

1. Rationale

The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) is committed to the ideals and philosophy of its Strategic Priorities, to the goals and principles of the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, and to providing a working and learning environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity.

It is further recognized that, beyond the provisions of the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, every individual has an equal right to learn and work in an environment that is free from objectionable behaviour.

This policy provides the foundation for procedures to ensure that workplace conflicts attributed to objectionable behaviour are dealt with expeditiously apart from Policy No. 3031, Workplace Harassment.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 Objectionable Behaviour is often, but not always, persistent, ongoing, vexatious conduct or communication in any form, of attitudes, beliefs or actions towards an individual in the workplace which might reasonably be known to be unwelcome. A single serious act or expression can constitute objectionable behaviour.
- 2.2 Objectionable behaviour can take the form of intimidation or any action or communication that humiliates insults, threatens or degrades. It includes behaviour that would be described as unwanted attention or other inappropriate behaviour that could reasonably be expected to cause physical, emotional or psychological distress.
- 2.3 Supervisors exercising their normal duties and responsibilities, including training, direction, instruction, evaluation, counselling and discipline, is not considered to be objectionable behaviour.
- 2.4 Improper use of authority or position to undermine, sabotage or otherwise interfere with the career of an employee (or academic success of a student) constitutes objectionable behaviour.
- 2.5 Workplace is any place where employees, students and other users perform work or work-related duties or functions. Schools and school-related activities, such as extracurricular activities and excursions, comprise the workplace, as do board offices and facilities. Conferences and training sessions fall within the ambit of this policy.

3. Guidelines

The Workplace Conflict Resolution policy applies to all board students, employees, trustees and other users such as members of consultative committees, clients of the board, parents/guardians, volunteers, permit holders, contractors, and employees of other organizations not related to the board but who nevertheless work on, or are invited onto, board premises.

4. Duties and Responsibilities

- 4.1 A school community is a place that promotes responsibility, respect, civility and academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment. All persons in its learning/working environment will:
- 4.1.1 respect differences in people, their ideas and opinions;
 - 4.1.2 treat one another with dignity and respect at all times, and especially when there is disagreement;
 - 4.1.3 respect the rights of others;
 - 4.1.4 show proper care and regard for board property and for property of others;
 - 4.1.5 demonstrate honesty and integrity; and,
 - 4.1.6 respect the need of others to work in an environment of learning and teaching.
- 4.2 The SCDSB has a duty to maintain an environment respectful of human rights and free of objectionable behaviour for all persons served by it. It must be vigilant in upholding this duty. The board expects that all persons in its learning/working environment will:
- 4.2.1 support individuals who are, or have been, targets of objectionable behaviour;
 - 4.2.2 prevent objectionable behaviour through training;
 - 4.2.3 take all allegations of objectionable behaviour seriously and respond promptly;
 - 4.2.4 provide positive role models; and,
 - 4.2.5 not demonstrate, allow or condone behaviour contrary to the policy, including reprisal.
- 4.3 The Superintendent of Human Resource Services, or designate, has the responsibility to designate resources for ensuring the implementation of, and compliance with, this policy.
- 4.4 The Superintendent of Human Resource Services, or designate, will ensure that new employees are aware of this policy and related procedures and ensure that it will receive profile at orientations for new principals and supervisors and at meetings of parents/guardians and students.
- 4.5 Supervisors have a specific duty to implement the procedures related to this policy. This duty includes the prevention of, and the response to, objectionable behaviour and the education of staff, students and the school community.

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4.6 All those who are covered by this policy are encouraged to report alleged occurrences of objectionable behaviour and are entitled to have access to the dispute resolution process. Every attempt should be made to resolve matters through an informal resolution. The first step is to inform the individual that his/her behaviour is inappropriate and must stop immediately. Many disputes can be resolved quickly and effectively using this approach. Should the attempt to resolve the matter at the informal stage be unsuccessful, the objectionable behaviour should be reported to the supervisor for a formal investigation, in accordance with APM A4075 – Dispute Resolution Procedure Arising From Workplace Harassment or Objectionable Behaviour.

5. Administrative Procedures

The Director of Education is authorized to provide the administrative procedures necessary to implement this policy.

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[APM A4075](#)