



World Class Learning in a Rural Environment

## SD10 (Arrow Lakes) District Protocol

### Safe and Caring Schools Protocol

#### Overview

All staff members and students have a right to work and learn in an environment that is protected from violence or the threat of violence. SD10 is committed to creating and sustaining school environments in which students, staff, parents and others feel safe.

Responsibility for acceptable behaviors is shared amongst many partners including the district, schools, students, parents/guardians, community groups, social agencies, and the RCMP. The Board promotes understanding and acceptance of the interactive roles required to achieve safe and caring schools.

SD10 is a signing partner of the *East/West Kootenay Boundary Regional Violence Threat Risk Protocol*. The protocol was developed to include SD 5, 6, 8, 10, 20, 51 and has been signed off by regional supervisors for RCMP, MCFD and district Superintendents.

#### Definitions:

Safe and caring school environments are free of acts of:

1. Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, threats, intimidation, verbal or written abuse, racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination of any kind including, but not limited to: real or perceived socio-economic status, race, skin colour, appearance, ethnicity, gender, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, culture, age or any other distinguishing characteristic.
2. Any form of violence
3. Theft
4. Vandalism

Safe and caring school environments do not tolerate the presence of:

5. Intoxicating or banned substances
6. Weapons (or replica weapons) and explosives; and
7. Intruders or trespassers.

#### School Codes of Conduct

Principals will facilitate the development and implementation of a school Code of Conduct which will promote a positive social and emotional climate within the school.

School codes of conduct will:

8. Adhere to the Ministry of Education Provincial Standards for Codes of Conduct, and the BC Human Rights Code.
9. Be prepared and presented in a language students can understand.
10. Consider the involvement of students, parents/ guardians and staff in the development of and/ or annual review of the school code of conduct.

11. Communicate the school code of conduct to staff, parents/ guardians, and students at the beginning of the school year and as circumstances require (i.e. if they arrive after the beginning of the year).
12. Display the school code of conduct in prominent areas in the school.
13. Encourage positive initiatives in school to reinforce these responsibilities.
14. Communicate the consequences of noncompliance to staff, parents/ guardians, and students. Consequences must allow flexibility on a case-by-case basis and consider the students' age, maturity, and special needs, if any.
15. Annually review the School Code of Conduct with staff, students, and parents/ guardians to assess the effectiveness of the code of conduct in addressing current school safety issues.

### **Student Responsibilities in Self-Managing Behaviour**

16. It is expected that students will:
  - a) Be familiar with SD10 Violence/Threat/Risk Protocol and report any threats
  - b) Neither take part in nor condone any form of violence, bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, threats, intimidation, verbal or written abuse, discrimination of any kind including, but not limited to, real or perceived socio-economic status, race, skin colour, appearance, ethnicity, sex, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, culture, age, or any other distinguishing characteristic.
  - c) Seek to prevent violence and potentially violent situations
  - d) Not use, possess or display any weapon, replica or toy weapon, on any school property or at any event that is organized or sponsored by a school
  - e) Not use, possess or sell any intoxicating, banned or controlled substances
  - f) Demonstrate, when utilizing electronic resources, appropriate on-line conduct including refraining from any acts of cyberbullying
  - g) Show respect for the property of others by refraining from theft, vandalism, graffiti or other inappropriate behaviours
  - h) Be present at schools and school properties for school-authorized purposes only
  - i) Use respectful language
  - j) Demonstrate commitment to learning by coming to school prepared to learn and by contributing to a positive, orderly, peaceful environment

### **Student Safety and Security: Community Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA)**

The purpose of the VTRA is to use the best knowledge, skill and experience available to assess high-risk behaviours so that appropriate interventions can be identified to protect individuals from harm, to plan effective interventions for student offenders and families, and to prevent serious violence.

17. All staff will be aware that their own safety is a priority in order to ensure the safety of students in their care.
18. All staff will report suspicious or threatening behavior to the Principal.

19. Any threat to self or others will be investigated. This assessment will be extensive in scope and include, where appropriate, the involvement of community VTRA Protocol partners such as RCMP, MCFD, CYMH, ARC, and the school district.
20. Student Threat Assessment Protocol - Fair Notice
  - a) The SD10 Fair Notice brochure will be delivered to students and families on an annual basis by principals. Principals will also review with staff reporting procedures and VTRA steps annually.

### **Identifying High Risk Behaviours**

21. These include but are not limited to:
  - a) Possession of weapons including replicas
  - b) Bomb threats and making and/or detonating explosive devices
  - c) Verbal/written threats to kill or injure others or self which are clear, direct and plausible
  - d) Internet websites/threats to kill or injure others
  - e) Escalation of violent behaviours
  - f) Bullying – verbal, physical, cyber and social via repeated patterns of behavior and victimization
  - g) Domestic violence
  - h) Fire setting
  - i) Sexual intimidation or assault
  - j) Hate motivated violence targeting a particular student/group

### **Making sure all students are safe.**

22. When a high risk behavior or immediate threat is identified:
  - a) Contact the Safe School Coordinator and RCMP if an immediate threat exists.
  - b) Parent(s) or caregiver(s) of the threat maker should be notified at the earliest opportunity. Specifically, notification should occur after enough initial data has been collected to confirm that a threat or violent incident has occurred and further investigation with the VTRA team will follow.
  - c) The parent(s) or caregiver(s) of the target(s) should be notified at the earliest opportunity. If the threat is 'clear, direct and plausible' notify after the target is secure. The school counselling services should be outlined as support when informing the target(s) and families.

### **Responding to High Risk Behaviours**

23. **Intoxication, possession of banned or controlled substance:** Persons under the influence of intoxicating, banned or controlled substances and persons using, marketing or distributing intoxicating or controlled substances are not allowed on school premises or any school-sponsored event. A student who is under the influence of, or using an intoxicating or controlled substance during school hours or at a school-sponsored event is subject to disciplinary procedures.
24. **Weapons:** Students shall not possess or use any weapon on any school premises or at any activity off school premises that is organized or sponsored by a school.

- a) Students shall not possess or use any replica or toy weapon, on any school premises or while involved in any school activity except as a prop in a theatrical production. If a replica or toy weapon is used in a theatrical production, it shall be stored appropriately when not required for the production.
- b) In every case involving weapons, persons in authority must use their professional judgment, common sense and discretion to prevent injury or death. The safety of all must be of paramount importance in dealing with situations involving weapons.
- c) If allegations of a weapon in the school is reported, conduct locker and/or person searches, seize and call RCMP.
- d) Where a Principal or Vice-Principal reasonably believes that a person on school premises is in possession of a weapon and that a risk of bodily harm exists, he/she will:
  - Activate Lockdown if necessary.
  - Immediately notify the police (911) and the Director of Learning.
  - Make reasonable attempts to minimize risk of injury to any persons.
  - Attempt to ensure that the weapon is controlled.
  - Contact the parents/guardians if the person is a student.
- e) Offences involving weapons shall result in severe consequences being imposed. Any weapons seized will be forfeited and provided to the police.

**25. Intruders or Trespassers:** Schools will prominently display a sign at entrances directing all visitors to report to the office. Where an employee has cause to believe that a person is on school board property without authorization, the following procedures are to be followed:

- a) Identify yourself and your position in the district
- b) Determine the status of the person:
  - Request the person to identify him/herself
  - Ask what is the nature of the person's visit
  - Ask if the person has checked in at the office.
- c) If the person refuses to answer any of the questions or if you are suspicious, request that he/she accompany you to the office.
- d) If the person refuses to comply with this request, the PVP or delegate can issue the Standard Warning Statement: "Pursuant to Sec 177 of the School Act, you (intruder name) are hereby directed to immediately leave the lands and premises at this school. Failure to comply with this order constitutes an offense under the School Act."
- e) If the person leaves, record as much detail as you can (physical description, clothing, vehicle, etc) and report to the Principal.
- f) If the person refuses to leave, notify the office. Office personnel will notify the police.
- g) PVP may activate "Hold and Secure"

- h) If the person complies with the request to report to the office, refer the person to the Principal or Vice Principal
- i) The Principal/Vice-Principal will:
  - Determine the status of the person
  - Gather information on the reason for the person's presence
  - Issue the Standard Warning where appropriate
- j) If the person's intrusion involves a violent or threatening act
  - Contact the police
  - Attempt to ensure that any weapons are controlled
  - Contact the parents/guardians if the person is a student

### **Conducting Searches**

26. A Principal or Vice-Principal may conduct or authorize a search of a student, personal property or locker if there are reasonable grounds to believe that policy has been or is being violated and that evidence of the violation will be found in the location or on the person of the student searched. The search should be conducted in a sensitive manner and be minimally intrusive.
27. The following may constitute reasonable grounds in this context:
- a) Information received from a student believed to be credible
  - b) A teacher or administrator's observation
  - c) Any combination of sources of information which the relevant authority considers to be credible.
28. Where there is a possibility of prosecution as a result of evidence found, the police will be contacted.
29. Where the Principal or Vice-Principal or designate conducts a search or interview with a student and the student is subject to school-initiated disciplinary action only, the following guidelines will be observed:
- a) The reason and purpose of the search or interview will be clearly stated to the student(s)
  - b) The search or interview will be conducted in a private area in a respectful manner which recognizes the right to a fair hearing and avoids threat or duress
  - c) Searches will be conducted in the presence of a second adult.

### **Police or Other Public Safety Agency Involvement in Student Interviews/Investigations**

Law enforcement agencies will strive to avoid conducting interviews or investigations at schools. However, it is acknowledged that there will be some situations when interview procedures must take place at the school as a result of specific circumstances including, but not limited to, concern for the student's safety, need to gather information from a student witness and/or need to interview a student who may be a suspect in a criminal investigation. In such cases, the school will strive to maintain respectful and low profile interactions between students and police/public safety personnel.

30. Where the police wish to interview a student on school premises, the following guidelines will be observed:

- a) The Principal or Vice Principal will work with police representatives to determine whether it is imperative to conduct the interview on school premises.
  - b) The person (PVP) granting permission for interviews on school premises shall be responsible for ensuring an appropriate setting is made for the interviews and shall assist the police in determining appropriate times for interviews. He/she shall ensure that a parent/guardian is immediately notified except in a case where it is deemed that immediate parent notification would compromise student safety and/or the security of an evidence trail.
  - c) If the interview is to take place at school, the police representatives will be requested to delay any interview until the parent/guardian has been contacted and provided an opportunity to attend unless it is critical that the interview be held without parent presence/involvement.
  - d) It is up to the student being interviewed, and not up to the school or the police, to determine who will be present to provide support during the interview.
  - e) Consultation time will be provided for the student and the student's support person prior to the interview.
31. Where the police wish to conduct an interview with a student witness/potential student witness or student victim on school premises, it is not necessary to follow the procedures above. However, parents/guardians will be contacted as soon as is practical. The Principal or Vice-Principal will attend such an interview if requested by the student. The primary purpose would be to provide support for the student. Whether to attend should be determined taking into account such factors as the age and maturity of the student and the nature of the incident being investigated. If the student wishes the interview to be conducted in private, then that view would be respected.
32. Where a serious crime is involved, an alternate location for the interview, determined in consultation with a parent/guardian, may be chosen.
33. If a student is being transported by police from the school, the Principal/Vice-Principal will work to ensure that the movement of the student to the agency vehicle is done in a safe and low profile manner and that the student's parents/guardians are made aware of the destination as soon as possible

**Related Documents:**

- VTRA Administrator Checklist/Stage 1 VTRA Quick Reference Form
- [School Act Sections 6, 10, 11, 26, 75, 76, 85](#)
- [Ministerial Order 276/07 Provincial Standards for Codes of Conduct Order](#)
- [BC Human Rights Code \(Section 7 and 8\)](#)
- [Safe, Caring, and Orderly Schools: A Guide \(2004\)](#)
- [Diversity in BC Schools: A Framework \(2004\)](#)
- [BC Performance Standards Social Responsibility: A Framework \(2001\)](#)
- ERASE Levels 1, 2, 3 publications (2016)