

Safety Plan



Safety Plan

INTRODUCTION

The Greater Victoria School District No. 61 (the District) believes every student in our District should feel safe, accepted and respected, regardless of race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, family status, diverse abilities, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression.

The Board, District and School Staff, in collaboration with police services and the Four Houses, will have opportunities to participate in trauma-informed professional development, cultural sensitivity training and other learning opportunities that promote a greater understanding among staff and students of the local Nations' history, territories and contemporary matters. Further, the District is committed to working collaboratively with the local police to support school safety through a holistic and intentional focus on proactive and preventative strategies and approaches.

The Safety Plan sets out the actions, supports and services the District provides, in collaboration with police services, to help prevent incidents, and to react to incidents in our District and learning community to ensure the safety and well-being of all students, staff, and visitors in schools.

The Safety Plan acknowledges the concerns of some members of our learning community that the presence of police makes them feel less safe and less comfortable at school. These concerns and perspectives have been carefully considered in the development of the Safety Plan. Police members working in schools will use a trauma-informed approach that considers the ethnic, cultural, and/or gender identity of students.

Both the District and local police services commit to centering the perspectives of Indigenous, racialized, and equity-deserving students as the Safety Plan is implemented, as well as making revisions and adjustments to the plan moving forward.

Key Safety Plan Objectives

- Coordinate safety protocols with local fire departments and police.
- Foster positive, respectful relationships with students, staff, parents, and police.
- Prevent student safety-related incidents through education, training, and awareness.
- Outline the roles and responsibilities of the District and the police.
- Prepare students and staff to respond effectively to emergencies.
- Promote a safe, equitable and inclusive learning environment.
- Create a bi-directional information sharing with police to assess gang activity, and co-create preventative measures to reduce any student behaviour related to gang activity.

DEFINITIONS

- **Board of Education** - is a corporate body, constituted of democratically elected school trustees, and is responsible for determining policy for the efficient and effective operation of schools, the provision of an educational program to students, and the provision of health, social and other support services to schools in the School District, in accordance with the School Act.
- **Crime Prevention** – comprises strategies and measures that seek to reduce the risk of crimes occurring, and their potential harmful effects on individuals and society, including fear of crime, by intervening to influence their multiple causes.
<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/justice-and-prison-reform/cpcj-crimeprevention-home.html>
- **Community Threat Assessment Protocol Process** – designed to reflect the shared understanding and agreement between Boards of Education and community partners about how to collaboratively respond to threat-making and worrisome behaviour.
- **District Safe Schools Coordinator** – is responsible for district-wide safety initiatives, including monitoring the online reporting tool, liaising with school administrators regarding student reports, building the capacity of school personnel to prevent and respond to safety concerns, and liaising with the Ministry of Education and Child Care.
- **Gang Activity** – a gang is an organized group who plan and carry out crime for profit, often using violence. Gangs may have a name, symbols, colours, signs, graffiti, clothing brands and tattoos. Gangs often claim a certain area for their criminal activities and violence.
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/bcs-criminal-justice-system/reporting-a-crime/what-is-a-crime/crime-examples/gang-violence>
- **Police Services (Police)** - refers to all police in the Greater Victoria School District region including Oak Bay Police Department, Saanich Police Department, Victoria Police Department and West Shore RCMP (including the Indigenous Policing Unit Officer).
- **Preventative Safety Measures** – all preventative measures to protect persons or places (i.e.: Police Services, Community Threat Assessment Protocols, Worrisome Online Behaviour Reports, Safe Schools Coordinator role, student support plan, etc.)
- **Regional Safety Committee** – a lower Vancouver Island committee comprised of representatives from SD61, SD62, SD63, Saanich Police, Victoria & Esquimalt Police, Oak Bay Police, Central Saanich Police, RCMP, Youth Probation, and Safer Schools Together.
- **Safety** - the safety of a student encompasses physical, environmental, cyber, psychological, emotional, and spiritual safety.
- **Safety Plan** – a comprehensive strategy developed by a school district to ensure the safety, security, and well-being of students, staff, and visitors across all schools and facilities within its jurisdiction.

- **Student Safety Plan** – an individual plan developed in collaboration with school staff and parents, and at times supported by district staff, in situations where a student’s behaviour could escalate and present an immediate risk of injury to staff or students. Each Student Safety Plan is specific to the needs of the individual student.
- **Student Support Plan** – applies to a small number of students who do not respond to Tier 1 interventions. Consists of more highly intensive interventions and require more support and instruction. Simple functional behaviour assessments may be employed at the Tier 2 level.
 - Tier 1 Intervention: includes school wide expectations defined in the classroom, teaching and modeling appropriate behaviours, and establishing routines. Other Tier 1 supports may include: non-verbal cues such as a nod, thumbs up, high-five, etc. Grounding exercises, including box breathing, mindfulness, and guided imagery.
 - Tier 2 Intervention: supports are moderately intensive and focused interventions, formally taught and practiced in a small group or individual setting on a systematic and an ongoing basis. These consist of more highly intensive interventions and require more support and instruction. Simple behaviour assessments may be employed at the Tier 2 level. This may include Non-Violent Crisis Intervention which include strategies: allowing time, providing space, and asking others to respect the time and space needed for the student.
- **Trauma-Informed Practice** – is a strengths-based framework grounded in an understanding of, and responsiveness to, the impact of trauma. It emphasizes physical, psychological, and emotional safety for everyone, and creates opportunities for survivors to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment. (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/managing-your-health/mental-health-substance-use/child-teen-mental-health/trauma-informed-practice-resources>)
- **Worrisome Online Behaviour Reports** – complements the evolving needs of School Safety/Threat Assessment teams by identifying potential risks or threats, allowing for proactive intervention and enhancing school safety.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board of Education:

- Ensuring Board governance facilitates for police to attend schools in order to help address proactive safety, crime prevention and crisis response.
- Ensuring the Safety Plan is in alignment with the Esquimalt Nation Local Education Agreement (LEA), the Songhees Nation LEA, the Métis Education Agreement and the Urban Peoples House Indigenous Advisory Terms of Reference.
- Ensuring the Safety Plan is in alignment with the School Act, all District Bylaws, Policies, and Regulations.
- Ensuring privacy rights of students and staff and adherence to Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act (FOIPPA).
- Providing oversight in the annual Safety Plan review process.
- Supporting and participating in cultural sensitivity, restorative practice and trauma informed training.

The Superintendent (or designate):

- Meeting three times per year with Police Chiefs and the RCMP Superintendent to discuss the Safety Plan.
- Working collaboratively with Esquimalt Nations, Songhees Nations, Métis Nations Greater Victoria and Urban Peoples Indigenous Advisory staff as per their respective Education Agreement and Terms of Reference
- Communicating the Safety Plan and any changes to the plan with Principals and Vice-Principals.
- Providing the Board with a report at the conclusion of the annual review.
- Ensuring that the police can attend schools to help address proactive safety, crime prevention and crisis response.
- Co-planning with Indigenous Education Department including the Director of Indigenous Education and the District Indigenous Education Counsellors and District staff to provide and participate in cultural sensitivity, restorative practice and trauma informed training.

The Principal and Vice Principal:

- Working collaboratively and fostering relationships with police and ensure that police can attend schools in order to help address proactive safety, crime prevention and crisis response.
- Ensuring students are aware of their rights as per Policy 5145 Police Questioning of Students in Schools.
- Ensuring that parents/guardians are contacted immediately upon the Principal (or designate) receiving notice of the police request to interview a student.
- Responsible for aligning student conduct and school discipline with the school Student Code of Conduct.

- Working collaboratively with Esquimalt and Songhees Nation staff as per their respective LEAs.
- Working collaboratively with Métis Nations Greater Victoria and Urban Peoples Indigenous Advisory staff as per their respective Education Agreement and Terms of Reference
- Ensuring the privacy rights of students and staff and adherence to FOIPPA.
- Contacting the appropriate Senior Leadership member in relation to questions or clarifications related to police in schools.
- Co-planning with the Indigenous Education Department including the Indigenous Education District Counsellors, staff committees to provide and participate in cultural sensitivity and trauma informed training.
- Meeting a minimum of once per month with the police member assigned to school.
- Providing their contact information to the police member assigned to their school.

The Police Department(s):

- Meeting three times per year with the Superintendent (or designate) to discuss the Safety Plan.
- Working collaboratively with district and school-based staff in order to help address proactive safety, crime prevention and crisis response.
- Providing to the Greater Victoria School District Board of Education existing oversight mechanisms including a police complaint process.
- Selecting appropriate police officers to work with a trauma informed lens to work with vulnerable and or high-risk youth populations in schools.
- Providing contact information for the assigned officer to each school to the Safe School Coordinator and the respective school Principal.
- Supporting and participating in cultural sensitivity, restorative practice and trauma informed training.

The Police Member in School(s):

- Building relationships between learning community and respective police department by having a regular presence in the school.
- Meeting a minimum of once per month with the school principal.
- Informing the school principal (or designate) when on site.
- Engaging with youth in positive, non-confrontational settings.
- Working collaboratively with district and school staff to deliver proactive safety, crime prevention and crisis response.
- Providing advice and guidance to students, parents/guardians, and staff who request support.
- Working collaboratively with district and school staff to review and revise safety and security at schools.
- Serving as a mentor and positive role model to students.
- Supporting and participating in cultural sensitivity, restorative practice and trauma informed training.

PROACTIVE SAFETY MEASURES

Proactive safety measures include, but are not limited to:

School Based

- School-based staff using the application of the Behaviour and Digital Threat Assessment (BDTA) to assess the impact of a student's behaviour.
- Providing extra-curricular teams and clubs which offer physical literacy and mentorship to enhance protective factors for vulnerable and or high-risk youth.
- Physical Health Education Teachers and School Based Counsellors continuing to support and educate Sexual Health and Consent.
- Offering the Second Step Program at elementary and middle schools in both English and French - Children benefit from social-emotional learning (SEL) in this program.
- Piloting Junior Youth Empowerment Program in a partnership between Colquitz Middle School and Spectrum Community School.

District Based

- Maintaining building access controls (i.e.: locks, alarms, alarm monitoring).
- The Safe Schools Coordinator attending Regional Safety Meeting on a monthly basis as part of existing, changing, or emerging safety concerns that may impact student safety.
- The Safe Schools Coordinator sharing information gathered or exchanged at Regional Safety Meeting with Middle and Secondary School Principals.
- District staff using the application of the Behaviour and Digital Threat Assessment (BDTA) to assess the impact of a student's behaviour.
- Receiving Worrisome Online Behaviour Reports from Safer Schools Together to enhance the safety and welfare of staff, students and surrounding communities by identifying potential risks or threats, allowing for proactive intervention.
- Bi-annual confirmation in August and January by Associate Superintendents with Principals and Vice Principals of the 18 secondary and middle schools to review the Student Codes of Conduct and school expectations.
- Bi-annual meeting in August and January with Senior Leadership Team and all Principals and Vice Principals to discuss School District Policies and Regulations relevant to student safety, including online reporting tools (ERASE) and Community Threat Assessment protocols (BDTA).
- The District Counsellor working with Island Sexual Health, MYST and Shift Education to support Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Consent education provided in our schools for both staff and students.
- The District Counsellor providing resources each month in a Counsellor Newsletter. Examples included in the newsletters include: 'Consent Culture' – a consent module designed to cultivate a culture of consent in schools and community; 'Power Up Sexual Health Middle/Secondary;' and 'Power Up Sexual Health Elementary/Middle' consent education resources. The newsletter is

available to the entire learning community and published on the District website: <https://supportforlearning.sd61.bc.ca>.

- Coordinating District Based Team meetings with school staff, district staff, the student and their family to discuss attendance, achievement or behaviour related concerns and to establish a collaborative plan moving forward to help address the concerns.
- Ensuring the District Healthy Schools website is publicly available on the District website and contains resources for students, staff and the community, supporting topics such as: Mental Health, Nutrition, Healthy Practices, Gender and Sexuality, Sexual Health, Active Living, Social Emotional Learning and Where to Call for Help for Students. <https://healthyschools.sd61.bc.ca/resources-links/sexual-health/>.
- Sending an annual reminder in April for Principals and Vice Principals to consult with staff, parents and students about their respective schools' Student Code of Conduct as per the Provincial Standards for Codes of Conduct Ministerial Order 89/2024.
- Offering Mental Health and Well-being student grants to all elementary, middle, and secondary schools.
- Sending to families and posting on district websites any safety information and resources related to extreme heat and heat warnings, cooling center locations, the BC Wildfire App, mental health supports such as ERASE, and general and home emergency preparedness.
- Monthly meetings with Principals and Vice Principals to help address proactive safety, crime prevention and crisis response in schools.

Multi-Agency

- Collaborating with police to help address proactive safety, crime prevention and crisis response. Examples of this are: cyber/ social media online safety, mental health and substance use, vandalism, sextortion, bullying, consent, increased gang activity and violence prevention.
- Ensuring safe access to school sites through District partnerships with municipalities in support of crossing guard services.
- Collaborating with police services to support traffic safety around school sites and enforcement of school zone speed limits.
- Coordinating between police and School Principal (or designate) to identify the safe location in each classroom/room where students and staff shall assemble should there be a lock down.
- Supporting Student-Led Mental Health Community Resource Fair.
- Bi-monthly meetings with Director of Indigenous Education, Superintendent, and staff members of Esquimalt Nation and Songhees Nation regarding the implementation of Local Education Agreements.
- Creating a holistic, student support plan to support vulnerable youth utilizing multi-disciplinary teams, which may include: school based administration, school counsellors, case managers, district based counsellors, Senior Leadership team

members, Safe School Coordinator, Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), Mobile Youth Services Team (MYST), Indigenous Education Department, Esquimalt Nation staff, Songhees Nation staff, Métis Nation staff, Urban Peoples' House Indigenous Advisory representatives, Island Health, Integrated Mobile Crisis Response Team (IMCRT) and local police services.

Training

- Encouraging staff to participate in Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training offerings.
- Offering Cultural Sensitivity training
- Offering Trauma Informed training
- Offering Local Education Agreement training
- Providing BDTA training

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RELATIONAL WORK

Rightsholders

The Four Houses: Esquimalt Nation, Songhees Nation, Métis Nation, and Urban Peoples' House Indigenous Advisory (UPHIA), consult with our Board through our Indigenous Education Department (IED). Monthly meetings are held with each of the Four Houses to discuss matters relating to Local Education Agreements (LEA), the Métis Education Agreement and the UPHIA Terms of Reference.

Esquimalt Nation and Songhees Nation- As part of the Local Education Agreements, schools take a team approach with the Nation's Education representatives when dealing with general disciplinary issues involving Nation students (with written consent of the Nation, and the student's parents). Communication regarding general safety related items may include school staff, the Nation's Education representatives and the Indigenous Education Department staff.

The Local Education Agreements (LEAs) with Esquimalt Nation and Songhees Nation, the Métis Nation Education Agreement, and the UPHIA Terms of Reference are available on the school district website via the following link: <https://www.sd61.bc.ca/our-district/local-education-agreements/>.

See relevant sections from the **Esquimalt LEA**: 10.0 Vulnerable Student Placement; 12.0 Student Conduct; 13.0 Student Safety; 16.0 Reporting; 17.0 Communication; and 19.0 Implementation, Monitoring, Review: LEA Committee; and 20.0 Dispute Resolution.

See relevant sections from the **Songhees LEA**: 9.0 Vulnerable Student Placement; 11.0 Student Conduct; 12.0 Student Safety; 15.0 Reporting; 16.0 Communication; 18.0 Implementation, Monitoring, Review: LEA Committee; and 19.0 Dispute Resolution.

Métis Nation - Communication regarding general safety related items may include school staff, the Nation's Education representatives and the Indigenous Education Department staff.

See relevant sections from the **Métis Education Agreement**: 12.0 Reporting and Meetings; and 13.0 Dispute Resolution.

Urban Peoples' House Indigenous Advisory - the purpose of the UPHIA is to provide community voice to the school district on behalf of urban Indigenous children and families to ensure that voice has adequate influence.

See relevant sections from the **Urban Peoples' House Indigenous Advisory**: 5. The Urban Peoples' House Indigenous Advisory's Guiding Principles.

Indigenous Education Advisory Council (IEAC) - Section 87.005 of the School Act authorizes an Indigenous Education Council to make rules governing terms of reference in relation to the IEC that are consistent with the *School Act*, the regulations, or the orders of the Ministry, including MO 217/2024, the Indigenous Education Council Order

(the IEC Order). As set out in the IEC Order, an IEC must comply with the following rules in the conduct of its business:

- (a) The protocols, laws, customs, and traditions of local first nations must be respected;
- (b) The Indigenous Education Council must:
 - (i) Be guided by the need to support strong and effective relationships between the Board and Local First Nations.
 - (ii) Acknowledge its work is undertaken in the Local First Nations' territory and have deference to the views and perspectives of members representing Local First Nations, and
 - (iii) Consider the distinctions and diversity of the Indigenous student population in advising the Board. '

The District will collaborate with the IEAC on matters involving safety that impact Indigenous student education and support services.

Police Services

- Police officers will be working in schools in collaboration with school and district staff to build and maintain relationships between school communities and police.
- Police officers will be working in schools in collaboration with school and district staff to establish:
 - positive connections with students at risk as determined by the school staff based on risk enhancing indicators such as attendance concerns, changes in behaviour, and changes in academic achievement.
 - early intervention programs and services for students at risk of harm, exploitation, victimization or criminal behaviour.
 - education and awareness programs for schools, grade levels or specific groups of students.
 - role modelling opportunities to help foster positive programming related to decision making, conflict resolution and restorative justice.
 - anti-bullying, gang prevention, and digital safety resources and supports.
 - parent education workshops.
 - opportunities for students, staff and parents who may feel fear, unsafe or mistrust of police officers to work together to share truths about racism and work together to rebuild that trust with the community and staff.
- Westshore RCMP will be working collaboratively in schools to facilitate an opportunity for all Nations' students to feel safe at school, including safety from racism, indifference, bias, marginalization, bullying and stereotyping.

Educational Partners

Educational Partners include CUPE382, CUPE947, Greater Victoria Teachers Association (GVTA), Victoria Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (VCPAC), and the Victoria Principals and Vice Principals Association (VPVPA).

Communication regarding general safety related items may include school-based staff, District staff, and the Executive of each of the Educational Partner groups. Depending on the safety related item this may occur through phone correspondence, email, and/or at a meeting.

Educational Partners play a key role in helping to identify high risk and vulnerable youth by monitoring behavioural signs such as changes in student baseline behavioural trends (e.g. attendance, anxiety, depression, theft/vandalism, substance use, aggressive behaviours) in school and community.

Interventions, which can enhance protective factors, can be co-created with educational partners and police to address specific community needs. Some examples of these interventions are positive role models, pro-social activities, positive cultural identity, social emotional skills, school clubs and teams.

RESPONSES TO SAFETY EVENTS

Emergency Response

When an imminent risk is identified, school staff call 911 immediately to ensure a school safety plan and/or protocols are activated as required.

When safe to do so, the Principal (or designate) will contact the Senior Leadership Team member associated with the school as soon as possible.

When applicable, communication is sent to all Principals and Vice Principals in the event of a 'critical period' when there is a potential for increased threat-making or threat-related behaviour.

Non-Emergency Response

In the event of a non-emergency event where police are required, the Principal (or designate) will call the police officer assigned to the school. If the officer is unavailable, the Principal (or designate) will call the non-emergency police line.

Communication – School Safety Response (Police Involvement)

In the case of a safety related event involving police in the school, such as a lockdown or hold and secure, the Principal of the impacted school(s), in collaboration with the Communications Specialist and the Safe Schools Coordinator, will send a note home to all parents/caregivers. In addition, the district website may be updated to reflect information pertaining to the lockdown or hold and secure. The Communications Specialist, in collaboration with the Superintendent or designate, will work with the local police department to confirm factual and timely messaging as per the Communication Protocol. Every effort will be made to provide the information to parents/caregivers prior to the end of the school day.

Communication – School Safety Response (No Police Involvement)

In the case of a safety related event involving a student or classroom, but not involving police, and when appropriate, the classroom teacher, in collaboration with the Principal or Vice Principal, will send a note home to parents/caregivers of the impacted students advising them of the event that occurred. When deemed appropriate by the classroom teacher and Principal, every effort will be made to send the note home on the day of the event.

RECOVERY AND SUPPORT SERVICES

The District Crisis Incident Response Team (CIRT), consisting of School-Based Administrators, Counsellors and a member of the Senior Leadership Team and, when appropriate, support from members of the Indigenous Education Department, is in place. In addition, each school has a CIRT team comprised of School Administration, Teacher Counsellor(s), Office staff, Teacher(s), and Educational Assistant(s). CIRT provides support to schools and families in dealing with critical incidents through the provision of expertise, resources and additional counseling support. The school-based CIRT will develop an action plan in response to a critical incident and may invite the District CIRT to provide further support.

Integrated Mobile Crisis Response Team (IMCRT) is accessed by schools for mental health clinicians, psychiatric nurses, child and youth counsellors and plain-clothed police officers for crisis response, mental health and substance use assessment and support, consultation for planning and support, and referral and connection to services.

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RELEVANT DISTRICT POLICIES

The Safety Plan outlines the coordinated, proactive, preventative, and ongoing steps taken to mitigate safety risks that may impact students in the District. The Board's policies related to student safety and student codes of conduct are key components of our District's ongoing prevention and mitigation measures and strategies to support student safety. The Board policies relevant to this Safety Plan are as follows:

Bylaw 9330.1 Appeal Process

1155 Complaint Process for a Resolution of Concerns

1300 Acceptable Use of Digital Technology

1305 Social Media Use

4116 Sexual Harassment

4302 Multiculturalism

4303 Discrimination

4304 Bullying and Harassment

4305 Gender Identity & Gender Expression

5131.0 Personal Safety & Security

5131.1 Discipline

5131.2 Threats to Students, Employees, or Volunteer Sponsors

5131.3 Prohibition of Weapons in Schools

5131.4 Substance Abuse ***currently under review**

5131.5 Smoking

5131.6 Student Attendance

5131.7 Student Suspensions

5132 Student Dress Code

5134 Student Input

5140.1 Child Abuse

5145 Police Questioning of Students in Schools ***currently under review**

6114 Maintenance of Order

6164.03 Physical Restraint

8400 Whistleblower Protection

REVIEW PROCESS

The District and Police services are committed to an annual review of the Safety Plan with a focus on continuous improvement. This reflective practice will include a culturally responsive review process that includes listening to the voices of the recipients of the service.

During the annual review process, a review team comprised of district staff, the Four Houses, police services, and Educational Partners will focus on the following six areas:

1. Alignment
2. Continuous Improvement
3. Culturally Responsive
4. Data and evidence (qualitative and quantitative)
5. Trauma Informed
6. Indigenous Relations

Metrics

Our District engages in ongoing monitoring of relevant reporting indicators and key initiatives including McCreary, EDI, the Student Learning Survey, anecdotal feedback from Regional Safety Committee meetings, meetings between the Chiefs of Police and the Superintendent, Local Education Agreement Meetings and Indigenous Education Council meetings.

At the conclusion of the annual review, a report will be provided to the Four Houses, Police Services, Educational Partners and the Board of Education.

CHANGES TO THE SAFETY PLAN

This Safety Plan may be amended by the Board following consultation with the Four Houses, Police Services and Educational Partners and 60 days advance notice to the Minister of changes to be made.