

## **Weapons Policy**

### **-POLICY-**

The Board believes that students, staff and visitors to a school have the right to pursue their affairs in a safe and protective environment. The Board considers the possession or use of any weapon by anyone, other than a peace officer, on or near school premises or at school events, to be a serious threat to the safety and security of students and staff.

Students shall not possess, display or use any weapon, except as otherwise approved by the principal, on any school premises, school bus or contracted transport or at any activity off school premises that is organized or sponsored by a school. The Board directs all school personnel who believe that such a threat exists to take appropriate action in accordance with the following regulations to ensure the safety of both students and staff.

### **-REGULATION-**

#### 1. Definition

The definition of a weapon is:

- 1.1 anything used, designed to be used, or intended for use in causing death or injury to any person or for the purpose of threatening or intimidating any person, and without restricting the generality of the foregoing, includes any firearm or ammunition, or any device prohibited or restricted under the Criminal Code of Canada;
- 1.2 anything that is a replica, facsimile, imitation or toy designed or intended to replicate the foregoing; and
- 1.3 anything else that, in the opinion of the principal or vice-principal, is potentially dangerous in the hands of a particular student or in a particular situation.

#### 2. Management of Risk

- 2.1 When a school administrator or staff member reasonably believes that a person traveling to and from school or on or near school premises, without lawful reason;

2.2 is in possession of a weapon on his or her person or in any other place at or near the school; or

2.3 has used such a weapon for the purposes of intimidation or assault;

The Board directs that the situation be treated with the utmost seriousness, that the principal be informed and that the principal or when appropriate, a staff member, shall as expeditiously as possible;

2.4 make all reasonable efforts to minimize the risk of injury to any other person;

2.5 notify the police if that action is deemed appropriate;

2.6 make all reasonable efforts to ensure that the weapon is controlled; and

2.7 confiscate and/or arrange with the appropriate authority to have the weapon removed from the school premises or surroundings. Any weapons seized shall be considered forfeited.

### 3. Report of Incident

Once the safety of the students and staff is ensured, the principal:

3.1 may, report the matter to the local law enforcement authorities and if appropriate seek their assistance, if not previously requested;

3.2 shall, as soon as practicable, notify the parent or guardian of any student involved in the situation;

3.3 shall, if appropriate, report the matter to parents of all students in the school if there is a possibility of ongoing threat;

3.4 shall, make an immediate oral report of the situation to the Superintendent of Schools or designate; and

3.5 shall, as soon as is practicable, and if appropriate, provide a written report to the Superintendent of Schools. Every effort should be made to include appropriate detail of the person or persons involved, the situation, processes and procedures used and the evidence gathered, all of which may be required to support further action, including charges.

**4. Disciplinary Action**

If a weapon is in the possession of, is used by, attempted to be used by, or threatened to be used by, a student, thereby threatening the school environment and the safety of students and staff, the Board directs principals to consider immediate suspension of that student in a manner consistent with the District Suspension Policy, pending further disciplinary action or criminal charges.

**5. Weapon Possession Approved by the Principal**

Principals may use discretion in approving the use of objects that are defined as weapons for such activities as drama and theatrical productions, outdoor education activities, and Remembrance Day observances.

Such objects shall be stored appropriately when not required for such productions, activities and observances.

**6. Exceptions for Religious Reasons**

Kirpans may be worn at school by Sikhs. Principals must be notified by parents beforehand should a Sikh student wish to wear a Kirpan.

When a parent, based on religious grounds, wishes his/her child to wear a religious symbol, which falls within the definition of "weapon" at school, the following procedure must be followed:

- 6.1 the parent must obtain authorization from the Board of Education for his/her child to wear such a symbol;
- 6.2 when a student arrives at school with a religious symbol which falls within the definition of a weapon, and authorization has not been obtained from the Board of Education, the principal will immediately contact the parent and request that:
  - a.) the religious symbol be surrendered, or
  - b.) the student return home until a meeting with the student's parents has taken place and official authorization has been obtained from the Board of Education.

7. Awareness

Details of this policy shall be communicated at the beginning of each school year to students, parents and staff members.