

The South Slave Divisional Education Council recognizes that the use of intoxicants such as alcohol, cannabis products, and other illicit drugs along with the problems associated with their misuse, can pose serious societal concerns, and that the issue of substance abuse is best dealt with through a holistic community approach emphasizing prevention, treatment, harm reduction and enforcement. The Council also believes in providing a safe, caring and nurturing environment for all students (Policy AD), and that intoxicant possession or use is not compatible with this value statement and therefore unacceptable within the school context.

Schools are responsible for providing a safe environment and maintaining order and discipline in the school so that a quality education can be provided. Teachers and administrators must be able to respond quickly and effectively to problems that arise in their school.

Research has indicated that community based drug prevention programs are more effective in reducing addiction problems than stand-alone school based programs. Community ownership of the problems and solutions associated with substance abuse has a greater impact in the community.

This policy provides a framework for action and response that extends to the community at large, and contributes to the reduction of substance abuse in our schools and communities. This policy establishes drug awareness and prevention expectations that balance the need for enforcement and support.

For the purpose of this policy the term “drugs” and/or “intoxicants” is used to refer to:

- all illegal drugs (as defined in the Federal *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*)
- restricted drugs, including alcohol, cannabis, vaporizers / electronic cigarettes, and volatile substances (those giving off gas or vapour that can be inhaled)
- all substances digested, injected or inhaled with the express purpose of altering one’s state of consciousness

REGULATIONS

The following regulations outline the ongoing efforts that are to be made to monitor and prevent drug related activity on school property and during school sanctioned events:

Programming

- 1) Schools shall provide drug awareness and prevention programming as prescribed by the approved *NWT* curriculum, and any other related Council developed programs and resources.

Enforcement

- 2) In all suspected cases of drug or drug paraphernalia use or possession, the respective parent will be contacted.

- 3) All cases of a student deemed using, in possession, or under the influence of drugs on school premises or during school related activities shall result in suspension (as per Education Act, sec 35(1e))
- 4) Principals shall cooperate with the RCMP officers in all cases where a search warrant or subpoena is being acted upon, and in investigations of trafficking of drugs on school premises or during sponsored activities

Community Supports

- 5) Each school will identify, make contact, and encourage inter-agency cooperation and specific partnership efforts in providing supplementary drug awareness and prevention educational programs, counselling and treatment for students
- 6) Each school will develop written protocol and procedures for re-entry of students from drug related disciplinary actions, and for otherwise referring students for in-school and outside agency guidance and counseling available to assist students in crisis or need
- 7) The treatment of students for substance abuse will continue to be the responsibility of appropriately trained personnel of community agencies
- 8) A written protocol will be included in each school's *safe and caring school plan* for managing medical emergencies involving suspected drug or alcohol consumption

Communications

- 9) Principals will ensure that this policy shall be part of the school code of conduct and communicated to staff, students and parents early each school year:
 - a) staff, students and parents will be informed of the disciplinary actions that will be taken in the light of first time and repeated drug use/possession at school and/or school functions
 - b) school handbooks or registration forms will advise students and parents that school property such as desks and lockers remain the property of schools and may be searched by school staff at any time, that students are responsible for the contents of their lockers, and that only locks issued by the school are allowed to be used on school lockers
 - c) school handbooks or other written communication will also confirm that students, their property, and their electronic communications may be subject to search when there are reasonable grounds to believe that there has been a breach of the law or school rules and that the search will reveal evidence of the violation
- 10) Principals will ensure that all staff members are aware of:
 - a) this Council policy and any DEA/school drug policies, and on staff roles and responsibilities within the context of the policy

- b) staff expectations regarding the programming and monitoring of drug awareness and prevention programs within the classes
- c) the means of accessing in-school and interagency interventions to reduce the severity and incidences of drug abuse

Reporting

- 11) Principals will include in their bi-monthly report to the Superintendent, the specific number of drug related incidents, along with reference to any key activities related to drug awareness and prevention programs and services, implementation issues, and/or future strategies/plan for addressing those issues
- 12) The Superintendent will report annually to the Council any key activities, number of drug related incidents, issues, and future plans

Reference: *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act – Federal Statute 1996*
NWT Education Act, Secs. 22, 34-36
NWT School Health Program (K-9)

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