

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 53 (Okanagan Similkameen)

POLICY

No. F-17

Approved: June 21, 2022

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AMONG STUDENTS

Policy:

All students have the right to attend school in a safe environment free of sexual harassment and assault. Sexual harassment and assault violate the fundamental rights, dignity, and integrity of the individual. The Board condemns any acts of sexual harassment and assault against students to and from school and all school sanctioned events.

Rationale:

The Board of Education of School District No. 53 (Okanagan Similkameen) reaffirms its commitment to the values of the B.C. Human Rights Code, the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It recognizes that all students have the right to learn in a safe environment free of sexual harassment and assault.

Definition:

'Sexual harassment' is unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. It includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Physical contact
- Gestures
- Leering or persistently looking at a person's body
- Sexually suggestive remarks, verbal abuse with a sexual connotation, and sexual propositions and invitations
- Display of sexually offensive material and recounting sexually offensive jokes and anecdotes
- Subtle or overt demands to participate in sexual activities
- Request for sexual activities accompanied by either implied or actual threats or a reprisal made after a sexual advance is rejected
- Physical assault of a sexual nature
- Abusive behaviour that includes discrimination against others on the basis of gender, sexual orientation and/or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity

The district encourages any student who feels they are being subjected to sexual harassment to seek assistance and support from a parent, counsellor, teacher, administrator, or other trusted adult.

Where sexual assault is alleged, it must be reported by the person receiving the complaint to any of the following as appropriate to the situation: School Principal, Ministry for Children and Families, RCMP, or the Superintendent.

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REGULATIONS

No. F-17

Approved: June 21, 2022

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AMONG STUDENTS

The main objective of this policy is to prevent sexual harassment of students. All persons within the school community have a responsibility to promote, monitor and maintain safe learning environments free from sexual harassment.

This policy shall apply to all students, both on school premises and during activities that are off school premises and that are organized or sponsored by the school.

Complaints of sexual harassment will be investigated promptly, thoroughly and in a sensitive manner as follows:

- Any investigation into the complaints of sexual harassment will adhere to the principles of confidentiality and due process.
- If an investigation reveals evidence to support the complaint of sexual harassment, both the parents/guardians of the complainant and harasser will be informed, in writing. The incident will be documented in the harasser's file.
- Students who engage in sexual harassment shall be subject to appropriate forms of stepped discipline, which may include suspension and/or expulsion, subject to their age and/or unique needs.
- If an investigation fails to find evidence to support a complaint, no documentation will be placed in the file of the alleged harasser.
- Where the complaint was filed in good faith, whether the complaint was upheld or not, no documentation will be placed in the complainant's file. Where an investigation reveals that a complaint was not made in good faith, stepped discipline appropriate to the situation will be applied with documentation placed in the complainant's file.
- Regardless of the outcome of an investigation, the complainant and anyone providing information will be protected from any form of retaliation as well as harassment because of having made a complaint or providing evidence regarding the complaint.

School principals will review this policy and regulations annually with age-appropriate students.