



## 1. Purpose

The Board is committed to providing appropriate and targeted support and intervention to all of our students who may be particularly at risk for victimization. School staff who work directly with students are required to support all students, including those who instigate or who are victims of serious student incidents. Staff will provide contact information about professional supports such as public health units, HELP phone lines, or other community agencies that offer the appropriate type of confidential support that reflect, or at least respect, Catholic moral values.

Board employees are required to address all allegations of gender-based violence, homophobia, sexual harassment, inappropriate sexual behaviour and bullying, and to act in a timely, sensitive and supportive manner. As such, the Board is committed to the development and promotion of prevention and awareness strategies aimed at all members of the school community to address these issues.

## 2. Procedure

2.1 Prevention and strategies for raising awareness will be consistent with:

- a) the **Pastoral Guidelines to Assist Students of Same-Sex Orientation** by the Education Commission of the Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops, *and*
- b) requirements for IEPs for students with special needs, including requirements regarding accommodations and modifications.

2.2 All schools will conduct anonymous school climate surveys of their students every two years and they are required to share climate survey results with their Safe Schools teams.

2.3 The Board and its schools will work with agencies/organizations who have knowledge/expertise in gender-based violence, sexual assault, homophobia, sexual harassment, and inappropriate sexual behaviour to provide appropriate support to students, parents and teachers in addressing these issues by:

- a) maintaining an up-to-date contact list of agencies/organizations that have professional expertise and knowledge in these areas;
- b) make the list available to staff and students of every school; *and*
- c) ensuring that all schools provide access to public health units to deliver their mandated public health curriculum, as long as these agencies deliver the curriculum in accordance



with Catholic moral principles and under the supervision of qualified Catholic Board personnel.

- 2.4 The Board will utilize a range of prevention programs, interventions, supports, and consequences, including circumstances in which short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion may be the response required (see Administrative Procedure B2:4, Suspension/Expulsion Programs).
- 2.5 The Board will provide for ongoing dialogue with parents on student achievement and behaviour at every step of the progressive discipline continuum.
- 2.6 Issues of gender-based violence, homophobia, sexual harassment and inappropriate sexual behaviour are to be addressed (when appropriate) in school improvement plans by:
  - a) outlining the Board-wide progressive discipline plan (see Administrative Procedure B2:3, Progressive Discipline); *and*
  - b) outlining support strategies for students, including plans to protect victims.