



<u>DUFFERIN-PEEL CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD</u> <u>POLICY</u>	
POLICY NUMBER:	P-2012
SUBJECT:	Bullying Awareness, Prevention, and Intervention
REFERENCE:	P-0002 Catholic Code of Conduct General Administrative Procedure (GAP) GAP2012 Catholic Code of Conduct GAP2013 Bullying Prevention
EFFECTIVE DATE:	February 1, 2008
AMENDED DATE:	Revised January 26, 2010; Revised (076) January 22, 2013 – Effective February 1; 2013; June 21, 2022; January 28, 2025

“For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.”

Proverbs 2:6

1. All people are created equal, in the image of God, each with inimitable characteristics deserving of dignity (Genesis: 1:27). In accordance with the Church’s teachings, it is the policy of the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board (DPCDSB) to provide, in all its operations, environments which support and reflect the dignity of the person.
2. This policy and its associated *General Administrative Procedure (GAP) [GAP2013](#) Bullying Prevention* (GAP2013) govern bullying awareness, prevention, and intervention involving DPCDSB students as alleged individuals who cause harm, victims, and witnesses of bullying, and DPCDSB staff as victims and witnesses of bullying involving students. Policies and procedures regarding bullying restricted to DPCDSB staff as alleged perpetrators of bullying can be found in [P-1009 Harassment and Discrimination](#) and [GAP5013 Employee Workplace Conduct \(Including Workplace Harassment\)](#).
3. DPCDSB prohibits bullying in all its forms and considers it as a serious offence against the dignity of persons created in God's image, and as an affront to the integrity of Catholic learning communities. To address bullying, DPCDSB relies on the consistent use of research-informed practices and approved protocols that are rooted in the dignity of the person.
4. DPCDSB names and addresses all forms of bullying, including bullying that is rooted in injustice related to any ground protected by the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, R.S.O. 1990, c. H. 19 (Ontario Human Rights Code), recognizing that bullying of any kind is harmful to one’s human dignity.
5. Bullying has a negative impact on school communities, particularly on school climate and healthy relationships.

6. Bullying in any form is prohibited on DPCDSB property, including schools, virtual and in-person classrooms and common areas, at school-related activities, on school buses, on online platforms such as through e-mail, cell phone, text, instant messages, websites, social networking sites and/or other and social media (also known as cyberbullying), or in any other circumstances that will have an impact on the school climate.
7. Research indicates that the most effective means to address bullying is through comprehensive school-wide programs that are grounded in empirical data and best practice and are tailored to meet local school or site needs through grassroots involvement.
8. DPCDSB supports the use of positive practices to prevent bullying. DPCDSB supports the ongoing implementation and monitoring of comprehensive, system-wide plans for the creation of "bully-free" learning and working environments for all.
9. Principals, or their designates where applicable, are authorized to impose consequences for bullying, up to and including a student referral to DPCDSB's Discipline Committee of the Board of Trustees for expulsion from all schools.
10. In alignment with its policies and procedures, DPCDSB will continue to promote compassionate responses to victims of bullying, including use of restorative justice, where appropriate, and progressive discipline in response to bullying incidents to promote a process for making amends and reconciling relationships. DPCDSB will continue to provide supports and programs for students who have been bullied, witnessed bullying, or engaged in bullying.
11. DPCDSB shall ensure safe and accessible avenues for staff and students to report incidents of bullying.
12. **References** relevant to this policy include:

12.1 Section 1 of the *Education Act*, R.S.O. 1990 c. E.2 (*Education Act*) defines bullying as follows:

"...aggressive and typically repeated behaviour by a pupil where,

- a) the behaviour is intended by the pupil to have the effect of, or the pupil ought to know that the behaviors 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 environment at a school for another individual, and
- b) the behaviour occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance between the pupil and the individual based on factors such as size, strength, age, intelligence, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race, disability, or the receipt of special education..."

- 12.2 For the purposes of the definition of ‘bullying’ above, behaviour includes the use of any physical, verbal, electronic, written, or other means.
- 12.3 For the purposes of the definition of ‘bullying’ above, cyber-bullying includes bullying by electronic means (commonly known as cyber-bullying), including,
- a) creating a web page or a blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person;
 - b) impersonating another person as the author of content or messages posted on the internet; and
 - c) communicating material electronically to more than one individual or posting material on a website that may be accessed by one or more individuals.
- 12.4 Section 169.1 of the *Education Act* sets out the responsibility of the DPCDSB Board of Trustees for student achievement and effective stewardship of resources, including the responsibility to do the following:
- a) (a) promote student achievement and well-being;
 - b) (a.1) promote a positive school climate that is inclusive and accepting of all pupils, including pupils of any race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status or disability;
 - c) (a.2) promote the prevention of bullying;
 - d) Policy/Program Memorandum 144: Bullying Prevention and Intervention (PPM 144) sets out the components that must be incorporated into a school board’s plans, policies, procedures and guidelines for bullying prevention and intervention.
- 12.5 Notwithstanding anything to the contrary, the *Ontario Human Rights Code* has primacy over provincial legislation and DPCDSB policies and other administrative documents.
- 12.6 [GAP2013](#) forms an integral part of this policy.
- 12.7 All references set out in this policy include such references as may be amended or replaced.