

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE

Progressive discipline is a non-punitive, whole-school approach that uses a continuum of preventative, corrective and supportive interventions, supports and consequences to address inappropriate behaviour and to build upon strategies that promote positive behaviours. Consequences include learning opportunities for reinforcing positive behaviour and assisting pupils to make good choices.

Prevention and early intervention are important for assisting pupils to achieve their potential and for maintaining a positive school environment. A positive school environment is effected through programs and activities that focus on building healthy relationships, character development, and civic responsibility, which encourage positive participation of the school community in the life of the school.

Progressive discipline is most effective when dialogue between the school and home regarding pupil achievement, behaviour and expectations is open, courteous and focused on pupil success. It is an expectation of the Board that principals, vice principals and teachers-in-charge consult with parents prior to imposing any pupil specific progressive discipline preventative measures, positive behaviour management strategies or progressive discipline consequences.

Each school is required to develop and implement a school-wide progressive discipline policy, consistent with the Board Student Discipline Policy and Student Discipline Procedures and the Human Rights Code.

Each school is also required to ensure that bullying prevention plans include: (1) awareness raising strategies (2) support strategies, including plans to protect victims; and (3) reporting requirements (please refer to the Bullying Prevention Policy and Procedures). In addition, teaching strategies should include a focus on developing healthy relationships by including bullying prevention throughout the curriculum, preventing homophobia, gender based violence, sexual harassment, inappropriate sexual behaviour, as well as promoting critical media literacy and safe internet use strategies, all of which is to be implemented in a manner consistent with the principles of equity and inclusion.

The teacher, principal or designate should select the most appropriate response to address the pupil's behaviour. Where a pupil has special education and/or ability related needs, the interventions, supports and consequences must be consistent with the expectations for the pupil, including those in the pupil's Individual Education Plan, Behaviour Management Plan and/or Safety Plan.

Progressive discipline includes the use of early and ongoing prevention, intervention strategies and strategies to address inappropriate behaviour. Pupils' parent(s) should be actively engaged in the progressive discipline approach.

Prevention Strategies

Board employees who work with pupils are expected to support pupils to achieve their potential.

Prevention strategies include supporting pupils, student councils and/or school councils that wish to participate in pupil led alliances or other alliances and/or activities promoting healthy relationships.

Where a pupil has reported harassment, bullying or violence as a result of one or more immutable characteristics, including on any grounds protected by the Human Rights Code, or inappropriate sexual behaviour, that pupil shall be supported by the school with the provision of contact information about professional supports, such as community agencies, public health facilitates, and telecommunications forums, such as a help-phone-line or website, that the pupil may access directly for information, assistance and/or support in an effort to promote and/or develop healthy relationships.

In accordance with Policy Program Memorandum 149, schools shall be required by the Board to work with agencies and/or organizations in their community that have professional expertise with respect to issues of gender based violence, sexual assault, homophobia and inappropriate sexual behaviour. A current list of community contacts will be created and maintained electronically by the Board and made available to all schools, staff and pupils on the Board's internet and intranet websites. A Protocol outlining the process for entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with an appropriate community agency and/or organization shall be made available to schools.

Schools shall provide public health units under the responsibility of the local officer of medical health the ability to deliver their mandated public health curriculum.

The Board also expects principals/vice principals to review and amend, as appropriate, Individual Education Plans, Behaviour Management Plans and Safety Plans at regular intervals and following an incident to ensure that every pupil with ability related needs is receiving appropriate accommodation up to the point of undue hardship.

Other preventative practices include:

- Human Rights strategy pursuant to PPM 119;
- anti-bullying and violence prevention programs;
- mentorship programs;
- student success strategies;
- character education;
- citizenship development;
- student leadership;
- promoting healthy student relationships; and
- promoting healthy lifestyles.

Positive Practices

In order to promote and support appropriate and positive pupil behaviours that contribute to creating and sustaining safe, comforting and accepting learning and teaching environments that encourage and support pupils to reach their full potential, the Board supports the use of positive practices for: (1) prevention, and (2) positive behaviour management.

Positive behaviour management practices include:

- program modifications or accommodations;
- class placement;
- positive encouragement and reinforcement;
- individual, peer and group counselling;
- conflict resolution/dispute resolution;
- mentorship programs;
- promotion of healthy student relationships;
- sensitivity programs;
- safety plans;
- school, Board and community support programs; and
- student success strategies.

The Board recognizes that, in some circumstances, positive practices might not be effective or sufficient to address inappropriate pupil behaviour. In such circumstances, the Board supports the use of progressive discipline consequences up to and including expulsion from all schools of the Board.

In circumstances where a pupil will receive a consequence for his/her behaviour, it is the expectation of the Board that the principle of progressive discipline, consistent with the Human Rights Code, Ministry of Education direction and PPM 145, will be applied in the least restrictive manner to be effective, and so as not to add to the historical disadvantage of racialized pupils and/or pupils with disabilities.

Early and Ongoing Intervention Strategies - Progressive Discipline Consequences

A teacher or the principal or vice principal, as appropriate, may utilise early and/or ongoing intervention strategies to prevent unsafe or inappropriate behaviours. These may include:

- contact with pupil's parent(s);
- oral reminders;
- review of expectations;
- written work assignment addressing the behaviour, that have a learning component;
- volunteer services to the school community;
- conflict mediation and resolution;
- peer mentoring;
- referral to counselling; and/or
- consultation between two or more of the parties.

In all cases where ongoing intervention strategies are used, the pupil's parents should be consulted.

The teacher, principal or vice principal should keep a record for each pupil with whom intervention strategies are utilized. The record should include:

- name of the pupil;
- date of the incident or behaviour;
- nature of the incident or behaviour;
- progressive discipline approach used;
- outcome; and/or
- contact with the pupil's parent (unless the pupil is an adult pupil).

Addressing Inappropriate Behaviour

If a pupil has displayed inappropriate behaviour the principal or vice principal may utilize a range of interventions, supports, and consequences that are (1) developmentally appropriate, and (2) include opportunities for pupils to focus on improving their behaviour.

Inappropriate behaviour includes any behaviour that disrupts the positive school climate and/or has a negative impact on the school community.

Inappropriate behaviour may also include, but is not limited to, one of the following infractions for which a suspension may be imposed:

- any act considered by the principal to be injurious to the moral tone of the school;
- any act considered by the principal to be injurious to the physical or mental well-being of any member of the school community; and
- any act considered by the principal to be contrary to the Provincial, Board or school Code of Conduct.

If a pupil has engaged in inappropriate behaviour and it is the first time that the pupil has engaged in such behaviour, the principal or designate may choose to use a progressive discipline strategy to address the infraction.

Interventions may include:

- meeting with the pupil's parent(s), pupil and principal;
- referral to a community agency for anger management or substance abuse counselling/intervention;
- detentions;
- withdrawal of privileges;
- withdrawal from class;
- restitution for damages;
- restorative practices; and
- transfer to another class or school.

In some cases, short-term suspension may also be considered a useful progressive discipline approach.

(material referenced from PPM 145)

Factors to Consider Before Deciding to Utilize a Progressive Discipline Consequence to Address Inappropriate Behaviour

Before applying any progressive discipline consequence, the principal/vice principal shall consider whether or not the progressive discipline consequence might have a disproportionate impact on a pupil protected by the Human Rights Code, including but not limited to race and ability and whether or not accommodation to the point of undue hardship is required.

In all cases where a progressive discipline consequence is being considered to address an inappropriate behaviour, the principal or vice principal must:

- consider the particular pupil and circumstances, including considering the mitigating or other factors;
- consider the nature and severity of the behaviour;
- consider the impact of the inappropriate behaviour on the school climate; and
- consult with the pupil's parent(s) (unless the pupil is an adult pupil).

Mitigating Factors

The mitigating factors to be considered by the principal before deciding whether to use a progressive discipline approach to address the inappropriate behaviour are:

- whether the pupil has the ability to control his or her behaviour;
- whether the pupil has the ability to understand the foreseeable consequences of his or her behaviour; and
- whether the pupil's continuing presence in the school does or does not create an unacceptable risk to the safety of any other individual at the school.

Other Factors to be Considered

1. The pupil's academic, discipline, and personal history.
2. Whether other progressive discipline has been attempted with the pupil, and if so, the progressive discipline approach(es) that has/have been attempted and any success or failure.
3. Whether the infraction for which the pupil might be disciplined was related to any harassment of the pupil because of race, colour, ethnic origin, place of origin, religion, creed, ability, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation or harassment for any other reason related to an immutable characteristic.
4. The impact of the discipline on the pupil's prospects for further education.
5. The pupil's age.
6. Where the pupil has an IEP or ability related needs:
 - whether the behaviour causing the incident was a manifestation of the pupil's ability;
 - whether appropriate individualized accommodation has been provided to the point of undue hardship; and
 - whether a suspension is likely to result in aggravating or worsening the pupil's behaviour or conduct or whether a suspension is likely to result in a greater likelihood of further inappropriate conduct.
7. Whether or not the pupil's continuing presence at the school creates an unacceptable risk to the safety of anyone in the school.

If the pupil's continuing presence in the school creates an unacceptable risk to the safety of others in the school, then a progressive discipline approach may not be appropriate.