

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>STRAIT REGIONAL SCHOOL BOARD</b>  <i>Excellence in Lifelong Learning</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>POLICIES AND GUIDELINES</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>STUDENTS</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>IV-B-3</b></span></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Student Activities and Welfare</b>  <b>PROTECTION OF STUDENTS</b></p>
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**PROTECTION OF STUDENTS**

**CHILD ABUSE**

**POLICY STATEMENT**

*The Strait Regional School Board recognizes that all students have the right to a quality education in a positive learning environment free from all forms of abuse. All school community members who have reasonable grounds to suspect that a student is or may be suffering or may have suffered from abuse have a legal and ethical duty to immediately report the suspicion and the information upon which it is based to the appropriate agency.*

**DEFINITIONS**

**CHILD NEGLECT** *Child Neglect is a chronic and serious omission on the part of the parent or guardian that results in physical harm to the child. It does not include emotional harm. The term “chronic” demands that the neglect constitutes a pattern of conduct over a period of time. The term “serious” conveys a marked and substantial departure from the standard of care expected of a reasonable parent.*

**EMOTIONAL ABUSE** *Emotional abuse is the most difficult type of abuse to define and identify. It may range from habitual humiliation of the child to the withholding of life-sustaining parenting.*

**PHYSICAL ABUSE** *Physical abuse is a deliberate non-accidental physical assault on a child that results in physical harm. Physical abuse may also result from excessive or inappropriate discipline.*

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## Guidelines

1. *The Board recognizes the rights and responsibilities of individuals and agencies regarding situations of child abuse (see Protocol and Guidelines for Child Protection Workers and School Personnel in the Strait Regional School Community, August 24, 2001).*
2. *The Board recognizes that in situations involving students fifteen (15) years of age or under, school personnel who have information, whether or not it is confidential or privileged, indicating that such student has or may be suffering abuse has a legal responsibility to report such information to an agency (see Model Framework: Protection from Child Abuse, Discrimination, and Sexual Harassment). If a student is sixteen (16) years of age or older and school personnel have reason to believe that student has or is suffering from physical or sexual abuse then such school personnel shall report the situation to the local detachment of the RCMP.*
3. *The Board understands that the duty of school personnel is only to report information, and to turn the investigating over to the agency.*
4. *The Board understands that it is not a requirement that the person making the report has proof that the abuse has occurred, the investigation outcome will be decided by the agency.*
5. *The Board realizes if the alleged perpetrator is school personnel the same requirement to contact the agency, and the Director of Human Resources, should be enforced. If there are no grounds for the investigation, the agency will revert the matter to the Director.*
6. *The Board agrees that the family reputation and right to privacy be respected and preserved, therefore the initial interview, with the victim of alleged abuse or neglect, should not be invasive, but allows the child to speak freely.*
7. *The Board will provide professional development on the Protection of Students information to all regular school community members, and updates will be given each year when there are new staff hired.*
8. *The Board will not tolerate any malicious reporting of abuse of any kind.*

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## Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

### Policy Statement

The Strait Regional School Board recognizes that all students, personnel, school community members (parents, volunteers, organizations, etc.), and others who visit the school on a regular basis have a right to enter school board premises and feel safe from discrimination and sexual harassment.

### DEFINITIONS

**Discrimination** *Is making a distinction, whether intentional or not, based on a characteristic, or perceived characteristics (age; race or colour; religion or creed; sex; sexual orientation, physical disability or mental disability; an irrational fear of contracting an illness or disease; ethnic, national, or aboriginal origin; family status; marital status; source of income; political belief, affiliation or activity; with another person or class of person having such characteristics)*

**SEXUAL ABUSE** *Sexual abuse is a generic term to be used to describe a range of sexual activity/behaviour perpetrated towards a child (under 16 years of age), with or without the child's consent, for the sexual gratification of the other person.*

**Sexual Harassment** *Any act that the author of the act knows or should normally know is inappropriate or unwelcome.*

### Guidelines

1. The Board encourages the individual who experiences or perceives prohibited behaviour to take direct action by:
  - *Informal means- communicating (in person or writing) with the respondent promptly to inform the person clearly and directly that the behaviour is unwelcome and must stop. Keep a record.*
  - *Formal means - a written complaint to the Director of Human Resources, a letter to the Superintendent of schools (within a year), or through formal investigation.*
2. The Board will make available the Race Relations Cross Cultural Understanding and Human Rights Complaint Form for use by school community members when they wish to make a complaint.

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3. *The Board will keep documentation with the Director of Human Resources, documents given to the respondent will be kept permanently in staff personnel files or according to appropriate collective agreements.*
  
4. *The Board understands that consequences may include complete exoneration, disciplinary action and/or severance of involvement with the school as determined by the Board.*