

PUBLIC CIVILITY IN SCHOOLS

Background

The rights of employees, like all other rights, are based on the nature of the human person and his/her transcendent dignity. The Church's authority to teach on social justice has determined that one's personality in the workplace should be safeguarded without suffering any affront to one's conscience or personal dignity.

Furthermore, in its efforts to support the intent of Section 256 of the Education Act, the school division is committed to maintaining orderly educational and administrative processes in keeping schools and administrative offices free from disruptions and preventing unauthorized persons from entering school/district grounds.

This Administrative Procedure promotes mutual respect, civility and orderly conduct among district employees, parents and the public. The expectations of this procedure are not intended to deprive any person of his/her right to resolve issues of concern, but only to maintain a safe, harassment-free workplace for our students and staff. In the interest of presenting divisional employees as positive role models to the children of our schools, as well as the greater community, Holy Spirit Catholic School Division encourages positive communication and discourages volatile, hostile, or aggressive actions. The district expects public cooperation with this endeavor.

Value and Core Commitment Link

"All God's Children"

- "We honour diversity."
- "Our schools provide a welcoming, safe, and accepting sanctuary."

Procedure

1. All staff members have a duty to the public to be fully cooperative in the fulfillment of the school division's mission, vision, values, and goals. Furthermore, all staff and volunteers are called to be solution-focused in addressing parental complaints.
2. No person shall:
 - 2.1 Disrupt or threaten to disrupt school/office operations;
 - 2.2 Threaten the health and safety of students or staff;
 - 2.3 Willfully cause property damage;

- 2.4 Use loud and/or offensive language;
 - 2.5 Harass staff with frequent and abusive communications;
 - 2.6 Access instructional and administrative environments without the prior approval of the Principal.
- 3. Members of the public, who demonstrate a continued pattern of unauthorized entry on school division property, will be directed to leave school or school division property promptly by the Principal or administrative designate, or the Superintendent or administrative designate.
 - 4. If any member of the public uses obscenities or speaks in a loud, insulting and/or demeaning manner, the employee to whom the remarks are directed will calmly and politely correct the individual to communicate civilly and in a constructive manner.
 - 5. Division staff are expected to respect and support corrective and cooperative actions that are made by members of the public who have initially exercised inappropriate communication in resolving their concerns.
 - 6. If corrective action is willfully not taken by the abusing party, the division employee will verbally notify the abusing party that his/her participation in the meeting, conference or telephone conversation is terminated and, if the meeting or conference is on district premises, the offending person will be politely and clearly directed to leave promptly. Furthermore, if applicable, such individuals will be informed of rights to appeal a decision of this nature to the employee's immediate supervisor.
 - 7. When an individual is directed to leave under the above circumstances, the Principal or designate shall inform the person that the basis for such direction is based upon divisional standards for civility, and if necessary, Section 256 of the Education Act.
 - 8. If an individual refuses to leave the school and school division property upon request, or returns before the applicable period of time, as further arranged by the Superintendent or designate, the Principal or Superintendent may notify law enforcement officials.
 - 9. Should the Principal feel that supportive community law enforcement assistance is required to assist civility in dealing with the public, the School Resource Officer or police may be contacted at any time.
 - 10. When it is determined by staff that a member of the public is in the process of violating the provisions of this Policy, an effort should be made by staff to:
 - 10.1 contact the Principal
 - 10.2 failing 10.1, for a perceived serious offence, contact law enforcement.

11. If possible, to deter escalation of behaviours previously noted, or upon request, a staff member is expected to explain the basis for interventions used within this procedure.
i.e.) "District Policy does not allow individuals to: [insert elements of 2.1 – 2.6], please refrain from such behaviour."
12. Following any violation of the provisions of this Policy, the employee will immediately notify his/her supervisor and provide a report of the incident on the attached form.
13. Should staff perceive an unfavorable encounter with a member of the public has been harassing in nature, reference to entitlements under Administrative Procedure 104: Harassment should be addressed.
14. Divisional office will provide professional development on how to deal with difficult people, upon a school's request.

References

**John Paul II, Encyclical Letter, Laborem Exercens (1981).
Sections 33, 52, 53, 197, 204, 222, 256, Education Act**