1.2))

Emergency Response Plan - a set of guidelines for staff and students to follow in the event of an emergency situation within the school setting. It is not meant to be all-encompassing (although procedures for a wide variety of incidents are outlined), nor is it meant to take the place of sound reasoning and good judgment. Safe and Caring School and Emergency Response Plans are established in conjunction with Community-Based Emergency Response Plans.



Emergency Situation - an event that overwhelms an individual's capacity to cope and that negatively affects school and classroom behavior and climate, and/or endangers the safety and well-being of students or staff members.

Safe and Caring School Committee - Required under the Safe School Regulations and must be composed of at minimum the school principal and a teacher. This committee may meet as part of other committees related to safety such as School Based Support Teams (SBST), Occupational Health and Safety (OHS), or leadership teams.

Safe and Caring School Plan - Required under the Education Act and further outlined in the Safe Schools Regulations, this plan must address the school's approach to bullying prevention, intervention, and education. Safe School Plans and their prescribed content, ensure that policies and procedures are in place to promote a positive learning environment and keep students and staff safe, both in the prevention and response of bullying and emergencies.

School Emergency Response Team (SERT) - Principals in conjunction with staff, TCSA board members, RCMP, etc. develop a SERT for their school. Such a team will assist in handling all emergencies and debriefing post-incident. This team may overlap with the Safe and Caring Schools Team and/or Occupational Health and Safety Team.

SCOPE/APPLICABILITY

This policy will apply to all students, parents, guardians, Elders, and staff in all TCSA schools, including alternative programming.

PROCEDURE

1. Principals are responsible for creating and sustaining a safe, caring, and respectful learning environment for all students, staff, and partners by:
 - a. Establishing a Safe and Caring School Committee in compliance with the NWT Safe and Caring Schools Regulations,
 - b. Creating and maintaining a Safe School Plan that is updated annually, appropriate to the local school community, and in accordance with the *NWT Education Act* and Safe Schools Regulations, the Territorial School Code of Conduct, and TCSA Policies;
 - c. Establishing a universal school-wide approach that focuses on prevention and developing social and emotional skills to help children manage themselves,



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work cooperatively with others, solve problems, and make appropriate decisions, and that reaches students, staff, parents, and community with school-wide initiatives, classroom activities, and individual interventions. This will include choosing and teachers implementing evidence-based healthy relationships and bullying prevention programming for students that help to develop student empathy and self-discipline, and provide them with the skills and confidence to self-regulate and resolve conflict in a non-violent way;

- d. Ensuring school staff explicitly teach expected behaviours, model these behaviours, provide opportunities for students to practice those desired behaviours, clarify what behaviours are not acceptable, and address incidents of misbehaviour consistently throughout the various school contexts;
- e. Requiring teachers to establish and consistently implement classroom, hallway, and playground rules and interventions, that may include rewards and consequences, and that promote respectful behaviour, protect individuals and groups of victims, and create and maintain a positive learning environment;
- f. Taking opportunities to have staff members trained in conflict resolution, de-escalation strategies, and/or non-violent crisis intervention;
- g. Establishing, in consultation with the Director of Education, and aligned with the TCSA Student Behaviour Policy a school-level student discipline and behaviour policy.
- h. Implementing bullying intervention strategies including procedures with respect to reporting, documenting, and responding to incidents of bullying.
- i. As part of the Safe School Plan annually update the Emergency Response Plan for their building.
- j. Communicating this Policy, the Safe School Plan, the TCSA Student Behaviour Policy, the School Student Behaviour Policy and associated discipline procedures, and related responsibilities to the school community, including staff, students, and parents.
- k. Notifying the Director of Education immediately in the event of serious incidents, including activation of school lockdown or hold and secure, to activate local, regional, and territorial supports and notify stakeholders as per the Emergency Response Plans. These situations may be debriefed and reviewed by leadership teams (ie: leadership team, School Emergency Response Team (SERT), and OHS team). A review of all serious events will be conducted by the School Emergency Response Team with the Regional Coordinating Principal to evaluate the mitigating measures that are in place



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and to ensure policy/procedures were followed and if improvements can be made.

1. Notifying the Director of Education of suspensions and expulsions according to 21-14-V1 Student Suspension and Expulsion Policy.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

NA

CROSS-REFERENCES

21-14-V1 Student Suspension and Expulsion Policy
21-10-V1 Student Behaviour Policy
16-05-V2 Emergency School Evacuation Policy
16-06-V2 Emergency School Lockdown Policy
16-07-V2 Emergency School Closure Policy
16-16-V1 School Security Surveillance Policy
13-06-V2 RCMP Information Sharing and Investigation in Schools Policy
16-01-V1 Workplace Violence Prevention Program Policy
16-03-V2 Positive Work Environment Policy
16-04-V1 Work Alone Policy

ATTACHMENTS

Incident Report Form - School Level (Minor/Major Office Referral)

REFERENCES

- NWT Education Act
- Safe Schools Regulations
- Territorial School Code of Conduct
- Promising Practices for Respectful and Harassment-Free School Communities
- Inclusive Schooling Directive and Handbook

APPROVAL:



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Reviewed and Approved By:

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11-September-2024

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