

Policy Title	Workplace Violence		
Date of Issue	June 15, 2010	<u>Related Procedures</u>	AP 7520-D, AP 7523-D, AP 7525-D, AP 7526-D
Revision Dates	November 15, 2011; February 21, 2012 (rev. Rationale-Strategic Plan); September 16, 2014; September 19, 2017; April 16, 2019; February 15, 2022; September 6, 2023 (reviewed)	Related Forms	Online Incident Reporting Tool (AF 7520); AF 7523; AF 7525; AF 7526; AF 7527
Review Date	September 1, 2024 (cyclical February 1, 2027)	Originator	Board of Trustees
References			
Education Act; Occupational Health and Safety Act; Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; Ontario Human Rights Code; Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act; BP 1601-D “The Development and Implementation of Board Policy”; BP 6820-D “Safe and Accepting Schools”			

1.0 RATIONALE

- 1.1 Bluewater District School Board policies will support and provide direction necessary to achieve the board's Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan priorities.
- 1.2 Bluewater District School Board believes in the prevention of workplace violence and promotes a violence-free workplace in which all people respect one another and work together to achieve common goals. Any act of workplace violence is unacceptable conduct. Workplace violence in any form erodes the mutual trust and confidence that are essential to the well-being of our staff.

2.0 POLICY

- 2.1 Threatening, violent, or harassing student misconduct is dealt with by the Safe and Accepting Schools provisions of the Education Act, board policy BP 6820-D “Safe and Accepting Schools”, and/or the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA), depending upon the circumstance. Section 32 of the OHSA covers harassment and risks of workplace violence that may arise because of adult and/or student behaviours. This policy, therefore, applies in appropriate circumstances.
- 2.2 As part of the internal responsibility system, individuals engaging in unsafe activity will be held accountable for their actions. Violent (and potentially violent activity) will be investigated by Bluewater District School Board and will be acted upon in a manner that protects members of the school community in the workplace. Violent behaviour, and behaviour which increases the risk of violence in the workplace, will not be tolerated.
- 2.3 Bluewater District School Board acknowledges the following three rights of employees under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA):
 - (a) Employees have the right to know about hazards in their workplace and to receive information, instruction, and supervision to protect their health and safety on the job. In addition to the board's responsibility to inform, it is also the employee's responsibility to actively seek out such information (see section 3.5.2).

- (b) Employees have the right to participate in identifying and solving workplace health and safety problems, following the procedure outlined in Appendix A of AP 3804-D “Joint Health and Safety Committees”.
 - (c) Employees have the right to refuse work in situations they believe would be dangerous to their health and safety or to that of any other employee in the workplace, as per AP 7525-D “Work Refusal”.
- 2.4 This policy applies to all work activities, or workplace social events, that occur while on or off board premises.
- 2.5 This policy applies to all members of the board community, including but not limited to, trustees, students, employees, visitors such as parents and community members, volunteers, permit holders, contractors, and employees of other organizations who work on or are invited onto board property.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Workplace violence, as defined by the OHSA, is:

- (a) the exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker;
- (b) an attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to a worker;
- (c) a statement or behaviour that it is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to a worker.

Domestic violence, which is likely to expose a worker to physical injury in the workplace, is recognized by the OHSA as workplace violence.

4.0 SYSTEM EXPECTATIONS

- 4.1 Employees are responsible for reporting any hazard, which includes potential/actual/near miss violent circumstances of which they are aware. Employees are also responsible for cooperating in investigations governed by this policy and participating in associated training.
- 4.2 The board is committed to the development and maintenance of a program to implement this policy with respect to workplace violence, and to meeting the requirements of the OHSA. Concerns will be investigated and dealt with in an appropriate and timely manner.
- 4.3 For details regarding the process and responsibilities involved in the reporting and management of violent incidents in the workplace, please refer to AP 7523-D “Workplace Violence”.
- 4.4 Bluewater District School Board’s Online Incident Reporting Tool will be used to report incidents of workplace violence (see AP 7523-D for additional information).
- 4.5 Administrative Council shall review this policy as often as necessary, but at least annually (OHSA Section 32.0.1(1)). Required changes will be reported to the Policy Standing Committee.
- 4.6 The Policy Standing Committee shall review this policy, at a minimum, in accordance with the standard cyclical review cycle established in BP 1601-D “The Development and Implementation of Board Policy”.