

Student Protection Policy

Policy Overview

This policy explains the Halifax Regional School Board's responsibility to take all reasonable measures to ensure the safety and security of all students while under the supervision of staff and volunteers.

Table of Contents

- 1.0 Legislative Context
- 2.0 Principles
- 3.0 Authorization
- 4.0 Policy Review

Policy and Procedures History

- Policy approved – December 16, 2003
- Policy revised – June 20, 2012
- Policy revised – March 25, 2015
- Procedures approved – December 16, 2003
- Procedures revised – June 20, 2012
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1.0 Legislative Context

- 1.1 *Nova Scotia Education Act;*
- 1.2 *B.010 Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect;*
- 1.3 *Nova Scotia Children and Family Services Act.*

2.0 Principles

- 2.1 The Halifax Regional School Board has a responsibility to provide a safe and secure environment for students.

3.0 Authorization

3.1 The Superintendent is authorized to develop and implement procedures in support of this policy.

4.0 Policy Review

4.1 This policy will be reviewed every five (5) years or on an as needed basis.

Student Protection Procedures

Table of Contents

- 1.0 Principal Responsibilities**
- 2.0 Employee Responsibilities**
- 3.0 School Volunteer and Visitor Responsibilities**

Appendix A – Definitions

1.0 Principal Responsibilities

- 1.1 Principals will ensure that all volunteers have a criminal records check and child abuse registry search completed prior to volunteering in schools.
 - 1.1.1 Principals will keep a copy of these documents on file at school.
- 1.2 Principals will implement the Halifax Regional School Board Security Protocol.
- 1.3 Principals will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that visitors and volunteers are not put in situations where a student, visitor or volunteer is vulnerable.

2.0 Employee Responsibilities

- 2.1 On recommendation for hire, or upon application when requested, all applicants for employment are to:
 - 2.1.1 Provide a completed Child Abuse Register Search or completed Child Abuse Register Request for Search (Form A) which can be found at:
<http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/abuse/ChildAbuseRegister.html>
 - 2.1.2 Provide an original or a certified and true copy of a current, completed in the three months preceding offer of employment, criminal records check or, for those working in schools, a vulnerable sector check, collectively referred to in these procedures as a “criminal records check.”
- 2.2 No employee may begin any position with the Halifax Regional School Board until the forms listed above have been received by the Human Resource Services Department.

- 2.3 All offers of employment shall be conditional upon there being no outstanding charges or prior convictions that indicate that the employee could pose a risk to students.
- 2.4 The Human Resource Services Department will report to the Department of Education any person who has been refused employment as a teacher as a result of a criminal records check or child abuse registry search.
- 2.5 All completed employee child abuse registry search, criminal records check, and records of inquiry with the Department of Education shall be secured in a confidential file by the Human Resource Services Department.
- 2.6 It is the responsibility of every employee of the board to contact the Director of Human Resource Services should they be subject to investigation or conviction under the Criminal Code of Canada.
- 2.7 In any instance where an offer of employment has been given and the criminal records check or child abuse register search indicates that the employee could pose a risk to students (i.e., the prospective employee has a criminal record for acts of child abuse or is found to be on the Child Abuse Registry), the offer of employment shall be withdrawn immediately.
- 2.8 In any cases where areas of concern are identified following a review of criminal charges or convictions, the Director of Human Resource Services, or designate, will meet with the applicant in determining their suitability for employment to make a final decision regarding the applicant's suitability for employment.
- 2.9 All employees of the board who experience a break in service (defined as when the individual is no longer an employee) at any time during the school year greater than three months will be required to submit the following documents at the time of their application to return to service:
 - 2.9.1 Provide a completed Child Abuse Register Search or completed Child Abuse Register Request for Search (Form A) which can be found at: <http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/abuse/ChildAbuseRegister.html>;
 - 2.9.2 A certified and true copy of a current, completed in the three months preceding offer of employment, criminal records check.
- 2.10 All employees must wear and visibly display their Halifax Regional School Board photo identification card at all times while working and visiting schools and board sites.

3.0 School Volunteer and Visitor Responsibilities

- 3.1 Prior to volunteering with the Halifax Regional School Board, **all volunteers** will provide:
 - 3.1.1 Provide a completed Child Abuse Register Search or completed Child Abuse Register Request for Search (Form A) which can be found at: <http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/abuse/ChildAbuseRegister.html>

This search must be updated every three years;
 - 3.1.2 A certified and true copy of a criminal records check completed in the three months preceding volunteering. This check must be updated every three years.
- 3.2 In any instance where an invitation to volunteer or conduct any other activities in the Halifax Regional School Board's schools has been given and the criminal records check or child abuse register search indicates that the volunteer could pose a risk to students (i.e., the person has a criminal record for acts of child abuse or is found to be on the child abuse registry), the invitation to volunteer or conduct other activities shall be withdrawn immediately.
 - 3.2.1 In all other cases where there is a criminal record, the school principal will consult with the School Administration supervisor to make a decision regarding the volunteer's suitability;
 - 3.2.2 It is the responsibility of any board volunteer, after having completed the screening process, to contact the school principal should they be subject to an investigation or conviction under the Criminal Code of Canada.
- 3.3 All visitors and volunteers are to sign in at the school office upon arrival and wear an access badge while at the school. This badge must be returned to the issuing office at the end of each visit. A record of issue should be established by the school to identify the date/time, the name of the cardholder, the company, if applicable, and the purpose of the visit.
 - 3.3.1 Emergency service personnel (police, fire, ambulance) do not require an access badge if in uniform and on official business;
 - 3.3.2 School Response Officers/School Liaison Officers, in uniform, who are working in schools, are not required to wear a visitor badge.

Appendix A

Definitions

Visitor – an individual who enters the school who is not an employee or volunteer. A visitor includes, but is not limited to, a one-time speaker, an individual making a delivery, a community member working at annual school events, a School Advisory Council or Parent-Teacher Association member and anyone attending a meeting with a teacher or an administrator.

Volunteer – an individual who interacts with students in an environment that is not supervised at all times by Halifax Regional School Board teachers or administrators. A volunteer includes, but is not limited to, a coach, a driver, a regular classroom helper and a trip chaperone.