

POLICY 545 RESPECTFUL WORKPLACE

The Board of Education is committed to ensuring a respectful workplace and believes that every employee has the right to work in an environment free from harassment including discriminatory harassment, sexual harassment, bullying or violence.

All employees, and others performing work on behalf of the District, are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner that supports a culture of mutual respect and cooperation. The Board will not tolerate any form of prohibited conduct or retaliation in the workplace and will act appropriately to preserve and promote a respectful working and learning environment.

This policy is intended to meet the legal obligations of the Board and enhance the promotion of a respectful workplace. Where a collective agreement includes provisions regarding the prohibited conduct outlined in this policy or a process for intervention in the circumstances of the complaint, the provisions of the agreement will continue to apply in conjunction with the provisions of this policy.

Definitions

- Harassment – Includes any inappropriate conduct, comment, display, action, or gesture directed towards a specific person or persons that a reasonable person knows or ought to know would have the effect of creating an intimidating, humiliating, hostile, or offensive work environment.
- Discriminatory Harassment – Is a form of Harassment that is based on, or related to, a prohibited ground of discrimination as set out in the *BC Human Rights Code*, including: Indigenous identity, race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or age of that person or because that person has been convicted of a criminal or summary conviction offence that is unrelated to the employment or to the intended employment of that person.
- Sexual Harassment – Is a form of Discriminatory Harassment and is based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. It can occur between men and women, individuals of the same gender, individuals of the same or differing sexual orientation, and includes harassment on the basis that an individual is transgender.
- Bullying – Is a form of Harassment that is marked by intentional, persistent attempts of a person or group to intimidate, demean, humiliate, torment, control, mentally or physically harm, or isolate another person or group. This behaviour, through its persistence or severity, diminishes the dignity or the psychological or physical integrity of the target(s).
- Violence – Workplace violence, as defined under WorkSafe BC policy, includes the attempted or actual exercise of any physical force so as to cause injury to a worker, or any threatening statement or behaviour to believe the employee is at risk of injury.

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- **Retaliation** – Is an adverse action taken against a person who invoked this policy in good faith, participated or cooperated in any investigation under this policy, or associated with a person who has involved this policy.

Responsibilities

The Board of Education:

- Promote a working environment respectful of human rights and free from bullying and harassment.
- Comply with legislation as defined under the BC Human Rights Code and WorkSafe BC policy.

The Superintendent and Senior Leadership:

- Implement this policy and the related administrative procedures, ensuring the provisions of this policy are communicated to all employees.
- Ensure appropriate training is provided to all employees.
- Intervene and respond to reported or suspected breaches of this policy in a timely and fair manner.

Human Resources:

- Provide support and consultation to Senior Leadership, Principals and Vice Principals, and Managers in addressing Respectful Workplace complaints.
- Oversee the investigation process of complaints.
- Provide or arrange for training.

Principals/Vice Principals and Managers:

- Communicate and review this policy and related procedures with the staff they supervise.
- Provide behavioural expectations and work requirements for staff to ensure respectful conduct in the workplace.
- Ensure appropriate steps are taken to address concerns raised by staff, including consulting with District Human Resources.

All Employees:

- Responsible to understand and adhere to this policy.
- Ensure respectful workplace behaviour and avoid engaging in prohibited conduct.
- Immediately report breaches of this policy and cooperate fully with any investigations, including when the breach is observed toward others.