



Anti-Sex Trafficking: New Policy

To: Governance and Policy Committee

Date: 27 October, 2021

Report No.: 10-21-4182

Strategic Directions

- Create a Culture for Student and Staff Well-Being
- Allocate Human and Financial Resources Strategically to Support Student Needs
- Build Strong Relationships and Partnerships Within School Communities to Support Student Learning and Well-Being

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Policy Development Work Plan for the Anti-Sex Trafficking Policy, as presented in this report, be approved

Context

On July 6, 2021, the Ministry of Education issued Policy/Program Memoranda 166 (PPM 166) – Keeping Students Safe: Policy Framework for School Board Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocols (see Appendix A). PPM 166 sets a strong foundation for Ontario school boards to establish key partnerships and implement tailored anti-sex trafficking protocols for all provincially funded schools by January 31, 2022. In addition, PPM 166 directs school boards to support protecting students from sexual exploitation and sex trafficking while empowering school communities to play a key role in providing a safe, nurturing, positive learning and working environment, through the development and implementation of anti-sex trafficking programs and strategies.

To ensure compliance with the Ministry directions, staff recommend development of the Anti-Sex Trafficking Policy to be consistent with the requirements of the PPM 166. The Policy would be supported by the corresponding operational procedure, Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocol.

The Policy Development Work Plan (see Appendix B) is presented for the Committee's consideration and approval.

As part of the policy development and to ensure timely compliance with PPM 166, staff have prepared the preliminary provisions based on the directions of the PPM 166 (see Appendix C). The preliminary provisions will be incorporated in the draft Policy and then shared during public consultations with the Board's stakeholders, including students (Student Senate), Community Advisory Committees, Board's unions and professional associations, school councils, and the general public. Public consultations are intended to last at least 45 calendar days.

The Policy Development Work Plan is provided for Committee's consideration and approval.

Action Plan and Associated Timeline

Subject to the Committee's approval of the Policy Development Work Plan, the draft Policy will be developed accordingly. Public consultations are expected to be conducted from November 2021 – January 2022. It is expected that the draft Policy will be presented to the Governance and Policy Committee in January 2022 and subsequently to the Board of Trustees for final approval.

Resource Implications

No additional resources will be required for implementation of the Policy at this time.

Communications Considerations

Following Board approval, the Policy will be communicated to the public in accordance with the Policy Development Work Plan.

Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)

Policies:

- Caring and Safe Schools Policy (P051)
- Dealing with Abuse and Neglect of Students Policy (P045)
- Equity Policy (P037)
- Gender-based Violence Policy (P071)
- Human Right Policy (P031)

Legislation:

- *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*
- *Child, Youth, and Family Services Act, 2017*
- *Education Act*
- *Human Rights Code*
- *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*
- *Protecting Students Act*

Other Documents:

- [PPM 9: Duty to Report Children in Need of Protection](#)
- [PPM 166: Keeping Students Safe: Policy Framework for School Board Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocols](#)

Appendices

- Appendix A: Policy/Program Memoranda (PPM) 166: Keeping Students Safe: Policy Framework for School Board Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocols
- Appendix B: Policy Development Work Plan
- Appendix C: Preliminary Provisions - Anti-Sex Trafficking Policy

From

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Ontario is now in Step Three of the [Roadmap to Reopen](#). Follow the [restrictions and public health measures](#).



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Policy/Program Memorandum 166

Date of Issue: July 6, 2021

Effective: January 31, 2022

Subject: Keeping Students Safe: Policy Framework for School Board Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocols

Application: Directors of Education
Supervisory Officers and Secretary-Treasurers of School Authorities
Principals of Elementary Schools
Principals of Secondary Schools
Principals of Provincial and Demonstration Schools

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Acknowledgement

The Ministry of Education wishes to express its gratitude for the time, dedication and insight of the ministry's Anti-Human Trafficking Working Group members, whose work informed this policy. The working group includes experts in education, child welfare, human trafficking and policing, as well as organizations and individuals who amplified the voices and shared the knowledge of survivors, Indigenous communities and organizations, Black and racialized communities, newcomers and students.

Application

It is the policy direction of the Ministry of Education that school boards establish and follow a protocol for the response to suspected sex trafficking occurrences. This policy framework will guide this work and is made pursuant to the authority of the Minister of Education.

The policy applies to district school boards, school authorities and provincial and demonstration schools, including Centre Jules-Léger Consortium. As school boards build their protocols, they will include in their collaborative partnerships the alternative delivery sites in the public education system, such as Education and Community Partnership Programs/section 23 programs and alternative and adult secondary school programs.

Purpose: the Ministry of Education's commitment

The Keeping Students Safe policy – the first of its kind for an education sector in Canada – sets a strong foundation for Ontario school boards to build upon to create local anti-sex trafficking protocols. This new policy will ensure every school board has a plan with core components in place to protect students and empower school communities to play a key role in fighting sex trafficking and keeping children and youth safe from sexual exploitation.

Developed in partnership with the Ministry of the Solicitor General and the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, the purpose of this framework is to provide a policy foundation to guide Ontario school boards across the province as they collaborate with their community police services, local child welfare agencies and other community organizations and service providers serving children, youth and their families to create community-centered anti-sex trafficking protocols.

Once established, the final protocols will support coordinated action by all community partners to prevent, identify and recognize sex trafficking and develop responses to facilitate early and appropriate intervention. ^[1]

The Ministry of Education's policy framework builds on the updated Health and Physical Education (HPE) curriculum for Grades 1 to 8 announced by Minister Lecce in 2019. That updated curriculum positioned Ontario as a leader by including mandatory learning beginning in Grades 1 to 3 as students start to learn skills to identify, develop and maintain healthy relationships, to identify and respond to exploitative and coercive behaviour, and how to seek help as needed. These skills help protect students from sex trafficking by teaching them to identify when they are in an unsafe situation. The curriculum is designed to be developmentally-appropriate, and in Grades 4 to 8 students continue to develop the skills they need to stay safe (in person and online), and how to help themselves and others. Students also learn about the impacts of sexually explicit media, including pornography. In every grade, students learn about consent, healthy relationships, and online safety, building foundational skills that support safe, healthy relationships throughout their lives.

Setting the context

Welcoming and engaging school environments lead to positive student experiences, especially when families and communities are intentionally involved in the students' learning. ^[2] Safe schools – both physically and psychologically – are a critical element to successfully nurturing positive student experiences.

Schools are ideally placed to respond to sex trafficking and are a key factor in helping survivors of trafficking heal and rebuild their lives. They promote safety by building a culture of caring and by taking meaningful, culturally responsive and consistent action to prevent and respond to issues of safety and inappropriate behaviours.

The Ministry of Education is making active changes to the education system to help break down barriers for Black, Indigenous and racialized students and to provide all students with an equal opportunity to succeed. These actions have included providing teachers with additional anti-racism and anti-discrimination training. Work continues to strengthen human rights and equity in the education system, which are important steps in the effort to ensure schools are the safe spaces they are intended to be for all students.

The urgency to act

Human trafficking is one of the fastest growing and most lucrative crimes worldwide. It is predatory and devastatingly damaging to victims, survivors, their families and communities. Human trafficking can include recruiting, harbouring or controlling a person's movements using force, physical or psychological coercion or deception.

With the average age of recruitment into sex trafficking in Canada being 13 years old, school-aged children and youth are prime targets for traffickers for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Students face a multitude of diverse and intersecting factors that increase their vulnerability to violence and harm. They may have difficulty identifying warning signs of sex trafficking, recognizing when they may be in danger and knowing how to seek help.

Given the high rates and destructive impacts of sex trafficking in Ontario, there is an urgent need to establish an active, province-wide role for education, in collaboration with other sectors and partners. While strong policies and programming are protective against these threats, teachers and school staff play a vital role in building student awareness, supporting student mental health and being a frontline contact for students in crisis. ^[3]

The education sector can play a powerful role to safeguard the safety, mental health and well-being of school-aged children and youth by helping to recognize, prevent and respond to sex trafficking. Education staff can spot the warning signs and safely connect those who are, have been or are at risk of being trafficked to the appropriate supports and culturally responsive community programs and services.

Ontario has the highest number of police-reported human trafficking cases in Canada

Ontario had the most police-reported incidents of human trafficking in the country occurring within the province in 2019, accounting for the majority of all police-reported incidents of human trafficking nationally. ^[4] In addition, most police-reported cases of human trafficking in Ontario involve human trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation, which may also be referred to as sex trafficking. Young women and girls are particularly at risk, though boys and people who identify as 2SLGBTQQIA are also targeted. ^[5]

The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls highlighted that, “while Indigenous women represented only 4% of the Canadian population in 2016, they comprised nearly 50% of victims of human trafficking. Of those, nearly one-quarter were under the age of 18.” ^[6]

Not all sex traffickers are adults. School-aged children and youth may also be involved in trafficking their peers. According to Statistics Canada, between 2009 and 2018, there were approximately 1,400 victims of human trafficking reported to police in Canada, and 6% of the accused persons identified were between the ages of 12 to 17. ^[7]

School-aged children and youth will benefit from early intervention to reduce their vulnerability to sex trafficking and from connections to supports and help to rebuild their lives.

Increased risks and use of digital tools

Frequent use of mobile phones and computers can make it harder for caring adults to recognize the signs that a student is being groomed and lured. This increases the importance of educating students about both the positive and negative potentials of the internet, including the harmful impacts of violent depictions in sexually explicit imagery. Traffickers and other sexual predators are increasingly using online social media platforms to lure, groom and recruit young people into sexual acts or services. Social media can provide an easy point of access into conversation and relationships with unsuspecting students.

Why are some students at higher risk?

While any student can be sex trafficked, some groups are at increased risk of being trafficked.

- Systemic racism and discrimination have led to a disproportionate number of Indigenous and Black children and youth in care, which can lead to a lack of consistent relationships with caring adults and peers in schools.
- Indigenous peoples are especially vulnerable to sex trafficking due to historic and ongoing systemic discrimination, including intergenerational trauma resulting from residential schools and the “Sixties Scoop”. ^[8] First Nation youth transitioning from remote Northern communities to schools in urban centres can also face increased safety risks.
- Language barriers, isolation, economic disadvantage or a lack of community and social supports may leave newcomer youth with increased vulnerability to trafficking.
- Students with disabilities may experience bullying and isolation in addition to having difficulty understanding the intentions of others.
- Students who are 2SLGBTQQIA experience high rates of bullying, assaults and sexual abuse, and they may face isolation or displacement if they experience rejection from their family or the community.

Tactics used by sex traffickers

Traffickers use tactics to identify and groom vulnerable children and youth by fulfilling their unmet needs – such as love, affection, a sense of belonging and other basic needs like housing or food security – and/or by using threats, physical violence and control. An unstable home life and past trauma, as well as other factors such as a history of childhood abuse or involvement with the child welfare system, can leave students more susceptible to being trafficked.

Traffickers can use tactics such as befriending students on online platforms and pretending to be a love interest or encouraging the student to leave their rural/remote community to come to the city for work. Isolating the victim from family and friends is the ultimate goal, followed by normalization of abuse through a gradual grooming process.

Unique role of the education sector

Due to almost daily contact with students, teachers and other education staff are well placed to educate on prevention and promote healthy relationships, notice troubling changes in behaviour, and connect with students as caring adults. By training staff to recognize the signs of sex trafficking, they will be better equipped to identify the cues and safely intervene if they suspect a student is being trafficked or involved in trafficking. Education can also serve as a key factor in helping survivors of trafficking heal and rebuild their lives, helping to prevent re-victimization and resetting students on a healing trajectory towards positive outcomes.

Historical and ongoing trauma with the education system can be a barrier to the meaningful participation of Indigenous parents, caregivers, and communities. School boards should consider specific outreach and supports to Indigenous parents and caregivers, as well as groups that are disproportionately impacted by trafficking, to build their awareness and participation.

Definition of sex trafficking

Sex trafficking is a form of sexual exploitation and is a crime under the *Criminal Code of Canada*. It can include recruiting, harbouring, transporting, obtaining or providing a person for the purpose of sex. It involves the use of force, physical or psychological coercion or deception. Most individuals who are trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation are women and girls, but all people may be targeted.

Statement of principles

Define a role for parents/guardians/caregivers

Parents, guardians and caregivers are key partners in the development, implementation and review of school board anti-sex trafficking protocols. Care must be given when reaching out to parents, families and caregivers to ensure they are safe adults prior to engaging with them on matters regarding the student/s. Outreach to Indigenous parents and guardians, as well as outreach to Black and racialized parents and guardians, should be trauma-informed and recognize historic and systemic barriers that may impact their participation. Every effort should also be made to reduce cultural and/or linguistic barriers when reaching out to parents, guardians and caregivers about this work.

Foster student voices

Students are at the centre of this work and should be involved in efforts to develop actions against sex trafficking. Invite student groups to participate and inform the design, development, delivery and implementation of anti-sex trafficking protocols. Recognize that students with lived experience are experts and, if willing and appropriately supported through trauma-informed approaches, could share their story and insights as part of efforts to build awareness and empower students.

Build multi-sectoral relationships with community organizations

Ongoing consultation and engagement with community groups/agencies that support members of the school community are essential to supporting anti-sex trafficking approaches that are responsive to diverse students and the needs of local school communities.

Interventions must be safe

Caring adults and students within schools can promote a sense of student belonging, increase protective factors, help to reduce risk factors associated with sex trafficking, and support early intervention through identification and appropriate response, including connecting impacted persons to supportive services.

School board employees require comprehensive anti-sex trafficking training so they are equipped to identify the signs of sex trafficking, safely respond to disclosures, be culturally relevant and responsive to diverse student populations, and support the immediate physical and emotional safety needs of students. Training must emphasize how to respond to immediate dangers and the need to avoid actions that will make an individual's situation worse or more unsafe.

Build up school-based prevention

The development of the protocol will complement existing prevention efforts in schools, including the teaching of consent, healthy relationships and healthy sexuality. It is important for school staff to understand the historical and social context of sex trafficking and implement prevention strategies that are responsive to the needs of students and members of the local school community.

Respect confidentiality, privacy and informed consent

The development of procedures must respect confidentiality and ensure that the student fully understands how their information may be used or with whom it may be shared. It is key to develop referral relationships with community service organizations while adhering to applicable legal requirements, including those under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*; the *Ontario Human Rights Code*; the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*; the *Education Act*; and the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017*.

Promote equitable and culturally safe responses

Protocols should demonstrate a human rights-based, non-judgemental, culturally responsive, survivor-centered and trauma-informed approach to raising awareness, preventing, identifying and responding to sex trafficking.

The strength of the multi-sector approach

The development of school board anti-sex trafficking protocols will require collaboration and partnerships with persons with lived experience of trafficking as well as Indigenous organizations, local Children's Aid Societies, victim services, police services and other community-based service providers.

Some boards may opt to develop a regional protocol involving multiple school boards and local police services, in order to facilitate information-sharing and a coordinated response. Involving representatives from Indigenous, Black, racialized and newcomer groups and Francophone organizations, as well as American Sign Language and Québec Sign Language organizations, will help to develop a more culturally safe and equitable approach to the protocol.

A school board's protocol may also build on existing local multi-sectoral processes that may have been established to respond to human trafficking. This might include local anti-human trafficking committees, local situation tables and processes with victim services, sexual assault centres, youth shelters, public health units and other community-based organizations.

Consideration may also be given to aligning with and leveraging local community safety and well-being planning efforts, such as community consultations, planning advisory committees or action teams, as well as human trafficking strategies or programs that have been identified and/or implemented through a local community safety

and well-being plan.

The development of a school board protocol: essential components and considerations

It is the policy direction of the Ministry of Education that each school board's anti-sex trafficking protocol should have clearly articulated roles, responsibilities and accountability measures. It should also address threats associated with digital technology and the internet.

The core and essential elements of the protocol are:

- statement of principles
- strategies to raise awareness and prevent sex trafficking
- response procedures
- training for school board employees
- measuring success: accountability and evaluation

Statement of principles

The school board protocol must, at minimum, include the Statement of Principles outlined in this document.

Strategies to raise awareness and prevent sex trafficking

The school board protocol must include culturally safe strategies to raise awareness about sex trafficking with students, school board employees, parents, caregivers and the broader school community. Any protocol should apply to in-person and online learning and include all school and school board activities, including field trips, overnight excursions, board-sponsored sporting events and board-operated before- and after-school programs.

Strategies must include:

- A plan to make the protocol and related procedures and resources publicly available and accessible on the school board website.
- A process to raise awareness among parents and caregivers about:
 - cyber-safety
 - the signs that a student is being targeted, lured, groomed, trafficked or is trafficking another student; how to get help safely (for example, through the school board, community providers and/or support hotline)
 - how they can report concerns to the school board (including anonymous reporting) and the school board's process for responding to concerns
 - the process should include approaches to overcome barriers to participation that Indigenous, Black, newcomer and other parents/guardians may face
- A process to raise awareness among students on the signs a student is being targeted, lured, groomed, trafficked or is trafficking another student, and how to bring concerns about luring, grooming, recruitment or exiting sex trafficking to the school without fear of reprisal. The process should allow for concerns to be brought forward anonymously.
- A process to help prevent recruitment of students for sex trafficking, including through curriculum-based learning about healthy relationships, consent, mental health and well-being, coping skills, personal safety and online safety, as well as through work with local community-based organizations and survivors.
- Consideration of the use of available technology and tools to identify and deter potential situations involving students who could be at risk of sex trafficking and other online threats, while using school board-provided technology.

Awareness strategies could involve sending letters or emails, providing information in a student handbook, displaying posters, hosting information sessions, posting on the school/school board social media accounts, and/or posting information on the school board website. Schools may want to include the phone number for the [Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline \(https://www.canadianhumantraffickinghotline.ca/\)](https://www.canadianhumantraffickinghotline.ca/) to raise awareness about the supports and referrals it offers.

Response procedures

The school board protocol must establish procedures for school board employees to respond in situations where a student:

- may be at risk of or is being sex trafficked
- may be targeting, luring, grooming or recruiting children and youth for the purpose of sex trafficking
- is returning to school after they have been trafficked or involved in trafficking others

Response procedures must address the needs of, among others:

- students with special education needs, mental health needs, social or emotional needs or language/cultural barriers, and international students
- students who are in care, receiving care or in customary care arrangements
- students who are being trafficked and who may be involved in the recruiting of other victims, including students who are returning to school after they have been involved in a trafficking situation
- parents, including those who may live overseas and/or may not speak English or French
- students 18 years or older or who are 16 or 17 years old and have withdrawn from parental control

Response procedures must be trauma-informed and culturally responsive and, at minimum, include the following elements or direction to school board employees:

- A designated contact person at the school board who is familiar with the school board anti-sex trafficking protocol and can support school board employees with response procedures.
- The process for responding to situations where a student may be at risk of or is being sex trafficked, including steps for safely reporting concerns, responding to disclosures and supporting the student's immediate physical and emotional safety.
- The process for responding to situations where a student may be engaged in the trafficking of others, including steps for safely reporting concerns, responding to disclosures and supporting students' immediate physical and emotional safety.
- The process for responding to and supporting students re-entering school after they have been involved in a trafficking situation, including efforts to ensure that adequate safety and security needs are being met to support re-integration into school.
- Guidance on the requirements related to the duty to report a child in need of protection under Section 125(1) of the [Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017 \(https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/17c14\)](https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/17c14) and under [Policy/Program Memorandum 9: Duty to Report Children in Need of Protection \(https://www.ontario.ca/document/education-ontario-policy-and-program-direction/policyprogram-memorandum-9\)](https://www.ontario.ca/document/education-ontario-policy-and-program-direction/policyprogram-memorandum-9).
- Clear information on legislated privacy and confidentiality requirements when responding to a suspected or confirmed instance of sex trafficking.
- The process of notifying appropriate school/school board contacts and parents/guardians, as applicable.
- The process for school administrators to communicate and collaborate with community-based service providers, local police services, local Children's Aid Societies and Indigenous Child and Family Well-Being Agencies, as applicable and/or required by law, in responding to situations of suspected or confirmed sex trafficking of students.

- Direction on the approach to referring all affected students (including those indirectly affected, as needed) to supports.
- Direction on the approach to responding to possible sex trafficking recruitment by a student within the school, including appropriate interventions, supports and/or consequences, as applicable. Expectations should be consistent with the school board policy on progressive discipline and the mitigating circumstances that must be considered when determining the intervention, consequences or supports. For students with special education needs, information in the student's Individual Education Plan must be considered.
- Direction on the approach to appropriately respond to and meet the needs of students who are victims and survivors of sex trafficking, including access to education and facilitating school re-entry for those returning to school.
- Direction on monitoring and following-up on incidents reported (for example, check-ins with affected students).
- Direction on documenting suspected or reported sex trafficking situations and response procedures that were implemented.
- Information on culturally responsive and trauma-informed personal supports available to school board employees responding to sex trafficking situations.

Training for school board employees

The school board protocol must outline a process for providing ongoing training for school board employees, including teachers, administrators, and other school staff. Training must include the following elements:

- key definitions, common misconceptions and myths about sex trafficking, including tactics used for online luring, grooming and recruitment
- learning about human rights-based approaches to combatting sex trafficking, including the application of an equity lens, anti-racism, a gender-based lens, trauma-informed approaches and Indigenous cultural competencies
- information on protective factors and prevention-focused supports and resources
- information on risk factors and signs that a student is at risk, being lured, groomed or trafficked
- signs that a student is or involved in luring, grooming or trafficking others
- response procedures, including the duty to report, how to handle disclosures to support students' safety, how to support students impacted by sex trafficking and how to share information to ensure privacy and confidentiality
- supports available to students and affected staff, including culturally responsive supports
- additional training resources to support staff to understand and safely respond to sex trafficking
- roles and responsibilities of school board employees in raising awareness, identifying and responding to sex trafficking

The training must be tracked and be available throughout the year to all new and existing school board employees. Training must be updated and delivered regularly to stay current with emerging issues relating to trafficking and changes in community services and response.

Measuring success: accountability and evaluation

During the first year of implementation, the Ministry of Education will provide support for the review of the school board's anti-sex trafficking protocol and offer advice and suggestions, as requested by individual boards.

School boards should review their protocol, at minimum, every five years, or as part of their regular policy review cycle – whichever is the shorter period. Following the first year, school boards may be required to report to the Ministry of Education, upon the ministry's request, on their activities to achieve the expectations outlined in this policy framework.

The Ministry of Education will facilitate a community of practice to support implementation and review of school board anti-sex trafficking protocols.

The Ministry of Education will collaborate with school boards, as well as anti-human trafficking partners, to develop a performance measurement framework. This framework will monitor the effectiveness of training (for example, whether staff feel they are more aware and more able to safely identify and intervene in situations where a student is suspected of being trafficked or trafficking) and whether the protocols respond to the needs of students.

Community anti-human trafficking partners and local agencies, such as child protective services like Children's Aid Societies and Indigenous Child and Family Well-Being Agencies, should be invited to participate in the reporting process to the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with school boards, to determine how the protocols have helped children and youth in care stay out of, or exit, human trafficking. This should be measured carefully with performance indicators on how the protocols are preventing trafficking in Ontario communities.

Appendix A: glossary of terms

2SLGBTQQIA: Refers to two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex and asexual.

Anti-racism: Anti-racism is a process, a systematic method of analysis, and a proactive course of action rooted in the recognition of the existence of racism, including systemic racism. Anti-racism actively seeks to identify, remove, prevent and mitigate racially inequitable outcomes and power imbalances between groups and change the structures that sustain inequities.

Cultural responsiveness: “Extends beyond language to include a much larger set of professional attitudes, knowledge, behaviours and practices, and organizational policies, standards and performance management mechanisms to ensure responsiveness to the diversity of [students] who walk through [schools'] doors.” ^[9]

Cultural safety: Refers to “an environment that is spiritually, socially and emotionally safe, as well as physically safe for people; where there is no assault challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience of learning together.” ^[10]

Equity lens: Involves “strategically, intentionally and holistically examining the impact of an issue, policy or proposed solution on underserved and historically marginalized communities and population subgroups, with the goal of leveraging research findings to inform policy.” ^[11]

Human rights-based approach: A “conceptual framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights. It seeks to analyze inequalities which lie at the heart of development problems and redress discriminatory practices and unjust distributions of power that impede development progress.” ^[12]

Survivor: Used to refer to an individual who has escaped a trafficking situation, whereas *victim* is used to refer to an individual who is in the process of being recruited or is being trafficked. The term survivor may also be used to refer to an adult with lived experience of being trafficking. This approach is used for clarity and not intended to label or define an individual's experience. Individuals who have experienced sex trafficking may prefer one term over another in order to describe their experiences. School board employees should confirm how an individual impacted by trafficking prefers to be referenced.

Tactics: Traffickers may use a range of tactics to target, recruit, manipulate and coerce victims. This can often involve a process of targeting an individual's vulnerabilities then luring, grooming, isolating, manipulating, controlling and exploiting a victim to then conduct sexual acts (for example, forcing a victim to have sex, to take images of child sexual abuse). Often, a victim may not be aware that exploitation is happening, and victims may be forced to recruit other victims.

Trauma-informed approaches: Are “policies and practices that recognize the connections between violence, trauma, negative health outcomes and behaviours. These approaches increase safety, control and resilience for people who are seeking services in relation to experiences of violence and/or have a history of experiencing violence.” [13]

Victim: Used to refer to an individual who is in the process of being recruited or is being trafficked, whereas *survivor* is used to refer to an individual who has escaped a trafficking situation. The term victim is often used to refer to a child who has experienced sexual exploitation. This approach is used for clarity and not intended to label or define an individual's experience. Individuals who have experienced sex trafficking may prefer one term over another in order to describe their experiences. School board employees should confirm how an individual impacted by trafficking prefers to be referenced.

Updated: July 15, 2021

Footnotes

- [1] [^] In response to: [Legislative Assembly of Ontario, Private members' motions \(https://www.ola.org/en/legislative-business/status-business/private-members-motions\)](https://www.ola.org/en/legislative-business/status-business/private-members-motions), 42nd Parliament, 1st Session, Motion 122 voted and carried on December 3, 2020.
- [2] [^] Ministry of Education. (2021). [Parent Engagement: Encouraging Parent Involvement in Schools \(http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/involvement/\)](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/involvement/).
- [3] [^] U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Supportive Schools. (2021). [Human Trafficking in America's Schools: What schools can do to prevent respond and to help students recover from human trafficking \(https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/NCSSLE-2021HumanTraffickingGuide-508.pdf\)](https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/sites/default/files/NCSSLE-2021HumanTraffickingGuide-508.pdf). (2nd Ed.). U.S. Department of Education.
- [4] [^] Statistics Canada. [Table 35-10-0177-01 Incident-based crime statistics, by detailed violations, Canada, provinces, territories and Census Metropolitan Areas \(https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tb1/en/cv.action?pid=3510017701#timeframe\)](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tb1/en/cv.action?pid=3510017701#timeframe).
- [5] [^] Government of Ontario. (2021, March 23). [Human Trafficking \(https://www.ontario.ca/page/human-trafficking#:~:text=Human%20trafficking%20can%20include%20recruiting,manual%20labour%20or%20sexual%20services.&text=Learn%20the%20signs%20that\)](https://www.ontario.ca/page/human-trafficking#:~:text=Human%20trafficking%20can%20include%20recruiting,manual%20labour%20or%20sexual%20services.&text=Learn%20the%20signs%20that).
- [6] [^] National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. (2019). [Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, Volume 1a. \(https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Final_Report_Vol_1a-1.pdf\)](https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Final_Report_Vol_1a-1.pdf)
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POLICY DEVELOPMENT WORK PLAN

All policies will be developed to ensure consistency with the TDSB's Mission, Values and Goals Policy (P002), the Equity Policy (P037), and the Board's Multi-Year Strategic Plan.

Date: [October 27, 2021](#)

POLICY INFORMATION

Proposed Policy Title: [Anti-Sex Trafficking Policy](#)

Executive Council member responsible for development of the new Policy:

[Associate Director, Equity, Well-Being and School Improvement](#)

Phase I. APPROVAL OF POLICY RATIONALE

The rationale for the new Policy: [This Policy is required to comply with the Ministry of Education's Policy/Program Memorandum 166: School Board Teacher Hiring Practices \(PPM 166\). PPM 166 was issued on July 6, 2021 and is effective as of January 31, 2022.](#)

This Work Plan has been discussed with the Policy Coordinator:

Yes

No

Phase II. OBTAINING TRUSTEES' DIRECTIONS AND DRAFTING POLICY

This Policy Development Work Plan will be discussed at the Governance and Policy Committee meeting held on: [October 27, 2021](#)

Creating the Draft Policy

The draft Policy will be created and aligned with the current Policy Template (see Operational Procedure PR501, Policy Development and Management, Appendix A):

Yes

No

Detailed information on the proposed policy provisions, including findings of the policy equity assessment:

- [See attached preliminary provisions for the draft Anti-Sex Trafficking](#)

Policy (Appendix B)

Phase III. INTERNAL REVIEWS AND SIGN-OFFS

The draft Policy will include input from TDSB departments affected by the Policy:

- Business Operations and Service Excellence
- Equity, Well-Being and School Improvement
- Human Rights and Indigenous Education
- Leadership, Learning and School Improvement

In addition, the following departments will be required to sign-off on the proposed draft Policy:

- Legal Services
- Policy Services
- Government, Public and Community Relations

Following internal reviews and TDSB departments' sign-offs, the draft Policy will be submitted to Executive Council on: [October-November 2021](#)

A sign-off from the Director of Education will be obtained before proceeding with external consultations and/or Committee/Board approval.

- Director of Education

Phase IV. EXTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

Are external consultations applicable to this Policy?

- Yes
- No (*Ministry of Education mandated policy or corporate policy without external stakeholders*)

Mandatory external consultations will include, at a minimum:

1. Posting of the working draft Policy on TDSB website for public feedback (45 days minimum) – [November 2021 – January 2022](#)
2. Extending invitations for consultation to:
 - Student Senate

and

all Community Advisory Committees of the Board and conducting consultations with the Community Advisory Committees that expressed interest (either individually with each interested committee or collectively with representatives of all interested committees):

- 2SLGBTQ+ Community Advisory Committee
- Alternative Schools Community Advisory Committee
- Black Student Achievement Community Advisory Committee
- Community Use of Schools Community Advisory Committee
- Early Years Community Advisory Committee
- Environmental Sustainability Community Advisory Committee
- Equity Policy Community Advisory Committee
- French-as-a-Second-Language Community Advisory Committee
- Inner City Community Advisory Committee
- Parent Involvement Advisory Committee (PIAC)
- Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)
- Urban Indigenous Community Advisory Committee

In addition to mandatory consultations, other external participants and projected dates of consultation(s) include:

- School Councils
- Professional Associations and Unions
- Other:

The following methods will be applied in the external consultations:

- Public meeting
- Facilitated focus group
- Call for public delegations
- Expert panel discussion
- Survey
- Posting on the TDSB website
- Other (e.g., electronic communication)

Phase V. COMMITTEE/BOARD APPROVALS

The working draft Policy will be presented to the Governance and Policy Committee on the following date: [January 2022](#)

Following recommendation by the Governance and Policy Committee, the draft Policy will be presented to the Board on the following date: [January-February 2022](#)

Once approved, the new Policy will be added to the TDSB website.

Phase VI. IMPLEMENTATION

Following Board approval, the new Policy will be communicated through:

- Posting of the new Policy on the TDSB website through the Policy Coordinator
- Sharing with staff through the System Leaders' Bulletin
- Informing departments at staff meetings and channeling information to the school principals through respective superintendents

- Implementation of a broad communication plan for internal and external audiences, include summary of policy provisions and expected outcomes

Policy implementation will include:

- Conducting information/training sessions to TDSB staff affected by the Policy

The projected time period for conducting information/training sessions to staff will be: [Winter/Spring 2022](#)

- Initiate development of new procedures or review of associated procedures
[An Anti-Sex Trafficking Procedure/Protocol will be developed to support implementation of the Policy.](#)

Preliminary Provisions: Anti-Sex Trafficking Policy

1. RATIONALE

The Anti-Sex Trafficking Policy (P098) (the “Policy”) supports implementation of the Ministry of Education’s Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) 166: Keeping Students Safe: Policy Framework for School Board Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocols.

The Policy supports protecting students from sexual exploitation and sex trafficking while empowering school communities to play a key role in providing a safe, nurturing, positive learning and working environment, through the development and implementation of anti-sex trafficking programs and strategies.

The Policy is aligned with the TDSB’s Human Right Policy (P031), Equity Policy (P037), Dealing with Abuse and Neglect of Students Policy (P045), Caring and Safe Schools Policy (P051), and the Gender-based Violence Policy (P071).

The Policy is also aligned with governing legislation, including but not limited to, the *Human Rights Code*, the *Education Act*, the *Child, Youth, and Family Services Act, 2017*, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. and the *Protecting Students Act*.

2. OBJECTIVE

To set out principles for supporting coordinated action by the Board and school community to identify, recognize and prevent sex trafficking and develop responses to facilitate early and appropriate intervention.

3. DEFINITIONS

2SLGBTQQIA refers to two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex and asexual.

Anti-racism refers to the practice of identifying, challenging, and changing the values, structures and behaviors that perpetuate Systemic Racism. (Ontario Anti-Racism Secretariat). Anti-racism examines the Power Imbalances between racialized people and non-racialized/white people. These imbalances play out in the form of unearned Privileges that white people benefit from and racialized people do not (McIntosh, 1988).

Board refers to the Toronto District School Board, which is also referred to as the “TDSB”.

Cultural responsiveness refers to and extends beyond language to include a much larger set of professional attitudes, knowledge, behaviours and practices, and

organizational policies, standards and performance management mechanisms to ensure responsiveness to the diversity of [students] who walk through [schools'] doors.

Cultural safety refers to an environment that is spiritually, socially and emotionally safe, as well as physically safe for people; where there is no assault challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience of learning together.

Equity lens refers to and involves strategically, intentionally and holistically examining the impact of an issue, policy or proposed solution on underserved and historically marginalized communities and population subgroups, with the goal of leveraging research findings to inform policy.

Human rights-based approach refers to a conceptual framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights. It seeks to analyze inequalities which lie at the heart of development problems and redress discriminatory practices and unjust distributions of power that impede development progress

Sex trafficking refers to a form of sexual exploitation and is a crime under the Criminal Code of Canada. It can include recruiting, harbouring, transporting, obtaining or providing a person for the purpose of sex. It involves the use of force, physical or psychological coercion or deception. Most individuals who are trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation are women and girls, but all people may be targeted.

Survivor refers to an individual who has escaped a trafficking situation, whereas victim is used to refer to an individual who is in the process of being recruited or is being trafficked. The term survivor may also be used to refer to an adult with lived experience of being trafficking. This approach is used for clarity and not intended to label or define an individual's experience. Individuals who have experienced sex trafficking may prefer one term over another in order to describe their experiences. TDSB employees should confirm how an individual impacted by trafficking prefers to be referenced.

Tactics refers to methods traffickers may use to target, recruit, manipulate and coerce victims. This can often involve a process of targeting an individual's vulnerabilities then luring, grooming, isolating, manipulating, controlling and exploiting a victim to then conduct sexual acts (for example, forcing a victim to have sex, to take images of child sexual abuse). Often, a victim may not be aware that exploitation is happening, and victims may be forced to recruit other victims.

TDSB is the Toronto District School Board, which is also referred to as the "Board".

Trauma-informed approaches refers to policies and practices that recognize the connections between violence, trauma, negative health outcomes and behaviours. These approaches increase safety, control and resilience for people who are seeking services in relation to experiences of violence and/or have a history of experiencing violence.

Victim refers to an individual who is in the process of being recruited or is being trafficked, whereas survivor is used to refer to an individual who has escaped a trafficking situation. The term victim is often used to refer to a child who has experienced sexual exploitation. This approach is used for clarity and not intended to label or define an individual's experience. Individuals who have experienced sex trafficking may prefer one term over another in order to describe their experiences. TDSB employees should confirm how an individual impacted by trafficking prefers to be referenced.

4. RESPONSIBILITY

The Director of Education holds primary responsibility for the implementation of this Policy.

Within the Director's Office, the responsibility for the coordination and day-to-day management of the Policy is assigned to the Associate Director, Equity, Well-Being and School Improvement.

5. APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This Policy applies to all students, employees, and Trustees of the Board.

The Policy also covers, parents/guardians, school council members, visitors, third party service providers, volunteers, permit holders, customers of the Board and other members of organizations while partaking in any activities that occur in Board premises or while engaging in Board or school related activities, either in-person or online.

Schools and school-related activities, such as extra-curricular activities, Board-sponsored sporting events and board-operated before- and after-school programs and excursions comprising the learning and working environment, fall within the scope of this Policy, as do Board offices and facilities (including eating, lounge/changing areas and vehicles used for work purposes or on work property). Conferences, workshops, training sessions and staff functions also fall within the scope of this Policy.

6. POLICY

6.1. Statement of principles

6.1.1. In developing and implementing provisions related to anti-sex trafficking, the TDSB will:

- (a) define a role for parents/guardians/caregivers through:
 - ensuring parents, guardians and caregivers are key partners;
 - ensuring care is given when reaching out to parents, families and caregivers to ensure they are safe adults prior to engaging with them on matters regarding the student/s;
 - ensuring outreach to Indigenous parents and guardians, as well as outreach to Black and racialized parents and guardians, is trauma-informed and recognizes historic, systemic, linguistic, and/or cultural barriers that may impact participation.
 - (b) foster student voices by:
 - supporting and empowering student groups to participate and inform the design, development, delivery and implementation of anti-sex trafficking provisions.
 - (c) build multi-sectoral relationships with community organizations by:
 - consulting and engaging with culturally relevant and responsive community groups/agencies in developing and implementing anti-sex trafficking provisions in order to be responsive to the diverse needs of local school communities.
 - (d) ensure interventions are safe by:
 - increasing protective factors and helping reduce risk factors associated with sex trafficking, through providing comprehensive anti-sex trafficking training to staff, which will include:
 - supporting early intervention through identification and appropriate response; including connecting impacted persons to supportive services;
 - Identifying signs of human and sex trafficking;
 - safely responding to disclosures;
 - being culturally relevant and responsive to diverse student populations;
 - and supporting the immediate physical and emotional safety needs of students.
 - (e) build up school-based prevention through:
 - understanding the social and historical context of sex trafficking and implementing prevention strategies that are responsive to the needs of the students and members of the local school community;
 - employing strategies that complement existing prevention efforts at TDSB schools, including the
-

teaching of consent, healthy relationships and healthy sexuality.

- (f) respect confidentiality, privacy, and informed consent through:
 - recognizing the Boards obligations under provincial and federal laws, to deal with each student individually, with respect, dignity, equity and with due regard to confidentiality, privacy, and informed consent as per legal requirements, including those under the *Human Rights Code*, *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*; *the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*; *the Education Act*; and *the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017*.
- (g) promote equitable and culturally safe responses through:
 - implementing a human rights-based, non-judgemental, culturally responsive, survivor-centered and trauma-informed approach when raising awareness, preventing, identifying and responding to sex trafficking.

6.2. Employing a Multi-Sector Approach

- 6.2.1. TDSB anti-sex trafficking protocol will be developed in collaboration and partnerships with persons with lived experience of trafficking as well as Indigenous organizations, local Children's Aid Societies, victim services, police services and other community-based service providers in order to facilitate information-sharing and a coordinated response.
- 6.2.2. The TDSB will involve representatives from Indigenous, Black, racialized and newcomer groups and Francophone organizations, as well as American Sign Language and Québec Sign Language organizations, to develop a culturally safe and equitable approach related to anti-sex trafficking protocol.
- 6.2.3. Building on existing partnerships, the TDSB will align and leverage local community safety and well-being planning efforts to protect the school community from trafficking. This will include consulting with local anti-human trafficking committees, local situation tables and processes with victim services, sexual assault centres, youth shelters, public health units and other community-based organizations on effective anti-sex trafficking programs and strategies.
- 6.2.4. The TDSB will communicate and collaborate with community-based service providers, local police services, local Children's Aid Societies and Indigenous Child and Family Well-Being Agencies,

as applicable and/or required by law, in responding to situations of suspected or confirmed sex trafficking of students.

- The local Children's Aid Society must be notified when a child, 17 years and under, is at 'risk of' and in need of protection with concerns of Sex and/or Human Trafficking.

6.3. Strategies to Raise Awareness and Prevent Sex Trafficking

6.3.1. The TDSB will employ culturally safe strategies to raise awareness about sex trafficking with students, school board employees, parents, caregivers, and the broader school community. These strategies will include:

- (a) making the Anti-Sex Trafficking Policy and related procedures and resources publicly available and accessible on the TDSB websites;
- (b) outlining of processes to raise awareness among parents and caregivers about:
 - cyber-safety
 - the signs that a student is being targeted, lured, groomed, trafficked or is trafficking another student; how to get help safely (for example, through the school board, community providers and/or support hotline);
- (c) how individuals can report concerns to the TDSB (including anonymous reporting) and the TDSB's process for responding to concerns:
 - the process will include approaches to overcome barriers to participation that Indigenous, Black, newcomer and other parents/guardians may face;
- (d) processes in place to raise awareness among students on the signs a student is being targeted, lured, groomed, trafficked or is trafficking another student, and how to bring concerns about luring, grooming, recruitment or exiting sex trafficking to the school without fear of reprisal. The processes developed will allow for concerns to be brought forward anonymously;
- (e) processes to help prevent recruitment of students for sex trafficking, including through curriculum-based learning about healthy relationships, consent, mental health and well-being, coping skills, personal safety and online safety, as well as through work with local community-based organizations and survivors;

- (f) consideration of the use of available technology and tools to identify and deter potential situations involving students who could be at risk of sex trafficking and other online threats, while using school board-provided technology;
- (g) awareness strategies that may involve sending letters or emails, providing information in a student handbook, displaying posters, hosting information sessions, posting on the school/school board social media accounts, and/or posting information on the school board website (e.g., posting phone number for the Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline to raise awareness about the supports and referrals it offers).

6.4. Response Procedures

- 6.4.1. The Board will develop and implement related anti-sex trafficking procedures for TDSB employees when responding to situations where a student:
 - (a) may be at risk of or is being sex trafficked
 - (b) may be targeting, luring, grooming or recruiting children and youth for the purpose of sex trafficking
 - (c) is returning to school after they have been trafficked or involved in trafficking others
- 6.4.2. The related anti-sex trafficking procedures must be trauma-informed and culturally responsive and address the needs of:
 - (a) students with special education needs, mental health needs, social or emotional needs or language/cultural barriers, and international students
 - (b) students who are in care, receiving care or in customary care arrangements
 - (c) students who are being trafficked and who may be involved in the recruiting of other victims, including students who are returning to school after they have been involved in a trafficking situation
 - (d) parents, including those who may live overseas and/or may not speak English or French
 - (e) students 18 years or older or who are 16 or 17 years old and have withdrawn from parental control

6.5. Support and Training for Employees

- 6.5.1. Professional Support Services staff at the TDSB will be designated to support employees with anti-sex trafficking programs and strategies. This will include support with:

- (a) the process for responding to situations where a student may be at risk of or is being sex trafficked, including steps for safely reporting concerns, responding to disclosures, and supporting the student's immediate physical and emotional safety;
 - (b) the process for responding to situations where a student may be engaged in the trafficking of others, including steps for safely reporting concerns, responding to disclosures, and supporting students' immediate physical and emotional safety;
 - (c) the process for responding to and supporting students re-entering school after they have been involved in a trafficking situation, including efforts to ensure that adequate safety and security needs are being met to support re-integration into school;
 - (d) guidance on the requirements related to the duty to report a child in need of protection under Section 125(1) of the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017* and under *Policy/Program Memorandum 9: Duty to Report Children in Need of Protection*;
 - (e) clear information on legislated privacy and confidentiality requirements when responding to a suspected or confirmed instance of sex trafficking;
 - (f) the process of notifying appropriate school/school board contacts and parents/guardians, as applicable;
 - (g) direction on the approach to referring all affected students (including those indirectly affected, as needed) to supports;
 - (h) direction on the approach to responding to possible sex trafficking recruitment by a student within the school, including appropriate interventions, supports and/or consequences, as applicable:
 - expectations are to be consistent with the TDSB's Caring and Safe Schools Policy (P051) and the mitigating circumstances that must be considered when determining the intervention, consequences or supports. For students with special education needs, information in the student's Individual Education Plan must be considered;
 - (i) direction on the approach to appropriately respond to and meet the needs of students who are victims and survivors of sex trafficking, including access to education and facilitating school re-entry for those returning to school;
 - (j) direction on monitoring and following-up on incidents reported (for example, check-ins with affected students);
-

- (k) direction on documenting suspected or reported sex trafficking situations and response procedures that were implemented;
 - (l) information on culturally responsive and trauma-informed personal supports available to school board employees responding to sex trafficking situations.
- 6.5.2. The Board will provide ongoing training for TDSB employees, including teachers, administrators, and other school staff on anti-sex trafficking strategies. The training will consist of:
- (a) key definitions, common misconceptions, and myths about sex trafficking, including tactics used for online luring, grooming and recruitment;
 - (b) learning about human rights-based approaches to combatting sex trafficking, including the application of an equity lens, anti-racism, a gender-based lens, trauma-informed approaches, and Indigenous cultural competencies;
 - (c) information on protective factors and prevention-focused supports and resources;
 - (d) information on risk factors and signs that a student is at risk, being lured, groomed, or trafficked;
 - (e) signs that a student is or involved in luring, grooming or trafficking others;
 - (f) response procedures, including the duty to report, how to handle disclosures to support students' safety, how to support students impacted by sex trafficking and how to share information to ensure privacy and confidentiality;
 - (g) supports available to students and affected staff, including culturally responsive supports;
 - (h) additional training resources to support staff to understand and safely respond to sex trafficking;
 - (i) roles and responsibilities of employees in raising awareness, identifying and responding to sex trafficking.
- 6.5.3. The training will be tracked and be available throughout the year to all new and existing TDSB employees. The TDSB will update the training program on ongoing basis and deliver regularly to stay current with emerging issues relating to trafficking and changes in community services and response.

6.6. Accountability and Evaluation

- 6.6.1. In collaboration, with the Ministry of Education, anti-human trafficking partners and local agencies, such as the Children's Aid Society and Indigenous Child and Family Well-Being Agencies, and

other school boards, the TDSB will develop a performance measurement framework.

- 6.6.2. This framework will monitor the effectiveness of training (e.g., whether staff feel they are more aware and more able to safely identify and intervene in situations where a student is suspected of being trafficked or trafficking) and whether the provisions in place respond to the needs of students (e.g., helped children and youth in care stay out of, or exit, human trafficking). This will be measured with performance indicators on how the provisions in place are preventing trafficking within school communities.



Information Flow Protocol Request for Information List: Update

To: Governance and Policy Committee

Date: 27 October, 2021

Report No.: 10-21-4177

Strategic Directions

- Transform Student Learning
- Create a Culture for Student and Staff Well-Being
- Provide Equity of Access to Learning Opportunities for All Students
- Allocate Human and Financial Resources Strategically to Support Student Needs
- Build Strong Relationships and Partnerships Within School Communities to Support Student Learning and Well-Being

Recommendation

It is recommended that the update on the Request for Information List (RIL) be received for information.

Context

The Information Flow Protocol (PR733) was adopted on May 26, 2021. The Protocol provides individual Trustees with the opportunity to access information relevant to matters before the Board of Trustees or its Committees, excluding certain confidential and personal information. Individual Trustees will be able to request and obtain information through the Director or designates (Associate Directors, Executive Superintendents/Officers, Superintendents of Education).

In accordance with the Protocol, staff will provide information that is readily available without delay, and it is expected that delivery time estimates would be provided for information that requires time/staff resources to retrieve, assemble or compile in the required format.

As part of the Protocol implementation, staff is developing the Request for Information List (RIL) platform:

Agenda Page 44

- RIL will be used to plan, prioritize and manage requests for information
- Requests for information will be logged by staff
- RIL will serve as an on-line inventory of requested/collected information
- Trustees, Executives and designated staff will have access to RIL (Trustees will have viewing access)

As part of the Information Flow Protocol, key TDSB departments (through RIL Steering Committee) have been actively engaged in documenting and refining requirements for the implementation of the information request platform. It is expected that the soft launch of the platform will take place in January 2022.

Following the soft launch, training will be provided to all users. Staff training will be conducted in February 2022. Designated staff will require training on how to submit RIL requests on behalf of Trustees, updating and fulfilling requests, and viewing the status of requests on the dashboard.

Training for all Trustees will begin at the same time, in February 2022.

Action Plan and Associated Timeline

Staff are currently reviewing and finalizing the RIL application process with the RIL Steering Committee. Development planning will continue into October and application testing is expected to begin in early November. A soft launch of the new platform is planned for January 2022. Training is planned to begin in February 2022.

Resource Implications

Development and planning of the RIL is being led by in-house staff. The cost will be dependent on the number of users who access the platform from the backend of the system. Licensing costs are estimated to be about \$50 per user per month. Users who require viewing access (e.g., other staff, Trustees) will most likely not require a license.

Communications Considerations

Staff will continue to provide the Board of Trustees with updates on the status of RIL development, implementation and training content for target users of the RIL.

Board Policy and Procedure Reference(s)

- Information Flow Protocol (PR733)
- Open Data Policy (P091)

Appendices

N/A

From

Craig Snider, Interim Associate Director, Business Operations and Service Excellence by email at Craig.Snider@tdsb.on.ca.

Peter Singh, Executive Officer, Information Technology/Information Management by email at Peter.Singh@tdsb.on.ca

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