

Video Surveillance at School Sites

-POLICY-

Preamble:

Video Surveillance is a complex issue in that it attempts to balance the rights to physical security and protection of property against the privacy rights of individuals.

The intent of this policy is to ensure that the need to deploy video surveillance is compelling and that any resulting effects on privacy rights are minimized.

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act for BC governs the use of video surveillance. It is intended that this policy will meet both the requirements and the spirit of this legislation as well as any interpretations and recommendations made by the BC Privacy Commissioner from time to time.

This policy is not intended for emergency deployments such as a short-term covert action relating to a specific criminal investigation.

This policy does not apply to non-school buildings owned or operated by the School District. Video surveillance cameras are being deployed in increasing numbers to improve safety and reduce vandalism.

There are concerns by some about video surveillance including the impact on one's sense of privacy; the effect on the atmosphere of the school; the educational messages with respect to trust, security and privacy; desensitization towards privacy issues due to indefinite use; the use for supervision instead of more appropriate methods and being used solely as a cost savings measure.

There are others that claim it could be a cost saving measure and may reduce aberrant behaviour when used appropriately.

It is felt that people may have a higher expectation of privacy inside a school and during school hours.

There is also concern that video surveillance does not address the underlying causes of the behaviours which it seeks to control.

Finally, it is felt that all parties whose privacy may be impacted by video surveillance have the right to have input on its deployment as well as the right to be aware that they are under video surveillance.

-REGULATION-

Guiding Principles for Regulations:

1. Ensure that consultation processes used are thorough, adequate and appropriate in the circumstances.
2. Ensure that there is a compelling reason for each deployment.
3. Ensure that video surveillance is only used after all other reasonable and less invasive alternatives have been considered.
4. Ensure that deployment is for a time frame realistically tied to the problem that led to the deployment.
5. Ensure that video surveillance records are secure, and that access is restricted to Education Senior Staff and the SD Operations Manager.
6. Ensure that reporting procedures are designed to build empirical evidence to assist in assessing the efficacy of future deployment requests.