

POSSESSION OR USE OF WEAPONS

Background

The District believes that students, staff and visitors to a school have the right to pursue their affairs in a safe and protective environment. The District 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.

Definition

A weapon shall be defined as an object or instrument used to fight, intimidate, destroy, defeat, physically injure, or jeopardize the safety of another person.

Procedures

1. Weapon Brought to School Inadvertently
 - 1.1. In the case of a student who inadvertently brings to school an instrument or object that could be considered to be a weapon, but who has not:
 - 1.1.1. Publicly informed other students of control or possession,
 - 1.1.2. displayed the weapon, or
 - 1.1.3. used the weapon in the school, on the way to or from school, at breaks or lunch, or at any school event on or off school premises,the student must immediately hand over the weapon to an adult employee who will confiscate the object or instrument and transfer it to the appropriate Principal or Vice-Principal along with a report.
 - 1.2. In these cases, the Principal or Vice-Principal shall take appropriate action to the situation and inform the student's parents about the matter as soon as possible. The administrative officer may then return the weapon to the parents.
2. Use, Control or Possession of a Weapon
 - 2.1. Disciplinary action shall be taken against any student who has:
 - 2.1.1. used an object or instrument in a manner described in the definition above;
 - 2.1.2. publicly informed others of control or possession of the object or instrument;
 - 2.1.3. displayed the object or instrument, or
 - 2.1.4. intended, actually provided, supplied or sold the object or instrument to others.
 - 2.2. Any District employee is authorized to confiscate the object or instrument and, when so doing, shall report the incident to the appropriate Principal or Vice-Principal or their supervisor.

3. Disciplinary Action

Any use of a weapon is to result in significant disciplinary action, including suspension, initiation of the Level 1 Threat Assessment (VTRA) and referral to the Director of Instruction, in determining the level of disciplinary action to be taken, in cases where weapons are involved and not used, the Principal or Vice-Principal shall consider all the following:

- 3.1. the level of intent to injure, intimidate, threaten, jeopardize or cause other persons to have concern for their health, safety or well-being while at school or District sites, on school trips or at any school or function on or off premises;
- 3.2. the type of object or instrument that was used, controlled or in possession;
- 3.3. the type of object or instrument provided, supplied, or sold, along with the relevant circumstances;
- 3.4. the level or potential level of safety and well-being of others that was, or could have been, compromised;
- 3.5. the previous discipline record of the student(s) regarding bullying (including physical, emotional and verbal), disobedience, threats, fighting, and/or drug or alcohol use related to the above;
- 3.6. previously documented incidents involving the student's use, possession, supply or control of such objects or instruments in any school jurisdiction or community;
- 3.7. any extraordinary circumstances involved in the situation.

4. Involvement of Police

- 4.1. Nothing in this Administrative Procedure shall prevent the Principal or Vice-Principal from contacting and involving the police when it is deemed prudent or necessary.

5. General District Standard

- 5.1. Given the individual circumstances and situations involved, it is not possible to have a uniform response. However, the District desires a generally consistent approach in those situations where there is similarity of incidents. The Principal or Vice-Principal are to consult with the Superintendent regarding possible similar previous incidents in other schools and the level of discipline imposed. The Superintendent is responsible for ensuring that a general District approach is maintained.

6. Suspension to District Office

- 6.1. After consideration of the factors in section 2 of this Administrative Procedure, the Principal or Vice-Principal may determine that the situation warrants a suspension to the Board. In these cases, the suspension shall be referred to the Superintendent or, Designate. Whenever possible, the administrative officer shall bring the confiscated weapon to the hearing.

7. Determination by Superintendent or Designate

- 7.1. The Superintendent may return the student to the school, lengthen the suspension, transfer the student to another school in the District, or make alternative arrangements including a requirement for participation in community-based counselling, community justice programs or involvement with community-based law enforcement agencies.

7.2. In certain situations, the Superintendent may inform the Board of an expulsion of a student from any school or site or any District service.

Reference: Sections 6, 7, 8, 17, 20, 22, 26, 65, 79, 85 School Act

Adopted: February 26, 2002

Revised: June 25, 2019, September 2022