



# Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board

*A Great Place to Learn and A Great Place to Work!*

Chair of the Board: Carl Pitman

Director of Education: Kathy Soule

## Safe Schools Advisory Committee PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

Friday, January 8, 2010 – 1:00 p.m.  
(W.R. Kirk School)

- Present:** C. Portt, System Principal, HPEDSB; J. Rogers, Superintendent, HPEDSB, Ken Manderville, Student Success, HPEDSB; K. Chow, HAPE-OTL; B. Edwards, HAPE-OTL; D. Howes, CUPE; E. Doyle, ETFO; K. Fisk, ETFO, M. Moon, OSSTF; T. Goodfellow, SEAC; D. Reynolds, HPEDSB, D. Ludington, Quinte West OPP; D. Tregenza, Facility Services, HPEDSB; S. Burke, Stirling-Rawdon, OPP; G. Bongard, Belleville Police Services, J. Ling, Belleville Police Services; M. Orr, Belleville Police Services, K. Whyte, Centre Hastings OPP; ; N. Lott, Prince Edward OPP; L. Woodley, Secondary OPC; S. Steele, HPEDSB; T. Johnston, Health & Safety Officer, HPEDSB; W. Sutherland, HPEDSB; L. Brant, Tyendinaga Education Centre; and Terry Swift, Childrens' Mental Health Services.
- Regrets:** S. Cox, Bancroft OPP; G. McCurdy, HPEDSB; H. Seres, OPC HPEDSB; M. deSnoo, HPE Learning Foundation; and D. Stacey, Hastings CAS.
- Absent:** B. Foley, Stirling-Rawdon, OPP; E. Sorensen, Curriculum Services, HPEDSB; M. Norton, ITS, HPEDSB; B. Clapp, Tri-Board Transportation; C. Pitman, Trustee, S. Wowk, Tri-Board Transportation; S. Willman, Student Trustee, G. Platt, Student Trustee, K. Donnell, Communications Officer, HPEDSB; L. Knell, Bay of Quinte Safe Communities; P. Fong, ITS HPEDSB; R. McGall, Superintendent, HPEDSB; T. Reid, HPEDSB and T. Fitzgibbon, Superintendent, HPEDSB.
- Minutes:** S. Cole, Education Services

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### Welcome and Introductions

C. Portt welcomed everyone to the meeting and expressed appreciation for their support, feedback and direction regarding policy and program development as it pertains to the new safe schools legislation. C. Portt indicated that the next piece of legislation Bill 157 – *Keeping Our Kids Safe at School Act* comes into effect February 1, 2010 and refers to revisions to suspension and expulsion of students as referred to in Policy Program Memoranda 144 and 145 updated October, 2009. A Safe Schools training slideshow will be reviewed with the Committee detailing a summary of the two revised policy program memorandum. The slideshow will also be used for training of staff on January 29, 2010. The purpose of the training is to give an overview to staff on the new safe schools legislation and how it impacts on school boards, community organizations and policing agencies. C. Portt noted that the Board is looking for direction and suggestions on how community partners can assist with the development of the new procedure which is more specific and focused based.



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## **Bill 157 – Keeping Our Kids Safe at School**

At this point, C. Portt referred the Committee to the Ministry Safe Schools training document and gave an overview by slideshow of the requirements of Bill 157 as it pertains to all board employees:

- Requires all board employees to report to the principal if they are aware that a student may have engaged in an activity for which the student may be considered for suspension or expulsion;
- Requires principals to contact parents of victims in such incidents unless the victim is 18 years old or over; the victim is 16 to 17 years old and has withdrawn from parental control or in the opinion of the principal, doing so would put the victim at risk of harm from the parent;
- Requires board employees who work directly with students to respond to incidents that may have a negative impact on the school climate (this behavior includes, but is not limited to, racist or sexist comments that are unacceptable in schools)
- Permits a principal to delegate his/her powers to a vice-principal of the school or a teacher-in-charge.

## **Reporting to Principal**

It was noted that the Board included an additional three or more infractions for activities leading to suspension. C. Portt advised of the importance of reporting to the principal on the Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form Part 1 and the principal acknowledging receipt of the report on Form Part 2. She indicated that the Board will be revising their procedures and policies regarding bullying and progressive discipline. The legislation has put in place best practices as it pertains to student safety in schools – everyone must do something.

Members raised concerns regarding confidentiality of the person victimized; not revealing to parent/guardian, re a student's sexual orientation; and that you need to be careful what you inform the parent – could be abused themselves because of revealing information. The government is being more specific on what you can and cannot reveal for the safety of students.

It was further noted that the requirement for reporting creates an additional piece of paperwork and further expectations for staff. Staff will be trained (3 per school) on January 29, 2010 and principals will be requested to review the new procedure with staff on the PA Day February 1, 2010. Other concerns were raised on when police would be called and what happens if an incident is not reported.

## **Notification to Parents**

J. Rogers reviewed the requirement of principals to notify the parent/guardian of the victim and information that must be disclosed and not disclosed, i.e: name of aggressor – no aggressor personal information can be shared with parents of the victim. She reiterated the obligation of all board employees to report students behaving in such a way that is likely to have a negative impact on the



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school climate. J. Rogers was informed that on page 21 of the training guide, custodians were not mentioned when referring to response by employees of the board.

## **Support for Students**

J. Rogers referred to the training slides and the requirement of all board employees to take allegations of gender-based violence, homophobia, sexual harassment, inappropriate sexual behavior and bullying seriously to support students in a timely manner. All staff are required to provide contact information for professional assistance to students and have information available to students who wish to discuss personal issues. This could be accomplished by referring a student to personnel in the school who can assist the student. The Board is legally responsible for reporting incidents. She noted the importance of building on professional relationships with parents, community agencies and the police. On a question, it was noted that the principal would make the decision, after investigation, on whether or not to take action on the inappropriate behavior. Any action taken would be in accordance with the Board's progressive discipline procedures. It was also agreed that parents and guardians need to know what is happening at the school level and the importance of communicating this information.

## **Prevention and Awareness**

The Ministry of Education released school climate surveys for students in Grades 4 to 6 and Grades 7 to 12. Schools can adopt these surveys to use in their schools to address the issues of bullying, harassment and equity. A school climate survey is also available for staff and parents/guardians to complete to also assist in the development of strategies and awareness. These survey tools are available on the Safe Schools website and can be shared with respective safe school teams.

## **Monitoring and Review**

In order to monitor and review progressive discipline policies, boards have been directed to evaluate the effectiveness of their safe schools policies and programs every two years; the school climate survey can be used to fulfill this requirement. Boards are requested to revise their policy statements on progressive discipline to include homophobia, gender-based violence, sexual harassment and inappropriate sexual behavior. Building partnerships and working with community agencies and organizations who have knowledge and expertise in these areas is a huge piece of the legislation. Boards are to maintain up-to-date contact lists of various agencies and organization and have these available to staff and students.

## **Delegation of Authority**

A principal may delegate his/her authority to a vice-principal in his/her absence or a teacher should the principal and vice-principal be absent from school. This must be in writing. Final decisions regarding suspension or expulsion of a student for more than 5 school days rests solely with the Board.



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## **Resources**

Safe school resources will be available shortly on the website – Bill 157 – Keeping Our Kids Safe at School Act, Safe School training slides, Policy and Program Memorandum, School Climate surveys, and Administrative Procedure 378 - Student Discipline, Bullying Prevention and Intervention.

## **Feedback/suggestions**

A suggestion was made that through training and assistance from community agencies, specific examples on appropriate responses to give to students and how to react/respond effectively using the correct language/words be available to staff.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m. C. Portt thanked the Committee for their feedback and suggestions.

## **Next Meeting**

To be announced.