



Policy Section: **Personnel/Employee Matters**

**700**

Policy Name: **Respectful Working and Learning Environment: Conflict Prevention and Resolution**

**708**

## **Policy Statement**

The Keewatin-Patricia District School Board (KPDSB) is committed to providing a working and learning environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. The KPDSB has policies and procedures to deal with Human Rights Complaints. 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.

## **Rationale**

Every student, employee, Trustee, parent/guardian, and community member has the right to equal treatment and to learn and work in an environment free of objectionable behaviour.

This Policy is intended to provide a greater awareness of the value of establishing and maintaining respectful working and learning environments and of responsiveness to the damaging effects of objectionable behaviour. Procedures have been developed to ensure that workplace disputes attributed to objectionable behaviour are dealt with expeditiously.

## **Scope**

This Policy on Respectful Working and Learning Environment: Conflict Prevention and Resolution, applies to all KPDSB employees, Trustees, and other users such as members of consultative committees, clients of the KPDSB, parents/guardians, volunteers, permit holders, contractors, and employees of other organizations not related to the KPDSB but who nevertheless work on or are invited onto KPDSB premises. This Policy also covers objectionable behaviour by such persons which are proven to have repercussions that adversely affect the KPDSB's learning or working environment.

### Cross Reference

#### Policies

207, Trustee Code of Conduct  
321, Safe and Supportive Schools  
322, Code of Conduct  
330, Character Development  
329, Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour  
332, Accessibility Standards for Customer Service  
503, Equity and Inclusive Education  
706, Employee Code of Conduct  
709, Workplace Harassment  
710, Attendance Support  
711, Workplace Violence

#### Procedures

706, Employee Code of Conduct  
708, Respectful Working and Learning Environment: Conflict Prevention and Resolution  
709, Workplace Harassment

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14/06/2011; 10/11/2015; 06/06/2018

Review By: 2022

The rights of students to a respectful working and learning environment, free from objectionable behaviour, are dealt with under other appropriate policies, legislation, or regulations, including but not limited to the Education Act, and other KPDSB policies and procedures, including but not limited to, the KPDSB's Code of Conduct and Safe and Supportive School policies.

## **Definitions**

**“Objectionable Behaviour”** is often, but not always, persistent, ongoing vexatious conduct or communication in any form, of attitudes, beliefs, or actions towards an individual or group which might reasonably be known to be unwelcome. A single act or expression can constitute objectionable behaviour, for example, if it is a serious violation or it is from a person in authority. Objectionable behaviour may be either subtle or blunt. It can take the form of intimidation or threats. Examples of objectionable behaviour may include, but are not limited to, intimidation, verbal abuse or threats including yelling, screaming, or offensive language, excluding or isolating people from worksite activities, undermining responsibility, assigning impossible or meaningless tasks unrelated to their work, deliberately inconveniencing particular staff members, withholding information essential to do a task properly, or spreading malicious rumours.

Objectionable behaviour is not the normal exercise of supervisory responsibilities, including training, direction, instruction, performance appraisal, counselling, and discipline.

Improper use of authority or position to undermine, sabotage, or otherwise interfere with the career of an employee or academic success of a student can constitute objectionable behaviour.

**“Working and Learning Environment”** 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 this environment, as do Board offices and facilities. Conferences and training sessions fall within the scope of this policy. Utilization of technology is also included (i.e., fax, e-mail, telephone, mailboxes, social media, etc.).

## **Guidelines**

### **1. Duties and Responsibilities**

An educational community is a place that promotes responsibility, respect, civility, and academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment. All persons in its learning and working environment will:

- Respect differences in people, their ideas, and their opinions;

- Treat one another with dignity and respect at all times, especially when there is disagreement ;
- Respect the rights of others;
- Show proper care and regard for KPDSB property and for the property of others;
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity; and
- Respect the need of others to work in an environment of learning and teaching.

The KPDSB 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 ever vigilant of anything that might interfere with this duty. The KPDSB expects that all persons in its learning and working environment will:

- Be aware of and sensitive to issues of objectionable behaviour;
- Support individuals who are, or have been, targets of objectionable behaviour;
- Prevent objectionable behaviour through training;
- Take all allegations of objectionable behaviour seriously and respond promptly;
- Provide positive role models; and
- Not demonstrate, allow, or condone behaviour contrary to this Policy, including reprisal.

The Human Resources Department has all the responsibility to designate resources for ensuring the implementation of, and compliance with, these Procedures.

Supervisory and managerial personnel, including school administrators and field supervisors, have a specific duty to implement these Procedures. This duty includes the prevention of and the response to objectionable behaviour, the education of staff, and the school community.

## 2. Reporting Complaints

All those who are covered by this Policy have a right to report objectionable behaviour and are entitled to have access to the dispute resolution processes. Every attempt should be made to resolve matters through an informal resolution. The first step is for the person who has been offended to verbally inform the individual that their behaviour is unwelcome and must stop immediately. Many disputes can be resolved quickly and effectively using this approach. In order to stop objectionable behaviour, supervisory and managerial personnel must address and attempt to resolve disputes in a timely fashion. See KPDSB Procedure 708 – Respectful Working and Learning Environment for the Complaint Form.