

STUDENT SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Background

In order to provide the greatest opportunity for healthy student growth and development, the school environment must be free from the use of alcohol and drugs*. The District shares responsibility with students, parents and the community for addressing problems associated with the use and abuse of such substances.

(*For the purposes of this Administrative Procedure, “alcohol and drugs” refers to alcohol and drugs prohibited or restricted under the Food and Drug Act, Cannabis Control and Licensing Act, Cannabis Distribution Act and the Narcotic Control Act, and also includes misused prescription drugs.)

The District prohibits the use of alcohol and drugs by students while on school property or at school-sponsored events. The District supports a proactive and comprehensive approach to substance abuse which emphasizes preventative curriculum, early intervention, counseling and disciplinary actions.

Procedures

1. The District will:
 - 1.1. Provide students with age appropriate instruction on the prevention of substance abuse;
 - 1.2. Encourage and support the identification of and early intervention into problems of substance abuse by students through utilization of school as well as community resources;
 - 1.3. Provide fair and equitable response procedures and consequences regarding substance related infractions;
 - 1.4. Provide continued support for the services provided by school-based student services personnel;
 - 1.5. Provide in-service for administrators, counselors and teachers regarding implementation of this Administrative Procedure.
2. All employees of the District share responsibility for increasing their awareness and knowledge of:
 - 2.1. This Administrative Procedure;
 - 2.2. The incidence and identification of substance abuse; and
 - 2.3. Their duty to report all cases of substance abuse to the Principal.

3. Staff will encourage, model and teach students to develop attitudes and effective life skills that promote healthy decisions. The curricula for teaching substance abuse prevention are prescribed in “Physical and Health Education” K to 10. In addition, the District supports other school and community initiatives such as the DARE (Drug Awareness Resistance Education) Program and the Assets for Youth initiative which may be available. The objectives of preventive curricula are:
 - 3.1. To promote positive self-worth and personal confidence in students;
 - 3.2. To help students differentiate between the medicinal and harmful use of drugs;
 - 3.3. To help students develop effective decision-making, communication and refusal skills; and
 - 3.4. To promote healthy alternatives to mood altering substances.
4. The District will provide appropriate support and intervention within its resources to students who possess/use and/or abuse drugs and alcohol. The focus will be the early identification of at-risk students who display irregular behaviour, inappropriate decision-making and declining personal performance. Intervention will be made available to at-risk students and/or first-time offenders by counselors or community agencies, as appropriate. Positive and confidential help will be given to students who voluntarily seek assistance in overcoming substance abuse and problems.
5. When, in the course of his/her duties, any District staff member has reason to believe that any student is in direct or indirect possession of any substance as defined above, it is the duty of that staff member to refer the matter to the School Principal or designate.
 - 5.1. Indirect possession would include having another person store or possess the substance.
6. When a Principal has reason to believe that a student, while attending school or involved in an official school function, is in possession or is under the influence of a substance as defined above, it is the duty of the administrator to:
 - 6.1. Ensure the personal safety of the student and others;
 - 6.2. Determine an appropriate course of action. This may include disciplinary processes and/or the development of an intervention and support plan as appropriate.
 - 6.3. Dependent on the individual circumstances and the age and grade of the student, the administrator will consider the following in the development of an appropriate plan of action in consultation with counselor(s) and parents:
 - 6.3.1. Referral to school-based Youth Worker (where available);
 - 6.3.2. Referral to community agencies;
 - 6.3.3. Suspension of five days or less; and
 - 6.3.4. Notification of police when deemed appropriate by the Principal.
7. When any staff member feels a student's substance use or other risk factors may put the student at extreme risk of harm, it is his/her duty to report the concern to the Ministry for Children and Family Development – Children Protection Branch.

8. Consequences

- 8.1. The possession, consumption/use, sale or distribution of alcohol or drugs at school functions or while under the jurisdiction of the school will result in appropriate consequences pursuant to Administrative Procedure 350 – District Student Code of Conduct, Administrative Procedure 162 - Tobacco, Cannabis and Vapor Free Environment, and/or Administrative Procedure 355 – Student Behaviour and Discipline. These may include definite or indefinite suspension, referral to community agencies, and notification to the RCMP.

9. Drug Trafficking

- 9.1. Where there are reasonable grounds to conclude that a student is in possession of a substance for the purposes of selling, supplying or making available at school functions or while under the jurisdiction of the school, the Principal is to normally suspend the student immediately, inform the parents, and report the incident to the police.

Reference: Sections 6, 7, 8, 17, 20, 22, 26, 65, 79, 85, 177 School Act
Liquor Control and Licensing Act

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