

1. The Policy

It is the policy of Lakehead District School Board to provide safe learning environments for students, staff and the general public. Lakehead District School Board will respond to any violence or disruptions in its schools or operations.

2. Violence Against Staff

Lakehead District School Board recognizes that violence in the workplace is an occupational health and safety concern, and in keeping with our Health and Safety Policy and Violence in the Workplace Policy, is committed to providing a safe and secure working environment for our employees, agents, and those who have authorized access to Lakehead Board premises. It is an expectation of the Board that all its employees or others on board business will, at all times, conduct themselves in a courteous, polite manner while dealing with the general public or members of the educational community. Accordingly, Lakehead District School Board will protect and fully support any employee who is threatened, abused, or put at personal risk in the proper exercise of his/her duties.

3. Defining Violence in the Workplace

Violence can be defined as an act of aggression which produces damaging or hurtful results.

3.1 Three categories of risk are addressed by these procedures:

- 3.1.1 Student and Public Aggression - includes aggressive, hostile, or disruptive behaviour by members of the public (students/parents) either on their premises, in the public domain, at Lakehead Board facilities, on the phone, or any form of written or electronic communications.
- 3.1.2 Workplace Violence - includes physical aggression, threats, intimidation, bullying and temper outbursts. Lakehead District School Board's position is that aggression between employees is unacceptable in any form.
- 3.1.3 Workplace Protection - recognizes that personal tensions can pursue an employee to the workplace. Resentment, rejection, stalking and domestic disputes are among the factors that may compromise workplace security and could lead to an entire work group being put at risk.

3.2 To deal with the low frequency, but high priority that threats of violence have in the learning environment, Human Resources will monitor the internal risk environment of the Board and respond to events that could jeopardize Lakehead Board staff. Human Resources will develop tools to assist principals, managers and supervisors to resolve confirmed threats or acts of violence by: monitoring policy, conducting risk assessments, developing contingency plans, organizing resources, investigating serious incidents and ensuring that there is general awareness of Board practices and procedures to respond to workplace threats.

4. General Procedures

- 4.1 An employee who is seriously threatened or put at personal risk, in any of the three situations described above, is authorized to suspend work if the individual is not a student, terminate contact with the offending party, and to immediately report the circumstances to their supervisor. An employee who is seriously threatened or put at personal risk by a student will ensure the Duty of Care¹ of the student(s) in their charge. The employee will report the circumstances to their supervisor. Supervisors will assess the situation to determine whether:
- 4.1.1 an assault or a serious threat has taken place;
 - 4.1.2 the victim is in need of medical, emotional or other assistance;
 - 4.1.3 when and in what circumstances the original work should be resumed; and
 - 4.1.4 the employee should be reassigned.
- 4.2 Violent Incident Report Form must be submitted to Human Resources by the employee and/or supervisor for all violent encounters, and in all serious cases of aggression. The report must contain:
- 4.2.1 date, time and location of the occurrence;
 - 4.2.2 name(s) of the employee(s)/victim(s);
 - 4.2.3 name(s) and address(s) of the alleged assailant(s);
 - 4.2.4 specific language of the threat;
 - 4.2.5 actions that followed the threat;
 - 4.2.6 prior events or encounters that are relevant to the incident;
 - 4.2.7 the reason for contact between the victim(s) and the aggressor(s);
 - 4.2.8 a summary of events, including the outcome of the encounter;
 - 4.2.9 names and addresses of witnesses and of anyone else who was directly involved in the incident, including the police; and
 - 4.2.10 the supervisor's assessment of the encounter, including his/her recommendation for further action and the disposition of the case.
- 4.3 Minor Incidents
- Minor incidents may be resolved by the supervisor, the employee and the third party, providing the employee consents to having the issue summarily dealt with. Events in the minor category may, for example, include outbursts of intemperate language or signs of temper, where there was no serious intent to cause harm. In such cases a supervisor's intervention could serve to neutralize tension, to draw an apology from the offender and to show the employee that he or she is being supported. Minor incidents are to be reported to Human Resources within one working day. The supervisor will review and forward the completed Violent Incident Report to Human Resources, Health and Safety.

¹ - *The Education Act, Part x, Sec. 264 (e)*

VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE PROCEDURES**4.4 Serious Incidents**

Serious Incidents include assault, confinement, believable threats of assault, abuse or harm, or sabotage. As well, behaviour that disturbs or threatens employees, students and others may be seen as serious. Serious incidents are to be reported to the principal or building manager immediately, who will without delay notify the Superintendent of Education. The supervisor will review and fax the completed Violent Incident Report to the superintendent the same day. Human Resources will be advised of all serious incidents.

5. Workplace Violence

5.1 Hostile exchanges between employees, or in the context of working relationships, are subject to the same rules of law that apply in the greater community. Criminal and Civil actions may result from aggressive or abusive behaviour between workers, in addition to Board sanctions that could include termination. The supervisor will review and forward the completed Violent Incident Report to Human Resources, Health and Safety.

5.2 A potentially more damaging outcome of workplace violence, however, is the impact it has on teamwork and the corporate family. All cases of workplace violence at Lakehead District School Board will be investigated by the principal, manager or supervisor. The investigation will specifically look for serious behaviour problems, the need to prompt an EAP referral, and the greater need to ensure a threat-free working environment for all employees.

6. Workplace Protection

Workplace Protection, in terms of these procedures, refers to the steps taken by management to deal with deviant personalities who may seek to bring violence or disruptive behaviour to Board work locations. Disoriented and alienated persons (not necessarily current employees or students) may find a target for their resentment in the Board. Domestic, economic and personal pressures could precipitate a workplace crisis, as could a random violent act.

7. Human Resources Department

7.1 The Human Resources Department has been organized to respond to all serious incidents of student or public aggression, workplace violence, and workplace protection. In addition, Human Resources can be supported by external consultants in security, psychology, crisis management and other disciplines (Employee Assistance Program).

7.2 The Superintendent of Education will update these Procedures as required by its evaluations of serious incidents. Human Resources will also coordinate awareness and educational programs designed to keep all employees and agents of the company aware of the measures taken to support employee protection.

7.3 The Department will observe the strictest protocols of confidentiality so that employees will be encouraged to report potential and developing situations of violence.

8. Investigation

- 8.1 Investigation serves to protect Board employees from unfounded charges and counter charges. The process quickly documents the record of events, identifies witnesses and their evidence, corroborates facts and collects supporting detail. In most cases, investigation will give direction to, or reinforce, a police investigation.
- 8.2 The police and/or an independent investigator will be called on to look into all serious incidents. The investigator will begin his/her inquiries immediately. If possible the investigator will interview the victim and the alleged offender the same day, and provide a summary report to the Human Resources department within 24 hours. All witness statements will preferably be taken the day of the occurrence. Where that is not practical, the statements will be taken at the earliest opportunity.
- 8.3 Copies of all statements will be attached to the confidential investigative report submitted to Human Resources. Copies will also be provided to the police if they are conducting a related investigation, in which case a summary of the police investigation and its conclusions should also be forwarded to the Superintendent of Education.
- 8.4 If investigation determines the allegations are unfounded, all references will be removed from the individual's file as per statute of limitations.

9. Employee Support

- 9.1 Any employee who feels that a violent situation has not been effectively dealt with at the supervisory level may directly contact the Superintendent of Education to review the circumstances and advise the employee.
- 9.2 Lakehead District School Board will support any employee who has been subject to aggression in the line of work, or in circumstances that lead to charges being laid. The Board will allow the employee paid time off to assist the inquiry and to appear in court. It may also encourage other witnesses to support the administration of justice by indemnifying them from wage loss.
- 9.3 If criminal prosecution for an unprovoked attack on an employee is not entered by the police or if it does not succeed, the Board may elect to support the victim by underwriting the cost of civil litigation for damages. This exceptional option will be decided on by senior management based on the merits of the case.
- 9.4 As a minimum, the Board will ensure that the offender is formally warned or that a "Trespass Notice" is issued. The offender will be advised that such behaviour is illegal and unacceptable, and warned that any repeat act of aggression toward Board employees will result in criminal charges being laid.
- 9.5 In some situations the police will issue this warning to the offender, and will officially record the warning. Where the police are unable or unwilling to cooperate, the warning

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will be given by the Superintendent of Education, who will then formally notify the police of the warning for record purposes.

- 9.6 Incidents involving students will be addressed according to the relevant legislation, policy and procedure applicable to the situation.

Violent incidences will be flagged so that personnel can be alerted to potential volatile behaviours and appropriate training be provided to deal with potential incidences.

- 9.7 Students receiving special education services, whose behaviour(s) or activity(ies) pose a threat to staff or other students, will be dealt with according to the practices/procedures developed to deal with the situation.

10. Review

These procedures shall be reviewed in accordance with Policy Development and Review Policy 2010.

<u>Cross Reference</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>	<u>Legal Reference</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7030 Harassment and Human Rights Policy• 8070 Safe Schools Policy – System Expectations• 8020 Access to School-Board Premises	May 25, 2010	_____
	<u>Date Revised</u>	_____
	April 26, 2016	