



MEMORANDUM

October 8, 2024
Regular Board Meeting

TO	Board of Trustees
FROM	Shauna Boyce, Superintendent
ORIGINATOR	Mark Francis, Deputy Superintendent Dr. Meg Miskolzie, Associate Superintendent
RESOURCE	Christine Ross, Division Principal, Wellness and Community Partnerships Lisa Farough, Executive Assistant, Office of the Superintendent
GOVERNANCE POLICY	Board Policy 11: Board Delegation of Authority Board Policy 13: Appeals Regarding Student Matters
ADDITIONAL REFERENCE	Administrative Procedure 350: Code of Conduct Administrative Procedure 360: Student Discipline <i>Education Act</i> (Preamble, s. 31, 32, 33, 36, 37, 41-44)
SUBJECT	STUDENT CONDUCT AND INTERVENTION REPORT

PURPOSE

For information. No recommendation required.

BACKGROUND

The Board of Trustees, as stated in the *Education Act*, section 33 (1), “as a partner in education, has the responsibility to:

d) ensure that each student enrolled in a school operated by the board and each staff member employed by the board is provided with a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging”.

The Student Conduct and Intervention Report is in response to this responsibility.

REPORT SUMMARY

The Student Conduct and Intervention Report is an overview of the system approach to supporting students and families in ensuring student behavior and conduct is conducive to establishing a welcoming, caring and safe learning environment.

Administration would be pleased to respond to any questions.

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STUDENT CONDUCT AND INTERVENTION REPORT

OCTOBER 2024

Presented to the Board of Trustees, October 8, 2024

Mark Francis, Deputy Superintendent

Dr. Meg Miskolzie, Associate Superintendent

Our Students Possess the confidence, resilience, insight and skills required to thrive in, and positively impact, the world.

BACKGROUND

Parkland School Division (PSD), as per the *Education Act*, is required to provide a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging.

STUDENT CONDUCT

Code of Conduct

Section 33 of the *Education Act*, establishes the requirement for a Code of Conduct for all students. All schools develop a Code of Conduct, applicable to individual school needs (age, grades, etc.). These Codes of Conduct are established under Administrative Procedure (AP) [AP 350: Code of Conduct](#). Each school is required to:

- Develop a school code of conduct with input from stakeholders;
- Communicate to staff, students, and parents the codes of conduct and/or school rules, expectations, etc., which can be shared in a variety of methods including websites, school, newsletters, assemblies, by teachers, etc.;
- Annually review and revise the school code of conduct, as required; and

School divisions are required to outline procedures regarding student discipline when a Code of Conduct is violated.

Student Discipline

[AP 360: Student Discipline](#) outlines all of the procedures with respect to discipline processes including suspension and expulsion. Any disciplinary actions taken by school staff are to ensure safe, orderly learning environments that are conducive to learning. The following Disciplinary Principles are applied when administering any procedures or disciplinary action(s):

- A. Learning – and not punishment – shall be the foundation and primary consideration of any disciplinary action. To this end, wherever possible, teaching a child what to do is preferable to making a rule about what not to do;
- B. Student safety is immediate – appropriate disciplinary decisions and actions may take time;
- C. The parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be informed of disciplinary actions that pertain to their own child while respecting the privacy of other children who may be involved;
- D. Corrective discipline, wherever and whenever possible, shall be a private activity that maintains all students' sense of dignity;
- E. Codes of conduct, wherever possible, should be written as positive messages of what one should do, rather than what one should not do; and
- F. Disciplinary action and/or consequences shall consider the specific and unique special needs of any student.

Application of Disciplinary Actions

AP 360: Student Discipline states, “Discipline refers to specific corrective learning – and not punishment – that is intended to build foundational behaviours and habits of mind that will actively contribute to an individual’s well-being and success.”

When specific discipline is required, actions may include:

- Teaching of problem-solving skills;
- Increase monitoring;
- Assignment of designated tasks;
- Restorative practices;
- Temporary removal of privileges;
- Establishment of behavioural contracts;
- Provision of counselling, pro-social skills training;
- Referral to other agencies/resources; and/or
- Referral for further assessment.

Suspension

Additionally, PSD procedure and the *Education Act* provide for Suspension of a student. Suspension, as defined by the *Education Act* (section 36) include:

- Suspension by the principal from riding the school bus;
- Suspension from a classroom period by the teacher;
- Suspension from any school-related activity; and/or
- Suspension from school, as per the *Education Act*, for up to five (5) days.

Any suspension must be formally documented and communicated to the parents. All suspensions are reviewed and tracked by Division office for consistency, trend analysis and implementation of new procedures or practices.

Trends

- The number of individual incidents has continued to increase year over year. In 2023-2024 there were 1388 individual incidents resulting in suspension. For comparison, 2022-2023 had 823, 2021-2022 had 659 incidents, 2020-2021 had 445 incidents and 2019-2020 had 616 incidents.
- The number of suspensions of students in grade 5/6/7 is trending up significantly.
- Vaping continues to be an issue for schools.
- Online instances (“Cyber Bullying”) continues to be an area of concern.
- Instances of “Non-compliance/Disrespectful behaviour continue to trend up.
- Physical aggression continues to be an area of concern.

Discipline Hearings

The *Education Act* and PSD Procedure allow for a Discipline/Expulsion Hearing. Under section 37(1) of the *Education Act*, the Board may expel the student if:

- a) The student has displayed an attitude of willful, blatant, and repeated refusal to comply with section 31;
- b) The student has displayed an attitude of willful, blatant, and repeated refusal to comply with the Code of Conduct established under Section 33;
- c) The students conduct, whether or not the conduct occurs within the school building or during the school day, is injurious to the physical or mental well-being of others in the school;

Discipline Hearings are established under AP 360, Student Discipline. In 2023-2024 there were 27 Discipline Hearings (2022-2023 – 28; 2021-2022 – 14; 2020-2021 – 6).

ASSESSMENT & INTERVENTION

Violent Threat & Risk Assessment (VTRA) Protocol

The purpose of VTRA is to promote a common language and understanding of threat assessment, make use of community partners' expertise, and encourage a multidisciplinary approach to violence prevention. ***It is important to note that the VTRA process is not disciplinary in nature, although there may be a parallel disciplinary process occurring simultaneously based on each unique situation.***

VTRA is considered a supportive process where teams engage in a detailed analysis of what is happening in a student's life in collaboration with families. Trained VTRA teams work from the perspective that serious violence is an evolutionary process. The role of the VTRA team is to determine why there was an increase or change in the baseline behaviour and whether the individual poses a risk to self or others. After the analysis is completed, the team identifies and develops strategies and interventions to reduce identified risk enhancers and support families in implementing a plan to improve the student's trajectory.

This protocol is based on the work of Kevin Cameron and the Center for Trauma-Informed Practice (CTIP) (formerly the North American Center for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response) and reflects research and evidence-based practices from the fields of medical and mental health, law enforcement, threat management and more.

As part of the VTRA screening process, the following three elements are used to determine activation:

The multi-disciplinary approach to VTRA has four basic steps:

1. Identify worrisome or threatening behaviour;
2. Use a multi-disciplinary team to conduct a VTRA;
3. Determine if a threat-maker poses a risk and the potential level of risk; and
4. Intervene appropriately.

There are two VTRA stages:

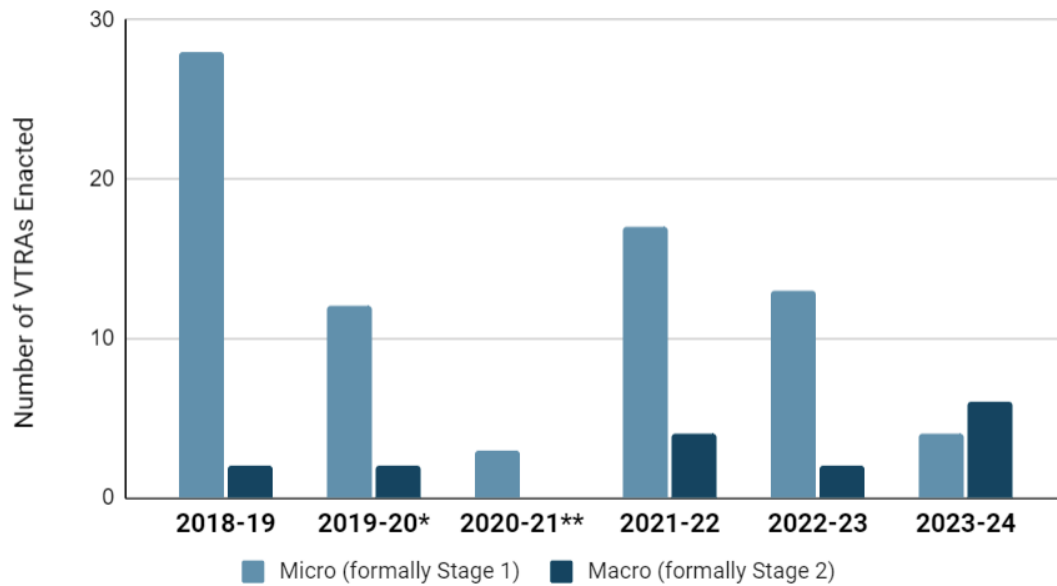
1. **Threat Assessment (Micro Assessment):** Previously referred to as a Stage 1 VTRA, this process determines if a threat-maker actually poses a risk to the target(s) they have threatened. Partners are engaged to rapidly gather data about the situation and identify the level of risk around a specific incident. The intervention plan typically focuses on the interventions required in the immediate environment where the threats occurred.
2. **Risk Assessment (Macro Assessment):** Previously referred to as a Stage 2 VTRA, this process determines if an individual may pose a further risk to a known or unknown target(s) in an unknown period of time. Partners are engaged to gather more specific information and data around the threat and develop a multi-disciplinary plan to intervene and address risk enhancers present in the student's life.

Not all Micro VTRAs result in Macro VTRAs: Several cases are resolved at the Micro stage when:

- The incident proves to either be a momentary lapse in judgment by the threat-maker that is low risk.
- Information that led to the activation of the VTRA proves to be unsubstantiated.
- In most cases, adequate interventions are put in place under the team's direction, addressing the needs of both the threat-maker and target.

VTRA Consultations: Within PSD, when a School Administrator is made aware of a threat they begin the process through a VTRA consultation with the Division Principal of Wellness and Community Partnerships and begin gathering information. While the majority of these consultations do not result in the activation of the VTRA Protocol, the Student Supports & Services team works alongside administration to support preventative and supportive plans for the student and school.

PSD Enacted VTRAs



*COVID-19 Pandemic began March 2020: data represents Sept 2019-March 2020

**COVID-19 Pandemic throughout the 2020-2021 school year

Early Intervention - Worrisome Behaviour Intervention Plans

At the core of the VTRA process is the belief that the best prevention is intervention. Over the course of a school year, many of the VTRA Consultations do not meet the threshold to enact a VTRA, but are worrisome in nature. To support early intervention, a new process was established beginning in the 2022-2023 school year, with the addition of Worrisome Behaviour support. In these cases, the Division Principal of Wellness and Community Partnership supports School Administration in the development of a **Worrisome Behaviour Intervention Plan**, which is preventative and supportive in nature. It is important to note that no VTRA activation does not mean no intervention. As demonstrated in the bar graph above, these supports have resulted in early trends showing a decrease in the need to enact Micro VTRAs. We will continue to track and report this data annually.

VTRA Consultation Data

To better capture the early intervention work of the Division, in addition to tracking the number of Micro and Macro VTRAs each school year, beginning in the 2023-2024 school year the Student Supports and Services team began recording the number of VTRA consultations, as well as the number resulting in Worrisome Behavior intervention planning, as shown below.

2023-2024 VTRA Consultation data	
Total VTRA Consultations	51
Worrisome Behaviour Interventions	13
Micro VTRA (formerly Stage 1)	4
Macro VTRA (formerly Stage 2)	6

2024-2025 VTRA Consultation data - to date

To date this school year, as of the writing of this report, there have been 3 VTRA consultations, with none of these resulting in Worrisome Behaviour Supports, Micro VTRAs, or Macro VTRAs.