

GAP GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

SECTION:	500 SCHOOL ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT
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*“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”
Psalm 119:105*

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Preamble

- a) In compliance with its mission, vision, and values, the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School DPCDSB (DPCDSB) is committed to the implementation of *Policy 9.01: Catholic Code of Conduct (Catholic Code of Conduct)* to provide and sustain a safe, caring, inclusive, and healthy Catholic school community in which every student can succeed.
- b) The *Catholic Code of Conduct* supports virtue formation and healthy relationships in the context of a vibrant Catholic community. It is responsive to equitable and inclusive education and ensures a whole school approach to developing a positive Catholic school learning environment for all.
- c) Recognizing the complexity of building and sustaining a whole school approach, the *Catholic Code of Conduct* is committed to progressive and restorative approaches to conflict resolution, based on evidence-informed solutions. All school community members are expected to work together to develop spiritually, intellectually, physically, socially, and emotionally by aspiring to the highest possible standards of Catholic behaviour. Such behaviour includes living according to Gospel values, and fostering a Catholic culture of respect, inclusion, equity, responsibility, and concern for the well-being of all.
- d) This General Administrative Procedure (GAP) details the *Catholic Code of Conduct* and is grounded in the transformative potential of individuals. It sets out DPCDSB-wide expectations of all members of each school community.

- e) In the case of more serious breaches of DPCDSB-wide expectations, this GAP identifies a range of responses for the imposition of progressive discipline, which may involve third parties, such as police, child protection agencies, and/or other outside agencies. Progressive discipline may include actions up to and including suspension and/or expulsion of students from a school or the DPCDSB and, in the case of any individual, an official notice of trespass, enforceable by police. In all cases, a degree of latitude has been provided to allow school administrators: to ascertain that an incident has occurred, to determine the nature of the incident, and to exercise supportive interventions and/or consequences.
- f) The oversight of the enforcement of this GAP on all DPCDSB property is the responsibility of the designated Supervisory Officer.
- g) In addition to this GAP, DPCDSB has policies and GAPs applicable to staff, volunteers, contractors, and vendors. For specific details, refer to DPCDSB policies and general administrative procedures applicable to Employee Relations and Human Resources and Supply Chain Management, respectively. If there is a conflict between the terms of this GAP and any policy or other general administrative procedure, the other policy or general administrative procedure shall govern.
- h) The DPCDSB interprets and applies the provisions of the Education Act, including its Regulations, in a broad and liberal manner consistent with the Ontario Human Rights Code, as well as other applicable laws and aligned practices. In a circumstance in which there is a conflict between provincial law (such as the Education Act), regulations, Policy Program Memoranda, school and DPCDSB policies and procedures, and the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Ontario Human Rights Code is deemed to be more important, and the inferior law, regulation, policy, or procedure must be applied in a manner consistent with the Ontario Human Rights Code (unless there is an explicit exception contained for such a circumstance). The principle of primacy of the Ontario Human Rights Code also requires DPCDSB policies and procedures to be interpreted and applied in a manner consistent with the Ontario Human Rights Code.

1.2. Catholic Code of Conduct

- a) In order to provide a positive, safe, caring, inclusive, and healthy Catholic school environment that enables student engagement and student voice, all members of the school community shall:
 - respect and comply with all applicable federal, provincial, and municipal laws;
 - respect and comply with all applicable DPCDSB and school policies, procedures and practices;
 - respect Catholic Church teachings and traditions;
 - support and/or participate in the liturgical life of the school;
 - strive to live a virtuous life in accordance with Gospel values;
 - respect the dignity and rights of others;
 - treat one another with dignity and respect at all times, and especially when there is disagreement;
 - respect differences in people, their ideas, and their opinions;
 - respect and celebrate diversity;

- respect and treat others fairly, regardless of citizenship, race, place of origin, ethnic origin, colour, ancestry, disability, age, creed, sex/pregnancy, family status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, receipt of public assistance (in housing), and record of offences (in employment);
- use verbal and non-verbal communication appropriate to a Catholic environment;
- demonstrate respect for persons in positions of authority;
- respect the need for others to work in an environment that is conducive to learning;
- reconcile differences and work toward restorative amends;
- resolve conflicts peacefully, seeking assistance from staff, if necessary;
- take appropriate measures to help those in need, especially the most vulnerable;
- acknowledge and support those who are marginalized;
- be punctual, prepared, properly attired, and attentive to the learning/work process;
- refrain from swearing at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority;
- strive to do one's personal best and actively cultivate talents for the service of others;
- demonstrate honesty and integrity;
- show proper care and regard for school and DPCDSB property, and for the property of others;
- exercise wise stewardship and conservation of resources within the community;
- use computers, social networking, technological aides and other specialized equipment for sanctioned activities only;
- use personal electronic devices (PEDs) in a responsible and respectful manner, ensuring that these devices are only used during instructional time under the following circumstances:
 - for educational purposes, as directed by an educator;
 - for health and medical purposes;
 - to support special education needs;
 - to provide an accommodation under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

2. ADMINISTRATION OF THE CATHOLIC CODE OF CONDUCT

- a) All DPCDSB schools are responsible for the consistent and conscientious administration of the *Catholic Code of Conduct* by establishing, upholding, and enforcing the standards of behaviour at the local school level, according to the procedures stated herein.

2.1. Establishing and Communicating Standards of Behaviour for All

- a) All persons within the DPCDSB community have a right to be safe and to feel safe on DPCDSB property and at DPCDSB-related events. All members share responsibility to adhere to the standards of behaviour in the *Catholic Code of Conduct*, and to contribute to the creation of a positive Catholic climate.
- b) A comprehensive plan to disseminate the *Catholic Code of Conduct* will ensure that all DPCDSB community members are informed that the standards of behaviour apply not only to students, but to all individuals involved in DPCDSB operations, including trustees, parents/guardians, volunteers, teachers, vendors, visitors, and staff, whether they are on school property, on school buses, at school-related events, or participating in parish activities, or involved in other circumstances that could have an impact on the school climate.

- c) All schools and DPCDSB locations shall post DPCDSB approved signage, messaging on automated telephone systems, and, where appropriate to site context, content for school newsletters and/or websites to remind all community members accessing DPCDSB schools or other premises (e.g., kiss and ride lanes, driveways and parking areas, athletic/play fields, offices) to engage in respectful, constructive interactions or risk being asked to leave the school or DPCDSB premises.

2.2. Upholding the Catholic Code of Conduct

- a) The local school community, under the leadership of the school principal, will undertake a comprehensive school-wide approach to upholding the *Catholic Code of Conduct*, ensuring the development of a faith-filled, positive school climate. The school plan will provide its members with the necessary information, skills, disciplinary protocols and professional development to:
 - live up to their responsibilities to contribute positively to a safe, caring, inclusive and healthy Catholic community; and
 - avoid actions that may contravene the *Catholic Code of Conduct* and thereby negatively impact the community.
- b) Provided there is no immediate risk of physical harm to any individual, staff members who work directly with pupils on a regular basis shall respond to any inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour or any other behaviour that negatively impacts school climate, which they believe to have occurred during the course of their duties or otherwise while on school property or during a school related event may cause a negative school climate for which a suspension or expulsion may be imposed, which they believed to have occurred during the course of their duties or otherwise while on school property or during a school related event.
- c) Consistent application of the *Catholic Code of Conduct* is guided by the philosophy of progressive discipline, which offers a philosophical construct and guiding principles from which prevention, intervention, and response protocols naturally emerge.

2.3. The Philosophy of Progressive Discipline

- a) Central to the practice of progressive discipline is a safe, caring, and inclusive community. Members of this community collaborate, communicate, and consult in the development of a comprehensive system of supports that strengthens the school's collective commitment to uphold the standards of the *Catholic Code of Conduct* and to support learning for all students.
- b) Progressive discipline exists at all times to support the growth of all students. This approach includes a range of proactive strategies that foster Catholic community and aim to prevent problems before they occur.
- c) At the school level, progressive discipline includes positive classroom management strategies, bullying prevention and intervention supports, and school-wide programs that teach pro-social skills, provide support for all students, promote virtue formation, and foster Catholic values.

- d) The Catholic school approach to progressive discipline combines prevention and intervention strategies and discipline with opportunities for students to continue their education. Focusing on prevention and early intervention strategies helps prevent unsafe or inappropriate behaviours from occurring in or affecting school.



Progressive Discipline exists at all times for all students

- e) Progressive discipline is based on a belief that there are numerous strategies for learning. This belief is rooted in Jesus' model of discipleship and His code of "beatitude living" that guides the practice of progressive discipline in DPCDSB school communities.
- f) Progressive discipline shifts the focus from one that is solely punitive to one that is corrective, supportive, and transformative. Progressive discipline acknowledges the value of a staged approach to discipline that is tailored to meet the unique needs of the student, taking the mitigating and other factors into account at all stages along the continuum of progressive discipline. Each student can access multiple layers of support, comprised of all the people who interact with the student, and all those who could be called upon to provide additional support (e.g. support services: social worker, child and youth worker, psychologist, speech and language pathologist).
- g) Progressive discipline invites schools to use *"a range of interventions, supports and consequences that are developmentally and socio-emotionally appropriate and include learning opportunities for reinforcing positive behavior while helping students make better choices."* (PPM No. 145).

3. ENFORCING THE CATHOLIC CODE OF CONDUCT

- a) When a challenging behaviour occurs, the principal ensures due process and equitable and just treatment for all involved in the incident. This treatment is predicated on the understanding that equitable and just processes consider the Mitigating and Other Factors outlined in section 3.5 (b) of this GAP. The application of progressive discipline ensures consistency in process while affording a differentiated response to suit the individuals and circumstances of the incident. The appropriate response to challenging behaviours may take the form of an intervention, a support, and/or a consequence.
- b) When enforcing the *Catholic Code of Conduct* at the classroom, school, and DPCDSB level, staff will undertake a broadly collaborative process in determining the most appropriate response to address a challenging behaviour. This process involves consultation with parents/guardians; however, the final decision rests with the principal and/or designate.

3.1. Reflective Practice

- a) When enforcing the *Catholic Code of Conduct*, staff must promote the safety of all and emphasize the importance of promoting positive change for students who struggle with challenging behaviours.
- b) In the case of minor or moderate incidents, the classroom teacher or other staff may be responsible for addressing student behavior through progressive discipline (See *GAP 552 – Progressive Discipline*).
- c) In serious or severe circumstances, the principal will lead the decision-making process through to an appropriate conclusion.
- d) Section 306 of the *Education Act* mandates when the principal **SHALL CONSIDER** suspension.
- e) Section 310 of the *Education Act* mandates when the principal **SHALL ISSUE** a 20-day suspension pending expulsion. **All final decisions shall be made in consultation with the Superintendent (or designate).**

3.2. Define the Incident Under the *Education Act*

- a) The first step in progressive discipline is the identification of the infraction. The table below lists infractions according to whether they fall under Section 306 or 310 of the *Education Act*.

Section 306 – Shall Consider Suspension		Section 310 – Shall Suspend	
306-1	Uttering a threat to inflict serious bodily harm on another person	310-1	Possessing a weapon, including possessing a firearm
306-2	Possessing alcohol, illegal drugs or, unless the pupil is a medical cannabis user, cannabis	310-2	Using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person
306-3	Being under the influence of alcohol or, unless the pupil is a medical cannabis user, cannabis	310-3	Committing physical assault on another person that causes bodily harm requiring treatment by a medical practitioner
306-4	Swearing at a teacher or at another person in a position of authority	310-4	Committing sexual assault

Section 306 – Shall Consider Suspension		Section 310 – Shall Suspend	
306-5	Committing an act of vandalism that causes extensive damage to school property at the pupil's school or to property located on the premises of the pupil's school	310-5	Trafficking in weapons or in illegal drugs
306-6	Bullying	310-6	Committing robbery
306-7	Breach of Code of conduct, DPCDSB & school policy	310-7	Giving alcohol or cannabis to a minor
306-7	Being under the influence of alcohol or illegal or restricted drugs	310-7.1	Bullying, if (i) the pupil has previously been suspended for engaging in bullying ¹ , and (ii) the pupil's continuing presence in the school creates an unacceptable risk to the safety of another person
306-7	Habitual neglect of duty, DPCDSB and school policy	310-7.2	Any activity listed in subsection 306 (1) that is motivated by bias, prejudice or hate based on race, national or ethnic origin, language, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or any other similar factor
306-7	Opposition to authority, DPCDSB and school policy	310-8	Any act considered by the principal to be a serious violation of the DPCDSB or school Code of Conduct
306-7	Profanity/swearing, DPCDSB and school policy	310-8	Activities engaged in by the pupil on or off school property that have caused extensive damage to the property of the DPCDSB or to goods that are/were on DPCDSB property
306-7	Possessing restricted drugs	310-8	Trafficking in restricted drugs
306-7	Fighting/violence, DPCDSB and school policy		

¹ As per Ontario Regulation 440/20, the condition set out in subparagraph 7.1 (i) of subsection 310 (1) of the Act does not apply in respect of a suspension under section 310 of the Act of a pupil in junior kindergarten, kindergarten, or grade 1, 2 or 3.

3.2.1. Education Act, Section 306: Suspensions

- a) A principal *shall consider* whether to suspend a pupil if they believe that the pupil has engaged in any of the activities listed in section 306 while at school, at a school-related activity, or in other circumstances (including off school property) where engaging in the activity may have a negative impact on the school climate.
- b) As per *Ontario Regulation 440/20*, a “...pupil in **junior kindergarten, kindergarten or grade 1, 2 or 3 shall not be** suspended under section 306 of the Act for engaging in an activity described in subsection 306 (1) of the Act.”
- c) However, for students in these grades:
 - the offence must still be reported to the principal; and
 - the principal must determine and put in place appropriate alternatives to discipline. These alternatives shall be tracked and documented as per normal protocols.
- d) A pupil in **Grade 4 or older** may be suspended only once for an infraction, in any one incident, and may be suspended for a minimum of one (1) school day and a maximum of twenty (20) school days.
- e) When determining whether to issue a suspension to a student in **Grade 4 or older**, and its length, a **principal must consider Mitigating and Other Factors** (see GAP Section 3.4 below).

3.2.2. Education Act, Section 310: Suspension, Investigation, and Possible Expulsion: JK-3

- a) Subject to *Ontario Regulation 440/20*, and as detailed below, a principal *shall suspend* and may consider recommending an expulsion of a pupil if they believe that the pupil has engaged in any of the activities listed in Section 310 while at school, at a school-related activity, or in other circumstances (including off school property) where engaging in the activity will have a negative impact on the school climate.
- b) As per *Ontario Regulation 440/20*, a pupil in **junior kindergarten, kindergarten, or grade 1, 2 or 3 shall not be** suspended under section 310 of the Act for engaging in an activity described in subsection 310 (1) of the Act **unless the principal has conducted an investigation** respecting the allegations. This regulation means that prior to issuing a suspension pending possible expulsion under Section 310 for this age group, the principal must first conduct an **initial investigation** to determine if a Section 310 suspension is warranted.
- c) If the principal determines a Section 310 offence has been committed, the student is **then** suspended pending possible expulsion. In such cases, the principal shall continue with the steps as noted below (i.e., further investigation to determine if there are mitigating or other factors to be considered in determining the length and type of discipline as required by the *Education Act*; principal chooses 1 of 5 possible discipline outcomes).

- d) If the principal determines no offence has been committed, then no suspension under Section 310 shall be issued. The principal may consider and assign alternatives to discipline, if appropriate.
- e) *As per Ontario Regulation 440/20, the condition set out in subparagraph 7.1 (i) of subsection 310 (1) of the Act [see table in 3.2a) above] does **not** apply in respect of a suspension under section 310 of the Act of a pupil in **junior kindergarten, kindergarten, or grade 1, 2 or 3.***
- f) Students in **Junior Kindergarten through Grade 3 (JK-3)** can no longer be “previously” suspended under Section 306 for bullying. As such, only s.310(1)7.1(ii) now applies for JK-3 students regarding a Section 310 bullying offence.

3.2.3. Education Act, Section 310: Suspension, Investigation, Possible Expulsion: Grades 4-12

- a) Subject to *Ontario Regulation 440/20*, and as detailed below, a principal *shall suspend* and may consider recommending an expulsion of a pupil if they believe that the pupil has engaged in any of the activities listed in Section 310 while at school, at a school-related activity, or in other circumstances (including off school property) where engaging in the activity will have a negative impact on the school climate.
- b) For infractions listed in Section 310 of the *Education Act*, if the principal believes that the student committed one of the infractions, the student shall be automatically suspended for 20 days pending expulsion.
- c) The school investigation commences. In circumstances involving police, the principal may be required to halt their investigation pending approval by the police to resume.
- d) There are five possible outcomes following the school investigation. All final decisions shall be made in consultation with the applicable family of schools superintendent (or designate).
- e) **Outcome 1: The principal determines that the student is NOT responsible for the infraction.** The student would return to school and the principal would withdraw the Suspension Pending Expulsion and expunge the student record of Suspension Pending Expulsion for the student, even if the suspension has been served. A determination letter reflecting this outcome would be issued.
- f) **Outcome 2: The principal determines that the infraction did occur, but there are mitigating factors* relevant to the circumstances** which lead to the principal’s decision to shorten the suspension to between 1 and 19 days, even if it has already been served. A determination letter reflecting this outcome would be issued.
- g) **Outcome 3: The principal determines that the infraction did occur, and the student receives a confirmed suspension of 20 days, however, there are mitigating factors relevant to the circumstances** which lead to the principal’s decision **not to recommend the student for expulsion.** A determination letter reflecting this outcome would be issued.

- h) **Outcome 4: The principal determines that the infraction did occur, and the principal is recommending expulsion from the student's current school only.** A determination letter reflecting this outcome would be issued.
- i) **Outcome 5: The principal determines that the infraction did occur, and the principal is recommending expulsion from all DPCDSB schools.** A determination letter reflecting this outcome would be issued.
- j) *When determining which of the five outcomes to select (see Outcomes 1-5 above), the principal must consider Mitigating and Other Factors (see GAP Section 3.4 below).

3.3. Progressive Discipline Strategies

- a) Progressive discipline is an approach that makes use of a continuum of interventions, supports, and consequences as strategies to promote positive behaviours.
- b) The range of interventions, supports, and consequences used by schools must be clear and developmentally appropriate, and must include learning opportunities for pupils that reinforce positive behaviours and help pupils make good choices.
- c) When inappropriate behaviour occurs, effective disciplinary measures will place the focus on positive restorative responses. For pupils with special needs, interventions, supports and consequences must be consistent with the expectations in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) and/or their demonstrated abilities.
- d) When reviewing progressive discipline strategies, consideration will be given to the usefulness of any interventions undertaken "to date" such as contact with parents/guardians, study hall, verbal reminders, review of expectations, a written work assignment with a reflective component, community service to improve attitude/conduct, and/or referral to Support Services staff or outside agencies. All progressive discipline strategies undertaken shall be documented by the school.
- e) If the inappropriate behaviour has become an on-going problem, it is important to consider the appropriateness of additional supports and/or interventions.
- f) The Ministry of Education and DPCDSB afford flexibility in response to inappropriate behaviours through a variety of policies, procedures, and protocols: PPM 144, Bill 13, Bill 157, PPM 120, and DPCDSB Policies 9.01, 9.02, 9.03, and 9.04. In addition, detailed progressive discipline strategies are outlined in DPCDSB GAP 552.00, and in the Ministry of Education PPM 145, *Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour*.
- g) Progressive discipline strategies may include a variety of early and/or ongoing intervention strategies, provided the appropriate consent(s) are in place where required. Examples of these strategies include:
 - review of expectations as outlined in the *Catholic Code of Conduct*;
 - classroom management strategies;
 - communication and consultation with parents/guardians;
 - student conference;
 - student contracts: i.e., attendance, performance, and/or behavioral;

- discipline-related learning reflection assignments;
- referral to school administrator;
- student and parent/guardian conference;
- consultation with school support staff;
- involvement of chaplaincy team leader and/or parish resources;
- involvement of school support and Support Services;
- school team conference/progressive discipline conference;
- attendance counselling;
- behaviour modification program;
- Crisis Prevention and Intervention (CPI);
- individual, peer, group, and/or family counselling;
- referral to community agency (e.g., Children's Aid, police, treatment, or medical agencies);
- volunteer service to the school community;
- withdrawal of privileges;
- restitution for damages;
- mentor and/or peer mediation;
- conflict resolution;
- restorative practice;
- assignment to an alternative learning environment;
- suspension;
- expulsion.

3.4. Mitigating and Other Factors the Principal Must Consider

- a) Before determining the discipline, if any, to follow the issuing of a suspension, as required by the *Education Act and Ontario Regulation 472/07*, the principal must consider any mitigating and other factors as set out in the DPCDSB's *Suspension and Expulsion Guidelines*. For the *Suspension and Expulsion Guidelines*, the DPCDSB interprets the provisions of the *Education Act and Regulations* in a broad and liberal manner consistent with the *Ontario Human Rights Code*. The principal shall consider whether the discipline will have a disproportionate impact on a pupil's rights under the protected grounds of the *Ontario Human Rights Code* and/or exacerbate any disadvantage the pupil may experience in society.
- b) If a pupil does not have the ability to control their behaviour or does not understand the foreseeable consequences of their behaviour, the principal will not suspend the pupil. Alternative discipline and/or other interventions may be considered by the principal in such circumstances. For clarity, even if the principal does not suspend a student, a record of the incident believed to have occurred shall be properly documented and retained as per this GAP and any applicable guidelines.
- c) If the pupil poses an unacceptable risk to the safety of themselves and/or to others in the school, the principal shall consult with their superintendent regarding appropriate accommodations and/or strategies that might be instituted to ensure safety and well-being of pupils, staff, and others in the school.

3.5. Three Factor Analysis

- a) In considering the most appropriate response to address inappropriate behavior, following defining the offence under either Section 306 or 310 of the *Education Act* and the reporting of the offence, the following items *shall* be taken into consideration when determining the appropriate consequences:
- b) **Factor 1: the individual student and circumstances** (e.g., mitigating or other factors). The following “mitigating” and “other” factors must be considered at every stage of deliberation when determining the most appropriate programs, supports, interventions, and consequences as they relate to student conduct.
- **Mitigating Factors:** The following mitigating factors shall be considered:
 - the pupil does not have the ability to control their behaviour;
 - the pupil does not have the ability to understand the foreseeable consequences of their behaviour;
 - the pupil's continuing presence in the school does not create an unacceptable risk to the safety of any person.
 - **Other Factors:** The following additional factors shall be considered:
 - the pupil's history;
 - whether a progressive discipline approach has been used with the pupil;
 - whether the activity for which the pupil may be or is being suspended or expelled was related to any harassment of the pupil because of their race, ethnic origin, religion, disability, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation, or to any other harassment;
 - how the suspension or expulsion would affect the pupil's ongoing education;
 - the age of the pupil;
 - in the case of a pupil with a disability and/or for whom an IEP has been developed:
 - whether the behaviour was a manifestation of a disability which may or may not be identified in the pupil's IEP;
 - whether appropriate individualized accommodation has been provided;
 - whether the suspension or expulsion is likely to result in an aggravation or worsening of the pupil's behaviour or conduct.
- c) **Factor 2: the nature and severity** of the behaviour.
- d) **Factor 3: the impact of the behaviour on the school climate** (i.e., the relationships within the school community).

3.6. Bullying

- a) In the case of **bullying**, principals *must* suspend a student for bullying and consider referring that student for expulsion if:
- the student has previously been suspended for bullying, and;
 - the student’s continuing presence in the school creates, in the principal’s opinion, an unacceptable risk to the safety of another person.
- b) According to the Ministry of Education definition², “bullying” means aggressive and typically repeated behaviour by a pupil where:
- (i) the behaviour is intended by the pupil to have the effect of, or the pupil ought to know that the behaviour would be likely to have the effect of:
- causing harm, fear, or distress to another individual, including physical, psychological, social, or academic harm, harm to the individual’s reputation, or harm to the individual’s property; or
 - creating a negative environment at a school for another individual, and
 - the behaviour occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance between the pupil and the individual based on factors such as size, strength, age, intelligence, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender identity, gender expression, race, disability, or the receipt of special education.
- c) For the purposes of the definition of “bullying” above, behaviour includes the use of any physical, verbal, electronic, written, or other means.
- d) For the purposes of the definition of “bullying” above, **cyber-bullying** includes bullying by electronic means (commonly known as cyber-bullying), including:
- (i) creating a web page or a blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person;
- (ii) impersonating another person as the author of content or messages posted on the internet; and
- (iii) communicating material electronically to more than one individual or posting material on a website that may be accessed by one or more individuals.

² Policy/Program Memorandum No. 144, Ministry of Education, Government of Ontario, subsection 1(1), Education Act

3.7. Reporting Incidents and Violent Incidents

- a) All incidents that may lead to a suspension/expulsion, that occur on school premises and/or during school run programs (including off-site), must be reported. In the event of witnessing or receiving information regarding an incident that may lead to suspension/expulsion:
- (i) Staff shall complete a **GF 025 - Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form – Part I**.
 - (ii) Upon receipt of a **Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form**, the principal and/or designate must issue the **GF 025 Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form – Part II - Acknowledgement of Receipt Report**.
 - (iii) The principal and/or designate must investigate.
 - (iv) The principal and/or designate will communicate results to the teacher and/or DPCDSB staff as appropriate.
 - (v) If the incident is violent according to PPM 120, the appropriate box will be checked accordingly by the principal or designate, and the GF 025 will be placed in the safe schools folder of the Ontario Student Record (OSR).
 - (vi) If a teacher has not submitted a GF 025, one must be completed by the administrator, including section 6 at the bottom portion of the form.
 - (i) The GF 025 will be retained in the OSR as per PPM 145 as described below:
 - Minimum 1 Year – Expunged Incidents
 - Minimum 3 Years – Suspensions
 - Minimum 5 Years – Expulsions
- b) The principal will consider whether a Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) will be conducted (see GAP Section 3.8 below).

3.8. Violence Threat Risk Assessment Protocol

- a) Under certain conditions, students may need to undergo a “Violence Threat Risk Assessment” (VTRA) when their behaviours confidently suggest they may be at risk of harming themselves or others.
- b) Threat assessment is the process of determining if a threat-maker (someone who utters, writes, emails, and/or gestures a threat to harm a target or targets) does indeed pose a risk to the target or targets they have threatened.
- c) All threat-making behaviours must be reported to administration. Administration, in consultation with the school team, will discern whether to activate the VTRA protocol.
- d) During the VTRA process, information is obtained from multiple sources to develop an intervention plan to reduce risk of violence.
- e) DPCDSB’s Catholic communities allow for students to grow, learn, reflect, and work towards reconciliation with the appropriate supports. The protocol is accessible in VTRA Guidelines (G005).

3.9. The Discipline Committee: Powers During Suspension Appeal and Expulsion Hearings

- a) The DPCDSB authorizes the creation of a Discipline Committee of no fewer than three (3) trustees to decide appeals of principal suspensions and principal recommendations for expulsion. For these purposes, the Discipline Committee will conduct the suspension appeals and expulsion hearings in accordance with the *Suspension Appeal Guidelines* and the *Expulsion Hearing Guidelines*. The discipline committee shall have the powers as set out in the *Education Act*.
- b) **Suspension Appeals:** Where a pupil's parent/guardian or the pupil (if they are aged 18 or older, or 16 or 17 and has withdrawn themselves from parental/guardian control) disagrees with the decision of a principal to suspend the pupil, that individual may appeal the principal's decision to suspend the pupil, in accordance with the DPCDSB's *Suspension Guidelines and Suspension Appeal Guidelines*.
- c) **Expulsion Hearings:** If the principal recommends expulsion, the Discipline Committee shall hold a hearing to determine whether a pupil will be expelled from one school or from all schools in DPCDSB. The two possible outcomes of this hearing, and subsequent action are listed below:
 - If the Discipline Committee expels a pupil from all schools, they will refer the pupil to DPCDSB's Expulsion Program.
 - If the Discipline Committee decides not to expel, it will determine whether to confirm, shorten, or expunge the suspension. These hearings will be conducted in accordance with the DPCDSB's *Expulsion Hearing Guidelines*.
- d) **Superintendents Responsible for Suspensions and Expulsions:** The superintendents delegated to be responsible for suspensions and expulsions shall have the powers and duties outlined in the *Suspension Guidelines for Administrators and Expulsion Guidelines for Administrators*.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- a) All members of the DPCDSB School Community must:
 - adhere to the standards of behaviour in the *Catholic Code of Conduct*;
 - acknowledge and defend the rights of others;
 - take personal responsibility for their actions;
 - fulfill the duties of their respective roles in service to others;
 - contribute positively to the creation of a safe, caring, inclusive, and healthy Catholic learning community.

4.1. DPCDSB

- a) The DPCDSB provides leadership to all members of the school community to ensure equitable opportunity for all to a safe, caring, inclusive, and healthy learning and work environment.

- b) The DPCDSB will develop and review policies and procedures that establish standards of behaviour, prevention, and intervention programs; progressive discipline response protocols; education and training programs for school community members; and partnerships with parish and community agencies.
- c) The DPCDSB will promote academic excellence, exemplary professional practice, accountability, and transparency. Civic responsibility and a rich experience of faith formation pervade the Catholic school community. The DPCDSB fulfills these responsibilities by doing the following:
- developing policies that set out how DPCDSB facilities will implement and enforce the *Catholic Code of Conduct* and all other rules that promote and support respect, civility, Catholic service, responsible citizenship, safety, and the conditions necessary for an optimal learning and work environment for all;
 - reviewing these policies regularly with staff and consulting with students, parents/guardians, volunteers, and the community;
 - seeking input from Central Committee for Catholic School Councils (CCCSC), Catholic School Councils, the DPCDSB's Parent Involvement Committee, the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), the Indigenous Education Advisory Council, the Black Community Advisory Council (BCAC), parents/guardians, students, staff members, and the school community;
 - establishing a process that clearly communicates the *Catholic Code of Conduct* to all staff, students, parents/guardians, volunteers, and the wider community, in order to obtain their commitment and support in its implementation;
 - ensuring a clear process for the reporting and monitoring of violent incidents;
 - providing system-wide direction to embed the Catholic imperatives implicit in the *Catholic Code of Conduct* by vigorous promotion of virtue formation and dedication to the Gospel messages of compassion, love, forgiveness, and service;
 - developing effective intervention strategies and responding to all infractions related to the standards for respect, civility, responsible citizenship, and safety;
 - developing, disseminating, and monitoring progressive discipline protocols that guide enforcement of the *Catholic Code of Conduct* and all policies and procedures related to securing a safe, caring, inclusive and healthy school climate;
 - cultivating strong partnerships with parish and community partners;
 - providing professional development for system leaders to assist them in ensuring compliance with and enforcement of the *Catholic Code of Conduct* at the local school level.

4.2. Trustees

- a) The Board of Trustees plays a significant role in providing leadership regarding the *Catholic Code of Conduct* and DPCDSB policies and procedures related to progressive discipline and school safety.

- b) Trustees oversee the development and consistent implementation of DPCDSB policies by:
- studying, reviewing, and approving all policies/regulations, and subsequent changes, related to standards of conduct, progressive discipline, and school safety;
 - ensuring that these policies/regulations reflect the mission of Catholic education as articulated in the *Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations (OCSGE)*;
 - hearing all suspension appeals and deciding on recommendations for expulsions;
 - ensuring that, when considering suspension appeals and expulsion recommendations, consideration is given to whether or not the discipline might have a disproportionate impact on a pupil under any of the grounds protected by the *Ontario Human Rights Code* and/or exacerbate any disadvantage the pupil may experience in society;
 - hearing delegations from concerned community members.

4.3. Principals

- a) The principal will provide leadership at the local school level in the administration of the *Catholic Code of Conduct* by: modeling servant leadership; cultivating an authentic safe, caring, and inclusive Catholic culture; empowering staff commitment and student involvement in the life of the school; promoting the highest possible standards of conduct and special care for the most vulnerable; ensuring consistent enforcement of school expectations using the DPCDSB-approved progressive discipline protocol and other DPCDSB policies and procedures; providing staff development opportunities regarding positive school climate and safety; cultivating strong partnerships with parish and community agencies.
- b) The principal will fulfill these responsibilities by:
- demonstrating care and commitment to academic excellence within a safe, caring, and inclusive teaching/learning environment;
 - educating the school community with respect to the *Catholic Code of Conduct* and the Gospel imperatives implicit in it;
 - holding everyone under their authority accountable for their behaviour and actions, emphasizing the importance of self-discipline, respect, kindness, and courtesy;
 - modeling Gospel values in all areas of leadership, including matters of conduct and safety;
 - creating opportunities for community members to gather for prayer and liturgy to cultivate a shared commitment to the creation of a safe, caring, inclusive, and healthy Catholic community;
 - empowering students to be positive leaders in their school and community by enabling opportunities for student engagement and student voice;
 - enabling community members to undertake Catholic service projects including environmental and social justice initiatives;
 - facilitating school-wide participation in the virtues program and other pro-social training programs;
 - facilitating a school-wide approach to the development of a positive school climate;
 - communicating regularly and meaningfully with all members of their school community;
 - training school staff and monitoring the implementation of DPCDSB-approved progressive discipline protocols to ensure optimal conditions for a positive work/learning environment;
 - implementing the DPCDSB process for the reporting and monitoring of violent incidents and/or incidents that may lead to suspension and/or expulsion;

- cultivating and maintaining strong partnerships with parents/guardians, the local parish, and community partners.

4.4. Teachers and Support Staff

- a) Under the leadership of the principal, school staff will maintain order in the school and act as positive role models for students.
- b) Staff will work collaboratively to hold everyone in their care to the highest standard of respectful and responsible behaviour, and to ensure that high standards of professional practice are maintained.
- c) Teachers and support staff will uphold standards of excellence for students by:
 - demonstrating respect for all students, staff, parents/guardians, volunteers, and members of the school community;
 - nurturing a vibrant Catholic learning environment where excellence in personal conduct, high standards of academic performance, and faith formation are actively cultivated;
 - striving to prepare students for the full responsibilities of citizenship and personhood, as shaped by the Catholic faith tradition;
 - helping students to develop a sense of self-worth, to work to their God-given potential, and to be positive leaders in the classroom, school, parish, and community;
 - providing students with opportunities to exercise Catholic service and wise stewardship;
 - assisting students in the exercise of personal conscience in discerning right choices;
 - helping students work to their full potential and in developing self-worth;
 - reporting any incidents that may lead to suspension and/or expulsion utilizing *Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form- Part I* (GF 025);
 - communicating regularly and meaningfully with parents/guardians;
 - collaborating with colleagues in exercising preventative and proactive strategies to maintain high standards of behaviour, and consistently utilizing DPCDSB-approved progressive discipline protocols.

4.5. Students

- a) Students of the DPCDSB represent the cherished hope for the future and the sacred trust of Catholic education.
- b) Students shall always be treated with respect and dignity.
- c) Staff, parents/guardians, and parish shall prepare students to answer the call of discipleship. The Catholic curricula and culture help in the formation of students as they discern meaningful vocations and develop a zealous commitment of service to God, family, and community. This holistic Catholic formation effectively integrates faith and life in a learning process that is rooted in Gospel values, while effectively implementing Ministry of Education course/program expectations.

- d) All DPCDSB students are expected to uphold the highest standards of personal conduct, to strive for academic excellence, to contribute positively to the community life of the school, and to embrace the Gospel values and living traditions of the Catholic Church, as articulated in the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations (OCSGE) (see GAP Section 5 for information about the OCSGE).
- e) Students will exercise self-discipline in their respect for self, staff, fellow students, school property, and the property of others.
- f) Students will take full responsibility for their own actions and strive to live up to the expectations of the *Catholic Code of Conduct* and all other DPCDSB/school/class expectations, policies, and procedures.
- g) Students will strive to achieve a virtuous lifestyle, high standards of personal conduct and academic performance, active participation in leadership and service initiatives, concern for the environment, and compassion for those in need.
- h) Students shall fulfill these responsibilities by:
- coming to school prepared, on time, ready to learn, and properly attired;
 - striving for excellence in personal conduct and academic performance;
 - cultivating opportunities to develop talents and strengthen personal leadership skills;
 - demonstrating courteous behaviour to fellow students and staff;
 - demonstrating respect for self;
 - contributing to an inclusive school culture by advocating that no student be excluded;
 - defending the rights of fellow students by reporting and/or safely intervening when the rights of others are threatened or violated;
 - cultivating a virtuous life through a commitment to Gospel values and service to others;
 - participating respectfully in the faith life and liturgical practices of the school community (e.g., sacraments, retreats, religion courses);
 - participating in school programs related to wise stewardship of resources, be they human or other;
 - following all school and DPCDSB policies and taking responsibility for their own actions;
 - accepting school discipline as necessary for personal growth, and as an extension of the responsibilities that would be exercised by a kind, firm, and judicious parent/guardian;
 - refraining from bringing anything to school that may compromise the safety of others;
 - acknowledging that school safety is a shared responsibility that depends on student commitment and involvement;
 - using computers, social networking, technological aides; and other specialized equipment for sanctioned activities only;

- respecting DPCDSB policy and procedures regarding use of personal electronic devices (PEDs), including using these devices in a responsible and respectful manner, and ensuring that PEDs are only used during instructional time under the following circumstances:
 - for educational purposes, as directed by an educator;
 - for health and/or medical purposes;
 - to support special education needs;
 - to provide an accommodation under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

4.6. Parents/Guardians

- a) Parents and guardians play an important role in the education of their children and can support the school in maintaining a safe and positive learning environment for all students.
- b) Parents/guardians fulfill their responsibilities when they:
 - affirm the distinctive Catholic culture of the school;
 - ensure that their child regularly attends school on time;
 - help their child be appropriately dressed and prepared for school;
 - become familiar with the Provincial Code of Conduct and help their child to adhere to the Catholic Code of Conduct and other expectations ;
 - communicate regularly with the school regarding their child's progress;
 - are engaged in their child's schoolwork and progress;
 - promptly report to the school their child's absence or late arrival;
 - encourage their child to cultivate leadership skills and demonstrate Gospel values;
 - assist school staff in dealing with disciplinary concerns involving their child.

4.7. In-School Support Teams

- a) In-school support teams meet regularly and frequently for the purpose of consultation, problem solving, and the development of strength-based solutions that focus on positive change for the student.
- b) The consultation process may address one or more areas of the student's life, including academic, well-being, and/or behavioural issues.
- c) At meetings of the in-school support team, several of the following team members may be present: administrator, guidance counsellor, classroom teacher, chaplaincy team leader, educational resource worker, psychologist, speech and language pathologist, child and youth worker, social worker, special education resource teacher, itinerant/DPCDSB-wide resource staff, and parents/guardians.

4.8. Parish

- a) The parish, in the person of the pastor or other parish staff members, is at the heart of the faith life of the Catholic school community and collaborates with the school in fostering a deep and lasting connection between students and families and the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church.

- b) The parish will assist families and schools in the immediate preparation of students for receipt of the sacraments (as outlined in the *Archdiocesan Sacramental Norms*); the regular celebration of Eucharist and other prayer services with the school community; by offering advice to staff regarding Church teachings in the faith formation of students; and by being a visible presence in the school, as time permits.

4.9. Community Connections

- a) Community supports assist the school in reinforcing consistent messaging regarding expected standards of behaviour and in providing services that enhance the school's ability to ensure a safe and caring school community.
- b) Community agencies and/or other community cooperatives and/or liaisons have an expanded influence in the wider community and are valuable resources in the front-line delivery of prevention and/or intervention programs that strengthen the school's commitment to provide a holistic education that prepares students to contribute to society.
- c) School principals are encouraged to consider the valuable resources in the community and are expected to nurture on-going relationships with community connections in order to facilitate youth leadership opportunities, and to strengthen communication and collaboration between home, school, parish, and community members. The DPCDSB and local schools will collaborate in developing consistent processes for the engagement of meaningful connections with the communities.

4.10. Police

- a) Police are essential partners in making DPCDSB schools and communities safe. Police offer ongoing education programs and provide tactical response in the event of emergencies. Police investigate incidents in accordance with the DPCDSB *Police - School Board Protocol*, which is based on a provincial model developed by the Ministry of the Solicitor General and the Ministry of Education.

5. THE ONTARIO CATHOLIC SCHOOL GRADUATE EXPECTATIONS³

- a) The *Ontario Catholic School Graduation Expectations* provide an image of the Catholic learner and a vision for the graduate of Catholic schools in Ontario. These distinctive expectations are shaped by a vision and destiny of the human person that emerges from the Catholic faith tradition and is best understood within the context of a human journey accomplished in community, in solidarity with brothers and sisters in the Church, and beyond. These expectations provide the broader vision within which the *Catholic Code of Conduct* is situated.

³ Institute for Catholic Education (2011)

b) The Ontario Catholic School Graduate is expected to be:

- **A discerning believer** formed in the Catholic faith community who celebrates the signs and sacred mystery of God’s presence through word, sacrament, prayer, forgiveness, reflection, and moral living.
- **An effective communicator** who speaks, writes, and listens honestly and sensitively, responding critically in light of Gospel values.
- **A reflective, creative, and holistic thinker** who solves problems and makes responsible decisions with an informed moral conscience for the common good.
- **A self-directed, responsible, lifelong learner** who develops and demonstrates their God-given potential.
- **A collaborative contributor** who finds meaning, dignity and vocation in work, which respects the rights of all and contributes to the common good.
- **A caring family member** who attends to family, school, parish, and the wider community.
- **A responsible citizen** who gives witness to Catholic social teaching by promoting peace, justice, and the sacredness of human life.

6. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

a) All DPCDSB schools will ensure that members of the community have a working knowledge of the definition of terms and concepts pertinent to the effective administration of the *Catholic Code of Conduct*. The following definitions apply for the purposes of implementation of the *Catholic Code of Conduct* and progressive discipline.

b) **Adult Pupil:** a pupil who is 18 years or older, or 16 or 17 and has withdrawn themselves from parental control.

c) **DPCDSB Expulsion:** an expulsion from all schools of the DPCDSB.

d) **Bullying:** aggressive and typically repeated behaviour by a pupil where,

(i) the behaviour is intended by the pupil to have the effect of, or the pupil ought to know that the behaviour would be likely to have the effect of:

- causing harm, fear, or distress to another individual, including physical, psychological, social or academic harm, harm to the individual’s reputation or harm to the individual’s property; or
- creating a negative environment at a school for another individual; or

- the behaviour occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance between the pupil and the individual based on factors such as size, strength, age, intelligence, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender identity, gender expression, race, disability, or the receipt of special education.

(ii) for the purposes of the definition of “bullying” above, behaviour includes the use of any physical, verbal, electronic, written, or other means.

(iii) for the purposes of the definition of “bullying” above, cyber-bullying includes bullying by electronic means (commonly known as cyber-bullying), including:

- creating a web page or a blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person;
 - impersonating another person as the author of content or messages posted on the internet; and
 - communicating material electronically to more than one individual or posting material on a website that may be accessed by one or more individuals.
- e) **Consequence:** an educative outcome resulting from a particular student behaviour that may occur “as a matter of course,” or may be purposefully undertaken by staff, to help the student acquire insight into the impact of their behaviour and to develop new skills or ways of thinking/acting that improve future behaviour.
- f) **Discipline Committee:** committee of three or more trustees designated to determine suspension appeals and recommendations for expulsion.
- g) **Educator:** as outlined in *Policy/Program Memorandum No. 128 (August 29, 2019)*, teachers regulated under the *Ontario College of Teachers Act, 1996*, and early childhood educators regulated under the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*.
- h) **Harassment:** words, conduct, or action directed at an individual, which may include: remarks; jokes; threats; name-calling; the display of material(s); touching; or other behavior that an individual knows or ought to know insults, intimidates, offends, demeans, annoys, alarms or causes that individual emotional distress, and which may constitute discrimination when related to grounds protected by the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.
- i) **IEP:** Individual Education Plan
- j) **Impact on School Climate:** an incident or activity which has a negative impact on the school community, and which may or may not occur on school property at any time.
- k) **Intervention:** a purposeful action undertaken by staff, either in the moment or on an ongoing basis, intended to promote a positive change in the student’s behavior or learning. Typically, an intervention is a decisive change intended to facilitate the student’s ability to adhere more consistently to the *Catholic Code of Conduct*, and to enhance the student’s performance and sense of well-being and belonging. One example of an intervention is a referral to support services personnel.
- l) **Parent/Guardian:** where there is a reference to involving or informing a parent/guardian, it means the custodial parent or legal guardian of a minor child who is not an adult pupil.
- m) **Personal Electronic Device:** any personal electronic device (PED) that can be used for electronic communication or to access the Internet, such as a cellphone or tablet.
- n) **Principal or Designate:** in this policy, principal refers to the administrator in charge of a local school community. Designate refers to a person designated by the principal or by the DPCDSB to fulfill that role.

- o) **Purview:** the scope, intention, and range of activities, roles, and locations understood to be under the authority of this GAP.
- p) **SAP:** Student Action Plan
- q) **Safe School Action Team:** a required local school committee, under the leadership of the principal, that has broad representation and exists to ensure the school community's compliance with the *Catholic Code of Conduct*. This team focuses its attention on violence and bullying prevention and the creation of a safe, caring, inclusive, and healthy learning community for all. This team assists with the development, review, and revision process for the *Catholic Code of Conduct*, assessment of school climate survey data, and various whole school program initiatives related to safe schools. (e.g., Catholic Community Culture and Caring Action Team).
- r) **Safe Schools Incident Reporting Form:** Identified as GF 025, documentation that staff is required to complete in the event of witnessing and/or receiving information regarding a violent incident and/or incident that may lead to the suspension/expulsion of a student or students.
- s) **School Climate:** the total of all personal relationships within a school. A positive climate exists when all members feel safe, cared for, included, and accepted.
- t) **School Community:** the school community is composed of staff, students, parents/guardians, and volunteers of the school, as well as the community of people and businesses that are served by or located in the greater neighbourhood of the school. The school community includes persons who, although not DPCDSB staff, nevertheless hold positions of authority and responsibility in the life of the school (e.g., coaches, lunchroom supervisors, bus drivers, guest lecturers, facilitators at off-site facilities, field trip/classroom volunteers, parish, police, and community agency representatives).
- u) **School Day:** the instructional day, excluding professional development days.
- v) **School Expulsion:** an expulsion from the DPCDSB school that the pupil was attending at the time of the incident.
- w) **Staff:** refers to all persons who are paid employees of the DPCDSB. At the local school level, this term would include the following: administrators, chaplaincy team leaders, teachers, educational resource workers, special services staff (social work, speech and language, psychology), child and youth workers, office staff, custodial, maintenance, student monitors, and any other support staff affiliated with the school.
- x) **Staff Who Work Directly with Pupils:** staff including administrators, teachers, educational resource workers, child and youth workers, social workers, psychologists, speech language pathologists, and other professional and para-professional staff who have regular and direct duties with the DPCDSB's pupils.

- y) **Support:** a designated course of action that is purposefully tailored to provide a scaffold of assistance that will maximize the probability of on-going growth/improvement in student learning and/or behaviours. A support may be intended as preventative, rehabilitative or transformative. Preventive strategies that build community and cultivate pro-social skills are frequently undertaken for the whole school, as they are deemed good for all and essential for some. A support may also be initiated for an individual student in anticipation of possible concerns, based on the student's propensity to engage in challenging behaviours, or to be victimized by them. Supports are also often part of the school's attempt to address a behavioural incident, as a student moves through the renewal and re-entry phases of progressive discipline. On-going supports may be part of a student's gradual re-entry to ensure that they continue to move in a positive direction.
- z) **Team:** a flexible, broadly collaborative, inclusive approach to addressing student needs, wherein team members engage in a problem-solving process to improve student outcomes. "Team" is pivotal in addressing the individual needs of the student in a strength-based model. The support services team aims at positive personal change and may also assist in the diagnostic phase of referral for formal professional assessment. In practical terms, "team" can be described as a model for student support that is rooted in relationship, collaboration, and communication. The team process may occur within team meetings, which gather stakeholders together in one place at a specific time; or as a process which occurs within multiple, discrete conversations between the various persons who collectively constitute "team". When informal communication occurs, team members operate in the realm of hypothetical where circumstances may be described in general terms, but names and details are not disclosed. When circumstances make it necessary to formalize the collaboration and communication process, meetings of the designated support services staff are convened to allow for sanctioned (i.e., with parent/guardian permission) sharing of information between team members.
- aa) **Violent Incident:** (as per PPM 120) the occurrence of any one of the following or occurrence of a combination of any of the following:
- possessing a weapon, including possessing a firearm
 - physical assault causing bodily harm requiring medical attention
 - sexual assault
 - robbery
 - using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person
 - extortion
 - hate and/or bias-motivated occurrences
- bb) **Violent Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA):** assessment that guides the DPCDSB's response following a situation/incident that may indicate or confidently suggest there is a continued targeted threat against an individual(s) and/or site(s), or when significant information exists to suggest a student may demonstrate violent behavior toward themselves or others.
- cc) **Weapon:** any article designed as a weapon or used or intended to be used for the purpose of threatening, intimidating, or injuring a person. All firearms, including replica firearms and imitation firearms, are always considered weapons.