



Anti-Bullying and Anti-Violence Plan Including Sexual Violence

2023-2024

School: St. Mary's School



Coordinator : Vicki Roach (Principal)

AVAB Committee Members :

Sara Matos-Chahal (Vice-Principal)

St. Mary's Teachers

St. Mary's Special Education Technicians

St. Mary's Attendants

St. Mary's Daycare Educators

Approved by Governing Board:

November 16, 2023.

2023-11-16 (6.4)

Resolution :



Statement

Riverside School Board recognizes its role as an educational organization, with the power and responsibility to impact citizenship through education. We recognize diversity as a fact. We must value and honour all faces, voices, realities, and experiences, and ensure that ours is an organization where children, youth and adults are acknowledged, respected, welcomed and empowered. We commit to the ongoing work required to keep equity and inclusion at the forefront of our reflection and decision-making, in dedication to social emotional well-being, educational excellence and success for all.





Anti-Bullying and Anti-Violence Plan

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DEFINITIONS

Bullying

The word “bullying” means any repeated direct or indirect behaviour, comment, act or gesture, whether deliberate or not, including in cyberspace, which occurs in a context where there is a power imbalance between the persons concerned and which causes distress and injures, hurts, oppresses, intimidates or ostracizes. (Education Act Section 13(1.1))

<http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/current-initiatives/bullying-and-violence-in-the-schools/bill-56/>

Violence

The word “violence” means any intentional demonstration of verbal, written, physical, psychological or sexual force which causes distress and injures, hurts or oppresses a person by attacking their psychological or physical integrity or well-being, or their rights or property. (Education Act Section 13(3))

<http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/current-initiatives/bullying-and-violence-in-the-schools/bill-56/>

Sexual Violence

"The concept of sexual violence refers to any form of violence committed through sexual practices or by targeting sexuality, including sexual assault. It also refers to any other misconduct, including that relating to sexual and gender diversity, in such forms as unwanted direct or indirect gestures, comments, behaviours or attitudes with sexual connotations, including by a technological means."

<https://www.quebec.ca/en/education/prescolaire-primaire-et-secondaire/droits-eleve/report-an-act-of-sexual-violence-against-a-student>

Racism

Racism means: “Racism corresponds to the “set of ideas, attitudes and actions whose purpose is to make ethnocultural and national groups feel inferior socially, economically, culturally and politically, thereby preventing them from benefitting fully from the advantages to which all citizens are entitled.” Racist discourse is usually based on real or presumed physical and cultural differences.” https://www.mifi.gouv.qc.ca/publications/fr/recherchesstatistiques/Pub_Immigration_et_demo_2015.pdf

Discrimination

Discrimination means:” Every person has a right to full and equal recognition and exercise of his human rights and freedoms, without distinction, exclusion or preference based on race, colour, sex, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, sexual orientation, civil status, age except as provided by law, religion, political convictions, language, ethnic or national origin, social condition, a handicap or the use of any means to palliate a handicap. Discrimination exists where such a distinction, exclusion or preference has the effect of nullifying or impairing such right.” (Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, section 10). <https://www.legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/document/cs/c-12>



ELEMENTS OF THE AV/AB PLAN

Element 1	An analysis of the situation prevailing at the school with respect to bullying and violence;
Element 2	Prevention measures to put an end to all forms of bullying and violence, in particular those motivated by racism or homophobia or targeting sexual orientation, sexual identity, a handicap or a physical characteristic;
Element 3	Measures to encourage parents/guardians to collaborate in preventing and stopping bullying and violence and in creating a healthy and secure learning environment;
Element 4	Procedures of reporting, or registering a complaint concerning, an act of bullying or violence to or with the institution and, more particularly, procedures for reporting the use of social media or communication technologies for cyberbullying purposes
Element 5	The actions to be taken when a student, teacher or other school staff member or any other person observes an act of bullying or violence; or when a report or complaint is sent to the institution by the regional student Ombudsman
Element 6	Measures to protect the confidentiality of any report or complaint concerning an act of bullying or violence;
Element 7	Supervisory or support measures for any student who is a victim or bullying or violence, for witnesses and for perpetrator, (and bystander);
Element 8	Specific disciplinary sanctions for acts of bullying or violence, according to their severity or repetitive nature, and;
Element 9	The required follow-up on any report or complaint concerning an act of bullying or violence;



Element 1 **ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION PREVAILING AT THE SCHOOL WITH RESPECT TO BULLYING AND VOILENCE**

School Portrait

Student population :

365

Other pertinent information::

- English & Immersion models of delivery
 - Two (2) 4 year-old kindergartens
 - Three (3) Regional Programs:
 - Sail (Kindergarten/Grade 1 for students with developmental delays)
 - Links cycle 2 and Links cycle 3 (for students with behaviour difficulties)
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- Socio-economic decile rank of 9

Analysis

An analysis of the situation prevailing at the school with respect to bullying and violence is conducted each year by using the following indicators:

- Results from the 2022-23 *Our School Survey* (formerly *Tell Them From Me*).

Feel safe at school as well as to and from school

The student perception of feeling safe at/to and from school scored at 40%. This breaks down as 42% of girls and 44% of boys feeling safe at school or traveling to and from school.

Students who perceived moderate to severe anxiety

64% of students do not experience moderate or high levels of anxiety at school, of which 60% are girls and 69% are boys.

Bullying and Exclusion

According to the survey, 71% of students claim that they were not victims of bullying. Of this percentage, 73% were girls and 69% were boys.



Other pertinent data :

According to the survey, 64% of students claim that there is a positive learning climate with clear rules and expectation for classroom behaviour. This is well on par with the Canadian norm of 67%.

Priorities

We feel that we need to further analyze why students feel unsafe. 40% of students felt unsafe at or going to /from school. The Canadian average is 64%. A sub-question revealed that the majority of students felt unsafe at recess time despite having an increased number of supervisors on duty, as well as feeling unsafe on their walk to/from school despite the addition of a crossing guard.



Element 2

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

To address the area(s) of concern, the following preventative measures aimed at putting an end to all forms of bullying and violence; in particular those motivated by racism or homophobia or targeting sexual orientation, sexual identity, a handicap or a physical characteristic include:

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 1 - | Observation of “Orange Shirt Day” (Day for Truth and Reconciliation). |
| 2 - | Observation of “ Pink Shirt Day” (anti-bullying) |
| 3 - | Adherence to the Sexual Health Education program at all levels, which include conversations on varying family structures, sexual identity, stereotypes, etc. |
| 4 - | High ratio of supervisors during recesses. |
| 5 - | BMS (Behaviour Management System) training offered to groups of staff members. |
| 6 - | Various pedagogical sessions offered throughout the year |
| 7 - | House System to promote sense of belonging |



The success of this plan depends on the understanding and support of all of our stakeholders. School administrators and staff play a key role in developing programs and strategies to improve daily school life. Students also have a responsibility to promote and support positive behaviours. Parents/ Guardians are equally important and necessary partners in this initiative. Parents/ Guardians are encouraged to be active advocates for their children and to be aware of changes in their behaviours and to contact the school when behaviours at home become a concern.

The following measures are aimed at encouraging parents/ guardians to collaborate in preventing and stopping bullying and violence and in creating a healthy and secure environment.

1. The School's Code of Conduct will be communicated with the parents/guardians (agenda, curriculum night, bulletins/memos, and/or on school website).
 2. The ABAV Plan will be explained and made available to parents/guardians; it will be posted on the school website, under the tab ABAV.
 3. Ongoing communication between principal and / or their designate and parents/ guardians of children who are being bullied and those who are engaging in bullying behaviours until the resolution of the situation. Periodic communication with students who are bullied and their parent(s)/ guardian(s) to ensure that measures taken have been successful and the bullying has ceased.
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Element 4 PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING

The school will take the necessary measures to ensure confidentiality for all parties.

An incident of bullying and/or violence can be reported verbally (in person or by phone) or in writing (by email or by letter addressed to school administration). Students who wish to write a note to report an incident are encouraged to include their name for follow up.

Staff members who receive a report must document the information and submit the information to administration for follow up. On receiving a complaint concerning bullying or violence, and after considering the best interest of the students directly involved, the principal shall promptly communicate with their parents to inform them of the measures in the anti-bullying and anti-violence plan. The principal shall also inform them of their right to request assistance from the person specifically designated by the school board for that purpose.

Complaintsofficer@rsb.qc.ca Gary Tennant

When parents/guardians have been told about a bullying situation or an act of violence, they are expected to communicate with the school principal, an alternate administrator or the classroom teacher. The report will be documented. Following the investigation, the parent/guardian should be contacted and advised that the situation has been investigated and appropriate action has been taken. Details are divulged so as to maintain confidentiality.



St. Mary's School is committed to providing a safe, caring and positive climate. Adult indifference is not-tolerated. School personnel must report and/or investigate all incidents of bullying and take appropriate action whether they personally observe incidents or learn of them by some other means. Reporting, investigation and action must occur even if the victim does not file a formal complaint or does not express overt disapproval of the incident.

This *Intervention Protocol* establishes practices and procedures for observed and reported incidents of bullying and/or violence.

For purposes of this Protocol, “*Conduct*” may include:

- Physical acts, such as inappropriate, unwanted, uninvited, or injurious physical contact with another; stalking; sexual assault; and destruction or damage to property of another;
- Written and electronic communication of any type that incorporates language or depictions that would constitute bullying, using any medium (including, but not limited to, cell phones, computers, websites, electronic networks, instant message, text messages and emails);
- Verbal threats made to another, including blackmail, extortion or demands for protection money;
- Direct or indirect, relationally aggressive behaviour such as social isolation, rumor spreading, or damaging someone’s reputation;
- Any of the above conduct which occurs off school grounds when such creates, or can reasonably be expected to create, a substantial disruption in the social setting and/or at school-sponsored activities and events.

In addition to the conduct described above, examples of conduct that may constitute bullying or violence include the following:

- Blocking access to school property of facilities;
- Stealing or hiding or otherwise defacing books, backpacks or other personal possessions;
- Repeated or pervasive taunting, name-calling, belittling, mocking putdowns, or demeaning humour relating to a student’s race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, ancestry, religion, disability, or other personal characteristics, whether or not the student actually possesses them, that could reasonably be expected to result in the disruption of school activities or that results in a hostile educational environment for the student.

Conduct that would **not** ordinarily be considered bullying or violence includes:

- Teasing
- “Talking trash”
- Trading of insults

The expression of ideas or beliefs that are protected by the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, so long as such expression is not lewd, profane, or intended to intimidate or harass another.



STAFF RESPONSE PROTOCOL

Any staff members who witness an act of bullying or violence must intervene immediately or as quickly as reasonably possible to address the issue.

1. The immediate safety and security of all parties must be ensured.
2. All incidents of bullying / violence must be reported to the principal, in a timely fashion.
3. A bullying/violence incident must be documented.
4. The school principal or their designate must investigate all reports in a timely fashion, preferably within 24 hours (when possible) of receiving initial report.
5. The staff person responsible for investigating the report about the behaviour should:
 - a) Interview student(s) exhibiting bullying behaviour and the target / victim(s) separately to avoid further victimization of the target.
 - b) Engage the target / victim first and focus on their safety.
 - c) Reassure them that the bullying behaviour will not be tolerated and that all possible steps will be taken to prevent a reoccurrence.
 - d) Offer the victim counselling (if needed).
 - e) Inform parents/guardians of the incident and subsequent intervention. (Details of the intervention or disciplinary actions are not to be shared in order to protect confidentiality).

PROTOCOLE D'INTERVENTION DES ÉLÈVES

STUDENT RESPONSE PROTOCOL

Any student who witnesses an act of bullying or violence has an obligation, as a responsible member of the school community, to intervene if the situation does not threaten their well-being, or to report the incident to school authorities.

The following are the means through which a student may do so:

- Inform a staff member on duty.
- Inform administration.
- Mention it to a teacher or staff member they trust.
- Tell parent/guardian.

PARENT / GUARDIAN RESPONSE PROTOCOL

- Report the incident to a school administrator or classroom teacher.

***At the discretion of the principal or their delegate, police intervention may be requested.**



Measures to protect the confidentiality of any report or complaint concerning an act of bullying or violence shall include:

1. Staff is reminded that every incident and the ensuing follow-up must be kept confidential. This is done at least once each year.
2. Reports of bullying and / or violence are recorded on a digital database that has restricted access.
3. Use of intervention strategies that protect the anonymity of persons who report or provide information.



Element 7

SUPERVISORY AND SUPPORT MEASURES
(for the victim, bully, witness & bystander)

It is the responsibility of every adult staff member to use difficult / challenging situations as opportunities to help students improve their social and emotional skills, accept personal responsibility for their learning environment, and understand consequences for poor choices and behaviours.

A clear distinction exists between *remediation* and *consequences*.

a) **Remediation**, intended to counter or “remedy” a behavioural mistake, can be an effective prevention practice. Remediation measures are intended to correct the problem behaviour, prevent a reoccurrence, protect and provide support for the victim and take corrective action for documented systemic problems related to bullying and violence. Remediation measures allow the student an opportunity to reflect on behaviours, learn pro-social skills and make amends to those affected. Working with recovery plans and restorative justice practices are categorized as remediation.

b) **Consequences** communicate to a perpetrator that their behavior is their choice and their responsibility. A consequence respects the child’s right to make a decision, even if it’s not a good one. It’s a matter-of-fact learning experience in which you maintain a better relationship with the child as you hold them accountable. Consequences are almost always enacted in conjunction with remediation measures and restorative practices. Measures should be applied on a case-by-case basis and take into consideration a number of factors including:

Student Considerations:

- Age and developmental maturity of the students involved;
- Nature, frequency and severity of the behaviours;
- Relationships of the parties involved;
- Context in which the alleged incidents occurred;
- Patterns of past or continuing behaviours;
- Other circumstances that may play a role.

School Considerations:

- School culture, climate and general staff management of the learning environment;
- Social, emotional and behavioural supports;
- Student-staff relationships and staff behaviour toward the student;
- Family, community and neighborhood situation;
- Alignment with policies and procedures.



Examples of remedial measures and consequences may include, but are not limited to, the examples listed below:

Remediation Measures for Victims

- Meet with counsellor / mentor / special education technician / administrator / staff member to:
 - Create a safe environment to allow victim to explore feelings about incident. Maintain open lines of communication.
 - Develop a plan to ensure student's emotional and physical safety at school.
 - Ensure student does not feel responsible for the behaviour.
 - Ask student to log and report any and all future related incidents.
 - Offer counseling to help develop skills for overcoming the negative impact on self-esteem.
- A staff member will conduct scheduled follow-up meetings with the student to ensure the bullying or violence has stopped and to provide support to the student. The degree of support offered at these meetings and their frequency shall depend upon the feedback from the victim regarding the current circumstances.
- In all cases, it will be determined which members of the school staff must be made aware of the incident to ensure that the student is safe.
- Parents/Guardians will be informed immediately following the incident and regularly updated until the situation is resolved.

Remediation Measures for Witnesses

- Following the incident, an intervention may be held with any witnesses to determine their role in the incident. If the incident witnessed is severe, witnesses are met, in a group or individually, to debrief the event, discuss their role and to determine more appropriate actions in the future.
- The school reserves the right to contact the parents/ guardians of bystanders.
- As with victims, witnesses to acts of bullying or violence should have a reasonable expectation of feedback from intervening adult figures in a timely manner so as to guarantee a sense of safety and security in the school.



Remediation Measures for Student Exhibiting Bullying Behaviour

- Develop an intervention plan with the student. Ensure the student has a voice in the outcome and can identify ways they can solve the problem and change behaviours.
- Meet with parent(s)/guardian(s) to develop a recovery plan agreement to ensure all understand school rules and expectations, as well as the long term negative consequences of bullying or violence, on all involved, and to clearly outline the consequences if the behaviour continues.
- Meet with special education technician, school counsellor, social worker or psychologist to:
 - Explore mental health issues or emotional disturbances – what is happening and why?
 - Offer additional social skills training such as impulse control, anger management, developing empathy and problem solving.
 - Arrange for apology – written is recommended.
 - Arrange for restitution – particularly if any personal items were damaged or stolen.
 - Determine restorative practices (age appropriate).

Remediation Measures for Student Bystanders

- Review Student Response Protocol.
- Explore reasons why they did not intervene or report the incident.
- Offer of coaching on how to safely intervene or help the situation.



Element 8

SPECIFIC DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Based on the severity and / or frequency of incidents and at the discretion of the administration, the following disciplinary and / or supportive/ corrective actions may include, but are not limited to:

- Parent/ Guardian notification
- Admonishment / conference with student (verbal warning)
- Reflection activity or action
- Recovery plan ~ Restorative measures or practices
- Written warning and deprivation of privilege(s) / service(s)
- Restitution
- Mediation or conflict resolution (when deemed appropriate)
- Probation and letter of expectations
- Detention
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Referral to alternative to suspension program for schools offering such a program
- Referral to counsellor, external social / medical agencies, for support
- Legal action / report to law enforcement, if required
- Signaling of youth protection
- Convocation to a disciplinary hearing at the school board
- School transfer
- Expulsion



Element 9 **FOLLOW-UP PROTOCOL**

The principal or their designate will ensure that each incident was properly followed up on and documented. Follow-up measures will include the following:

- Verification that the incident has been properly documented.
- Verification that all parties immediately involved have been met with and that intervention protocols have been followed.
- Verification that parents/ guardians of the victims and perpetrators have been contacted.
- Meeting with the victim and perpetrator to assess their well-being, and that the bullying / violence has ceased.
- Verification of the completion of all remedial measures for all parties concerned.
- Referral of parents/guardians to complaints procedure, should the parents/guardians express dissatisfaction with the course of action from the school administration. In fact, it is possible to make a report or file a complaint concerning an act of bullying, violence or sexual violence to or with the regional student ombudsman and, for a person who is dissatisfied with the follow-up on a complaint filed with the institution, to use the complaint processing procedure provided for in the Act respecting the National Student Ombudsman (2022, chapter 17).
- For each complaint received concerning bullying or violence and each report received relating to an act of sexual violence, the principal shall send the director general of the school board a summary report on the nature of the incident and the follow-up measures taken. The summary report concerning an act of sexual violence shall also be sent to the regional student ombudsman.



SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Elements 1 to 9 of the present ABAV plan apply to acts of sexual violence, as adapted considering the circumstances.

PREVENTATIVE / SAFETY MEASURES TO STOP ACTS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

In addition to the prevention measures mentioned in Element 2, the following training activities for management and other personnel specific to acts of sexual violence include the following:

Training activities for management and other personnel include the following:

Training to be provided by the MEQ

SAFETY MEASURES TO STOP SEXUAL VIOLENCE

To address the area(s) of concern, the following measures aimed at putting an end to all forms of sexual violence include:

1 -	General school climate and Social Emotional Learning practices
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2 -	Sexuality Health Education Curriculum and support from consultant holding the dossier
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INTERVENTION PROTOCOL

For acts of sexual violence involving a perpetrator of 12 years of age or older, the administration must contact the pertinent department of the Riverside School Board prior to applying the intervention protocol (Element 5) and the Supervisory and Support Measures (Element 7) mentioned herein. Specific measures might be required in certain cases and the board will be of assistance to the administration as to the steps to follow.

FOLLOW-UP PROTOCOL

In addition to the follow-up protocol mentioned herein (Element 9), and more specifically, to the possibility of filing a report or making a complaint, in the case of a complaint concerning an act of sexual violence, the principal shall also inform the student who is the victim that it is possible to refer the complaint to the Commission des services juridiques. If the student is under 14 years of age, the principal also informs their parents/guardians of that option, and if the student is 14 years of age or over, the principal may also inform their parents/guardians of that option, with the student's consent.



EXTRACURRICULAR SERVICES OR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SPECIAL SCHOOL PROJECT

In addition to the measures mentioned above, the following measures will be included in all agreements between the school and a body or person providing extracurricular services or carrying out a special school project for the provision of services other than educational services:

PREVENTION MEASURES TO PREVENT AND STOP ANY FORM OF BULLYING OR VIOLENCE DURING THE PROVISION OF AND, WHERE APPLICABLE (Art 215 Bill 9)

Preventative measures could include:

1 -	Anti-bullying and anti-violence training by persons who would be required to work with minor students and persons regularly in contact with minor students
2 -	Guidelines on reporting any incidents of bullying, violence and or sexual violence will be reviewed by the administration of the school.
3 -	Service agreement



END OF YEAR EVALUATION

“83.1. Each year, the governing board shall evaluate the results achieved by the school with respect to preventing and dealing with bullying and violence. A document reporting on the evaluation must be distributed to the parents/guardians, the school staff and the Regional Student Ombudsman in charge of accountability assigned to the region in which the school is located.”

To ensure the integrity of its Plan, the administration of our school will conduct a yearly evaluation that reviews:

- The *Our School Survey* results.
 - The initiatives put in place for the year and assessment of effectiveness of the actions.
-