

Ontario North East Region Safe Schools Protocol

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1. Signatories to the Protocol1

POLICE SIGNATORIES

Approved by:

NAME, Chief Jeff Skye
Anishinabek Police Service

Paul Pedersen, Chief of Police
Greater Sudbury Police Service

Roland Morrison, Chief of Po 9676 243.7(enP--0.0C

SCHOOL BOARD SIGNATORIES

Approved by:

Lucia Reece, Director of Education
Algoma District School Board

Jérémie Lepage, Directeur de l'éducation
Conseil scolaire catholique du district des
Grandes Rivières

Serge Levac, Directeur de l'éducation
Conseil scolaire catholique Franco-Nord

Paul E. Henry, Directeur de l'éducation
Conseil scolaire de district catholique du Nouvel
Ontario

Sébastien Fontaine, Directeur de l'éducation
Conseil scolaire du district du Grand Nord de
l'Ontario

Yves Laliberté, Directeur de l'éducaecn
Conseil(sc)6.3 (o)0.7 (l)2.1 (a)12.2 (i)2.9 (r)11 (e)-2.7 (-)-10.5 po

SCHOOL AUTHORITIES' SIGNATORIES



Angela Tozer, Director of Education
Moosonee District School Area Board

Jennifer Knight-Blackned, Supervisory Officer
Moose Factory Island District School Area Board



Angela Tozer, Director of Education
James Bay Lowlands Secondary School Board

Daniel Stevens, Director of Education
Nipissing First Nation Administration

2. STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

The following protocol aims to ensure a safe and non-threatening environment for students, staff, and

At the root of effective school-police partnerships is a common understanding of each partner's roles and responsibilities, as well as agreed-upon procedures and clearly delineated decision-making authority. Providing the best possible education for students in a safe school community is a shared responsibility which requires a commitment to collaboration, cooperation, and effective communication.

Making our schools safer requires a comprehensive strategy that includes:

- the opportunities for staff to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to maintain a school environment in which conflict and differences can be addressed in a manner characterized by respect and civility;

4. ROLES AND MANDATES

POLICE SERVICES

In cases of exigent circumstances, police will assume primary responsibility as may be necessary to ensure school safety.

In partnership with school boards, police are committed to protecting life and property in accordance with the **Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019 (CSPA)** and to serving the school community.

Police may be involved with the school in three basic ways:

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Through close cooperation, police can provide valuable guidance and consultation to school personnel, aid in the identification of appropriate responses to violent behavior, and clarify the procedures involved in police investigations.

Police will work in partnership with schools and other community agencies to administer crime-prevention programs that focus on areas such as peer mediation, conflict resolution, referral to appropriate community resources (e.g., those providing counselling or mentoring services, drug awareness and education programs, or support for seeking employment or housing), and Crime Stoppers.

From a crime-prevention perspective, police play a crucial role in the school community, offering ample opportunities for implementing various strategies, including but not limited to the strategy of **Crime Prevention through Social Development (CPSD)**. This approach aims to prevent and reduce crime by identifying and addressing associated risk factors. By employing proactive measures focused on the precursors of criminal and antisocial behavior, CPSD acknowledges the interplay of various socisoc sup)

This protocol is one component of a broader partnership between schools and other essential community partners, including mental health providers, health care professionals, and Children's Aid Societies, that is dedicated to violence prevention in Ontario schools.

6. NON-INCIDENT RELATED POLICE INVOLVEMENT

The following is a quotation from the National Association of School Resource Officers:

Police provide a visible and positive image for law enforcement. They serve as a confidential source of counseling to students concerning problems they face. They bring expertise into schools that will help

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both professionals and the general public and cannot be delegated to another person. Reporting is an ongoing obligation, and information sharing should prioritize the protection of vulnerable children.

Education Act

Under the Education Act and in accordance with the regulations and the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education, a principal is responsible for collecting information for inclusion in a student's record. The

- presence of weapons, their type, current location, and possessor; and/or
- description of suspect(s), including number of suspects, names, location, and approximate ages.

Refer to [Appendix B](#) regarding school lockdown procedures.

Reporting procedures must comply with the Duty to Report provisions under the CYFSA.

10. INITIAL POLICE CONTACT

Under exigent circumstances or if the principal is being investigated, the officer is not required to follow the procedures set out below.

The responding police officer is responsible for gathering and thoroughly documenting information regarding a school-related incident. The officer typically follows these steps:

- reports to the principal, vice-principal, or designate with proper identification;
- explains the purpose of the visit and collaborates with the school officials on the course of action;
- considers alternative approaches to minimize disruption to the school day;
- gathers information from the principal, vice-principal, or designate about the student, including any accommodation needs or communication barriers, before contacting the student; and
- contacts, or arranges for the principal, vice-principal, or designate to contact, parents of students under the age of 18, unless it is their opinion that doing so is likely to cause prejudice to the student and would not be in the student's best interests, or if the parent is the alleged offender.

From time to time, it may become necessary and/or unavoidable to interview or apprehend a staff member on school property. If this occurs it is the intent of the school board to proceed as sensitively and unobtrusively as possible while co-operating with the police. Police may not always be able to discuss or disclose circumstances involving the investigation, including apprehension. Where feasible, police should attempt to contact a supervisory officer or senior executive of the school board of the staff member being apprehended.

11. SCHOOL AND POLICE INVESTIGATION OF INCIDENTS

While it is important that the principal, vice-principal, or designate not do anything to prejudice the police investigation, it is also important that police recognize and respect his or her obligations under the **Education Act**. Under the Act, a school board's decision regarding expulsion of a student must be made within twenty school days from the date when the student was suspended.

Police investigations should be undertaken in accordance with the local police service's Criminal Investigation Management Plan and, where required, with the **Ontario Major Case Management Manual**.

The principal, vice-principal, or designate will inform police of any logistical information about the school (e.g., the hours of the school day and class rotation schedules) that may be relevant to the investigation process.

Police services will endeavor to work within these logistical considerations to minimize the disruption to the school.

search of lockers or desks to prevent allegations of tampering. All searches conducted by a principal, vice-principal, or designate must be witnessed, and, if necessary, force should be employed lawfully and judiciously to ensure the safety and effectiveness of the search.

Searches conducted by the police must be conducted in accordance with lawful authority. Ideally, police should notify the principal, vice-principal, or designate before conducting searches on school premises. However, under exigent circumstances, police may be required to execute a search warrant or production order without prior notice to school officials.

DETENTION AND ARREST

Where investigations result in detention and/or arrest, police and the principal, vice-principal, or designate should discuss the circumstances of the incident with the principal, vice-principal, or designate.

guardian as soon as possible, except in exigent circumstances or where police believe the parent may be implicated in the incident;

- the need to provide accommodations and/or modifications for students with special needs, as outlined in their Individualized Education Program (IEP);

CRISIS INTERVENTION REPORTING

When police arrive at the school in response to a crisis, the school will provide the following upon request:

- a complete list of staff and students;
- class schedules and time tables;
- attendance records for that day;
- access to video footage (CCTC);
- floor plans of the school, including environmental and mechanical systems;
- master keys; and
- telephone numbers,

APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY

TERM	DEFINITION
ARREST/DETENTION	Both arrest and detention involve the legal restriction of a person’s liberty. However, detention differs from arrest in that police can detain someone without formally charging them with an offense. This typically occurs when the police have suspicions about a person's activity but lack sufficient grounds to charge them with a specific offense, and they aim to gather more information. There are four types of detention: physical, lawful, psychological, and investigative, as outlined in Section 10 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
ASSAULT	<p><i>As defined in the Criminal Code of Canada (s. 265)</i></p> <p>(1) A person commits an assault when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) without the consent of another person, he applies force intentionally to that other person, directly or indirectly; (b) he attempts or threatens, by an act or a gesture, to apply force to another person, if he has, or causes that other person to believe on reasonable grounds that he has, present ability to effect his purpose; or (c) while openly wearing or carrying a weapon or an imitation thereof, he accosts or impedes another person or begs. <p><i>Application</i></p> <p>(2) This section applies to all forms of assault, including sexual assault, sexual assault with a weapon, threats to a third party or causing bodily harm and aggravated sexual assault.</p>
BARRICADING	Creating a further barrier to a classroom or office that would obstruct the entry of an intruder should the locked door be compromised. Barricading can be done by a number of means, including but not limited to adding a secondary locking mechanism or blocking the doorway with a large moveable object or with multiple smaller moveable objects. The barricade should be capable of being removed to allow exit from the room once the lockdown incident has been resolved.
BOARD CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM	A team of professional support services staff and educators who are trained to respond in crisis events in a school system. A crisis event is a death, accident or traumatic event that affects students, staff and school community that goes beyond the school resources in terms of coping and responding.

TERM	DEFINITION
	<p>physical, psychological, social, or academic harm, harm to the individual's reputation or harm to the individual's property, or</p> <p>(ii) creating a negative environment at a school for another individual, and</p> <p>(b) the behaviour occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance between the pupil and the individual based on factors such as size, strength, age, intelligence, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race, disability, or the receipt of special education;</p>
<p>CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY</p>	<p>For the purposes of this protocol, shall also include any equivalent child protection agency.</p>
<p>CRIMINAL HARASSMENT</p>	<p><i>As defined in the Criminal Code of Canada (s</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Ass ip201 Tw ()TJMC /h4691P AM19N12.4</i></p>

TERM	DEFINITION
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EXPULSION The removal of a student from his or her school or from all schools of the board. Students expelled only from their school are assigned to another school of the board. Students expelled from all schools of the board must be offered a program for expelled students. Activities for which expulsion must be considered are found in section 310(1) of the Education Act. An example is using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm.

EXTORTION *As defined in the Criminal Code of Canada (s. 346(1))*

(S. 346(1) of the Criminal Code of Canada)

TERM	DEFINITION
GANG-RELATED OCCURRENCES	Incidents involving a group that consists of three or more persons, however organized, and has as one of its main purposes the commission or facilitation of a criminal offence in which any or all the members engage.
HATE/BIAS MOTIVATED CRIME	<i>As defined in the Policing Standards Manual 2000</i> A criminal occurrence committed against a person or property which is motivated by

TERM

DEFINITION

LOCKDOWN

TERM	DEFINITION
	<p>to that person;</p> <p>(c) assaults any person with intent to steal from him; or</p> <p>(d) steals from any person while armed with an offensive weapon or imitation thereof.</p>
SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT	<p>A school code of conduct is a set of rules and standards that define the behavior expected of students, teachers, and other members of the school community. These standards of behaviour apply whether they are on school property, on school buses, at school-related events or activities, or in other circumstances that could have an impact on the</p>

APPENDIX B: LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Staff

School staff,

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secure area if safe to do so. Additionally, strategies should be developed for assisting students in coping with an extended lockdown or Hold and Secure. Access to emergency medications for prevalent medical conditions should be ensured, with the goal of making the classroom appear vacant.

Effective Practices

Plans must address unique challenges associated with portables, such as their thin wall construction. To mitigate potential risks, it is recommended to tip desks onto their sides with the desktops facing outward, serving as an additional barrier against stray rounds. Additionally, plans should outline procedures for effectively and safely locking down a school portable.

In the Main Office

In the event of an emergency, several critical steps must be taken to ensure the safety and security of all individuals involved. Firstly, it is imperative to notify the principal, vice-principal, or designate immediately. Simultaneously, contact the police via 911 or the local emergency number to alert them to the situation.

Next, all staff and students should be instructed to vacate hallways and relocate to secure rooms. Once inside these rooms, they must lock their doors to prevent unauthorized entry and ensure their safety. Additionally, the office should be locked to facilitate uninterrupted communication with staff and emergency responders.

A designated individual should be assigned to remain at the intercom as a communicator, ensuring clear communication channels for emergency updates and instructions. It's essential to maintain clear access to the intercom for emergency use, including providing portable radios if staff are outside in the playground with children. These coordinated actions are crucial for effectively managing emergencies and ensuring the safety of everyone involved.

In the Washrooms

Plans should address what staff and students should do if they are in a washroom when a lockdown is called.

Effective Practices

Washrooms, being unable to be locked, should be identified as danger (red) areas during planning for a lockdown. Students should evacuate washrooms if possible and move to an area that can be safely locked down (green).

For elementary schools, it is recommended that plans designate adults who normally work in close proximity to student washrooms to check the washroom(s) prior to locking down themselves, if it safe to do so. After gathering students in the immediate vicinity of their classroom door into their classroom, they would quickly check both male and female washrooms to which they have been assigned in the planning phase, if it is safe to do so, and take any students found in the washrooms into their classrooms to lock down. If it is not possible to leave the washroom, students and/or staff should lock stall, sit on the toilet, and lift legs.

For secondary schools, it is recommended that training include an explanation to students that they are responsible for getting out of the washrooms immediately upon hearing a lockdown

Effective Practices

To ensure that those who are outside school buildings are aware that the school is locking down,

collaborative approach between school officials and law enforcement is essential for effectively managing the situation and ensuring the safety of all individuals involved.

Should the violent incident develop into a more prolonged event then a formal Command Post would be established in a suitable location by the attending police service. The location would be determined at the time of the incident by the incident commander, as there are many different scenarios that the incident may take, and police tactics would have to be considered.

FIRE ALARMS

Plans should address the issue of how to deal with a fire alarm activation after a school has gone 0 Td()Tresw0cena3T

- to the extent possible, leave all objects exactly as they are to protect the crime scene for law enforcement investigations;
- discourage others from disturbing potential evidence; and
- keep the area isolated.

PROCEDURES TO END A LOCKDOWN

Plans should include how a lockdown will be terminated, which should be site specific.

Effective Practices

Procedures to conclude a lockdown will vary based on location. Options may include a general announcement via the PA system by the principal, vice-principal, or designate, or a room-to-room visit from police or the principal, vice-

- maintaining close co-

Effective Practices

School personnel shall invite police partners to all drills. The principal is responsible for setting the date of drills and overseeing the drill with police support and/or assistance. Consider including fire and EMS personnel during drills, so they become familiar with lockdown plans. Staff, students, and parents should be given some warning of an impending drill. Procedures should include a plan to alert neighbouring schools of lockdown drills, especially if fire and EMS personnel have been invited to participate. A short debriefing should be included after all drills to identify areas for improvement. Many boards have established a tracking system to record drill dates, thereby ensuring accountability and compliance.

MEDIA

Plans shall include provisions for dealing with media.

Effective Practices

The Media Liaison Officer from police will direct and coordinate the handling of the media. Police will make media releases or post information on their communication application during the crisis. Releases made upon the conclusion of the crisis will be made after consultation with school authorities. Likewise, school authorities should refrain from making any comment to the media without first consulting police during or subsequent to an incident.

Police are responsible for addressing media with respect to the criminal incident involved and police Cn8

Parents should be encouraged to ensure that their contact information is kept up to date so they can easily be reached by staff in the event of an emergency.

PLAN REVIEW

Each school's plan, along with the board-wide plan, must undergo a comprehensive annual review.

Individual School Plans

APPENDIX C: BOMB THREAT PROCEDURES FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

INTRODUCTION

Staff, students, and visitors in Ontario's schools have the right to learn, work, and be present in a safe and secure environment. To enhance safety and security, it is important that schools have plans for responding to bomb threats. According to the RCMP, the overwhelming majority of reported bomb threats are unfounded, but some are not. It's crucial to handle each incident calmly and consistently. Everyone who regularly spends time in an Ontario school must understand how to safeguard themselves and the students during a bomb threat.

The Ministry of Education, school boards, and police services from across the province continue to work in partnership to create safe school environments. This work includes planning and preparation if a bomb threat is received, an explosive device is discovered, or an explosives incident takes place.

Many school boards have actively undertaken the process of establishing Bomb Threat Response Plans, with the support of their police services. Plans and procedures reflecting the following policy must be included in the school's Emergency and Crisis Response Plan, which must be appended to the protocols already developed by school boards and police services.

Given the dynamic, complex, and fluid nature of such incidents, continuous communication, assessment, and coordination by first responders and the principal, vice-principal, or designate are of paramount importance in ensuring an effective response.

PURPOSE

The following policy is being provided to help elementary and secondary school staff ensure that their bomb threat plans meet basic requirements and to ensure an acceptable level of consistency across the province. Using these guidelines can help school staff and emergency services personnel work together to deal with bomb threat situations quickly and cautiously.

MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

While much of what is provided will be termed **Effective Practices** there are two key elements which the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police (OACP) is recommending as mandatory requirements by the Ministry of Education:

1. All publicly funded school boards in Ontario must establish a lockdown policy to ensure the development and implementation of individual school plans.
2. A minimum of two lockdown drills must occur each school year. It is recommended that one lockdown drill occur before September 30.

In developing Bomb Threat Response Plans, each elementary and secondary school staff should be guided by the following policy.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

regarding a bomb threat beyond mere acknowledgment of its receipt, it's imperative not to postpone initial contact.

Plans should include a list of information to be provided to police, including the following:

- the information recorded on the bomb threat checklist (see [Bomb Threat Intake Procedures](#));
- the activities taking place in the school at the time of the threat (e.g., examinations);
- the status of any evacuation that may be underway;
- the status of any safe visual scan that may be underway; and
- the in-

Effective Practices

Plans should specify designated primary and secondary communication systems with provisions for internal communication with staff and students and external communication with emergency services personnel. The external communication plan should have provisions for communication with parents, guardians, or other stakeholders during extended incidents and after incidents.

In most cases, intercoms and telephones will be used as primary communication systems. Radios and walkie-talkies are **not** recommended as secondary systems, given that radio signals may detonate sensitive explosive devices. Runners, loud hailers, or other methods should be used for secondary communication systems. Local police services should be consulted regarding the use of

In many situations, it may be impractical to try to provide training to school visitors. In other cases, however, when the visitor is in the school over an extended period, as in the case of a service provider, it is necessary to inform the visitor of the school's evacuation procedures.

Where possible, it is advantageous to have police partners present to assist with the training of staff and students. Fire department and EMS personnel could also be invited to training sessions.

DRILLS

Fire drills have long been accepted as an important and effective tool in preparing staff and students for procedures to be followed in the event a fire breaks out in a school. As with fire drills, drills and education related to evacuation following a bomb threat (d)-1.2 (a)12.2 (t2 (n)10.5 -2.6 ((w)6.6 (i)2.99.7 (reM8.3 (vr17.2 2.99.7 (re