

# PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN AGAINST VIOLENCE AND BULLYING

Revised November 2022



## Our Mission

To provide a supportive school environment that meets each student's needs and fosters learning, personal growth, well-being, and independence.



# PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN AGAINST VIOLENCE AND BULLYING

Updated: November 2022

## Belief Statements

- Summit School is committed to the promotion, encouragement, and support of a safe and peaceful environment on all three campuses.
- We, the board of directors and the Director General of Summit School, Mr. Herman Erdogmus, recognize that our students and employees have the right to be protected, safe and respected in their physical, psychological, and moral integrity.
- It is our duty to provide to all, an environment which is healthy and safe, and free from all forms of abuse, aggression, bullying, harassment, and violence.
- We encourage the establishment of healthy relationships among individuals, based on mutual respect and trust.
- We will assist all individuals who are victims of abuse, aggression, bullying, harassment, and violence.
- We commit to offering support to the student who initiated the incident and their family.

## Purpose of the Prevention and Intervention Plan

The purpose of this plan is to ensure, during school time, the students', and staff's physical, psychological, and moral integrity, as well as their protection and safety, are at the forefront of our objectives.

Acts of violence or bullying which occur outside of school hours, but influence in any way the activities of the students and staff at school, will be investigated.

## Objectives of the Prevention and Intervention Plan

- To help decrease problematic situations and behaviour which affect students' and staff's safety, integrity, and development.
- To encourage administration, staff, students, and parents to collaborate, create and maintain a school environment which is healthy, safe, motivating, stimulating, and rewarding for all.
- To convey to all members of Summit School's community the importance of ensuring the students' and staff's protection and safety by displaying attitudes which are free of aggression, violence, harassment, and bullying.

- All members of Summit School’s community must collaborate against all forms of abuse, aggression, harassment, bullying and violence.
- To identify and assist individuals who are victims of problematic situations and behaviours.
- To allow students to participate in activities, training them to recognize factors and situations which could affect their health, development, and safety, and to identify the proper measures to take to avoid certain forms of danger.
- When appropriate, to encourage the development of a peer assistance program in order to increase the efficiency of the help students give each other in situations of violence, and bullying.
- To train staff members to manage situations of violence and bullying and to bring assistance to the victims in an effective and timely manner.
- To foster the development of attitudes and behaviours which can prevent forms of violence, abuse, bullying, aggression, and harassment.

### Stakeholders

In order for the prevention and intervention plan to be effective, it needs to involve all members of the Summit School community in a structured and coordinated fashion: administration, teaching and non-teaching staff, students, parents/guardians, volunteers, transportation company as well neighborhood community partners.

Bena Finkelberg, Senior Principal, is the person responsible for applying the plan and corresponding policy. Her main responsibilities are:

- To coordinate the development of a Prevention and Intervention Plan.
- To assess training needs and set up activities for students.
- To act as the coordinator of all interventions, inquiries, witness, and parent interviews as well as sanctions as needed.
- To keep an updated registry of all incidents/complaints, intervention measures and their follow-up.
- To write a yearly report depicting the school situation, interventions, training, and awareness activities.

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

NAME	ROLE
Herman Erdogan	Director General
Bena Finkelberg	Senior Principal
Cindy Larson	Principal
Costa Kyriakou	Vice-Principal
Tanya Peixe	Vice-Principal
Josh Cunningham	Vice-Principal
Sabrina Censi	Psychologist

## DEFINITIONS

These definitions create a common vocabulary for all stakeholders involved in a violence and bullying Prevention and Intervention plan.

### ***OFFENDER***

The term offender designates a person who, in a given, situation, carries out or is an accomplice to an act of abuse, aggression, bullying, harassment or violence, of any severity level.

### ***VICTIM***

The term victim designates a person who, in a given, situation, is the target of an act of abuse, aggression, bullying, harassment or violence

### ***WITNESS***

The term witness designates a person or group who sees an act of abuse, aggression, bullying, harassment, or violence or who can be affected by its consequences without being directly concerned.

### ***VIOLENCE***

As defined in the Private Education Act (Article 9) as: "Any intentional demonstration of verbal, written, physical, psychological or sexual force which causes distress and injures, hurts, or oppresses a person by attacking their psychological or physical integrity or well-being, or their rights of property".

### ***BULLYING AND HARASSMENT***

As defined in the Private Education Act (Article 9) as: "A repeated direct or indirect behavior, comment, act or gesture whether deliberate or not, including in cyberspace, which occurs in the context where there is an imbalance between the persons concerned and which causes distress and injures, hurts, oppresses, intimidates or ostracizes".

### ***PHYSICAL VIOLENCE***

This form of violence is directed towards someone's body or personal belongings. Examples include but are not limited to hitting by slapping or punching; kicking; pushing/shoving; spitting; stealing or destroying items.

### ***VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL VIOLENCE OR BULLYING***

This form of violence uses words or gestures as a tool to hurt someone. Examples include but are not limited to insulting, threatening, ridiculing, mocking, and excluding others.

### ***CYBERBULLYING***

Designates a situation in which a person uses a technological tool, such as a computer or cell phone, to cause harm. Examples include but are not limited to cruel emails, text messages, and posting on social media.

### ***SEXUAL HARASSMENT***

Any act or comment of a sexual nature which makes a person uncomfortable. Examples include but are not limited to touching someone in a sexual way without their consent, making sexual comments or gestures, and commenting about someone's sexuality.

## **1. PORTRAIT OF OUR CURRENT SITUATION**

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Summit School is a private school in the public interest. The official mandate as described in its ministerial permit encompasses intellectual impairment from mild to profound, autism of all severity levels, and children/teenagers with psychopathology. Summit School currently serves 655 students, ages 4 to 21, at three campuses in Montreal. The vast majority of the clientele is affected by neurodiverse conditions as a primary deficit, which are often associated with numerous comorbid conditions.

The population of the school is very diverse. One of the caveats of this document is that it needs to take into account the variable level of awareness of our students, which affects the degree of the intentionality of their actions. A student with a mild cognitive level who displays violent behaviour towards a peer out of anger is very different from a child with autism who is upset because of a last-minute routine change. This factor will mostly affect measures of intervention.

All students have Individualized Educational Plans and follow the curriculum mandated by the provincial government based on age and ability (Challenges, CASP, WOTP, etc.).

Students are taught in small ratio classrooms with one teacher, one assistant and a number of supplementary assistants. In addition, support services are provided in-house to all students. Support staff include educational consultants, psychologists, behaviour technicians, social workers, speech-language pathologists, specialists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, job coaches, and a nurse.

### **SOURCES OF INFORMATION USED FOR THE ANALYSIS OF OUR SITUATION**

**Incident reports**

**Bus incident reports**

**Data collection from behavioural tracking sheets**

**School climate survey for staff**

**School climate survey for students**

Following an analysis of our situation regarding:

- Particularities of our school setting
- Characteristics of incidents
- Current school practices

Particularities of our school setting

- Diverse ethnic population
- Many families are recent immigrants
- Significant language barriers with families
- Many low socio-economic status families
- School services students from a large geographic area
- A significant number of students followed by Department of Youth Protection
- 56% of students diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Characteristics of Incidents

- Most of the incidents are not premeditated but rather are a result of their neurodiversity.
- Incidents which are premeditated tend to occur during transitions, recess, bus rides, and on social media.
- Types of premeditated incidents include verbal aggression and limited instances involving physical aggression.

Current School Practices

- Reduced student to staff ratio
- Inter-disciplinary staff including psychologists, behaviour technicians, and social workers
- Frequent communication with families
- Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVCI) training program provided yearly to staff
- School-wide implementation of Positive Behaviour and Intervention Supports
- Increased supervision during transitions
- Ongoing partnership with local police station for educational activities

Based on an analysis of our 2021-2022 situation, we have implemented the following for the 2022-2023 school year:

- Increased number of bus routes to reduce the number of students on the buses and travel time
- Hired behaviour technician assistants
- Hired Drama Instructor
- Implemented an additional afterschool program for the 16+ students
- Implemented structured lunch time activities

## 2. MEASURES OF PREVENTION

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### Measures Concerning Staff

- Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVCI) training program is provided yearly.
- Review and implementation of the following policies:
  - Policy on the Use of Behavioral Measures, Measures of Control and Other Interventions
  - Psychological Harassment
  - Sexual Harassment
  - Drug and Alcohol Policy
  - Student Code of Conduct
- Regular in-services fostering a positive and safe school environment (e.g. workshop on implementation of PBIS, in-service on gender diversity to support trans youth)
- Identification of perception of safety level through periodic questionnaires
- Periodic updates from the Safety Committee in order to maintain a safe environment
- Support from a psychologist or Human Resources are available
- Referral to the Employee and Family Assistance Program if required

### Measures Concerning Students

- “Positive Behaviour Integration Support” (PBIS) program is used across the school
- Engage students in educational activities that counter the development of bullying and violence at school, in the community, and in cyberspace
- Yearly review of the Student Code of Conduct
- Implement discussions at the classroom level regarding rules of conduct and safety measures
- Implement an anti-bullying and anti-violence curriculum (e.g. *PEERS* social skills program, *Positive Choices*, *Social Express*, *Acting Out*, *Autism: Attack Social Interaction Problems*, *Attainment’s Explore Social Skills*)
- Offer extra-curricular activities that promote positive peer relationships (e.g. choir, intramural sports, after-school program)
- Support from a psychologist, social worker, and/or behaviour technician is available

## 3. COLLABORATION WITH PARENTS

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- Inform all parents of the school's anti-bullying and anti-violence plan through our school website
- Online resources for parents curated by the psychology and social worker departments
- Include a summary of the code of conduct in students' agendas and have parents/guardians and possibly students sign as acknowledgement
- Review school policies during meet the teacher night
- Weekly communication between school and parents

#### 4. PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING OR REGISTERING A COMPLAINT

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As was mentioned in the "Portrait of Our Situation" section, each situation is dealt with while taking into account the student's cognitive and social awareness level.

##### Procedures for Reporting or Registering a Complaint

For students	Student can report an incident to any staff member either verbally or in written form. This staff member is required to relay the information to administration.
For parents	Parent can report an incident to any staff member in-person, by email, or by telephone. This staff member is required to relay the information to administration.
For staff	Staff member can report an incident to administration or Human Resources either verbally or in written form.
For community partners (e.g. bus drivers, stage supervisors)	Community partner can report an incident to any staff member in-person, by email, or by telephone. This staff member is required to relay the information to administration.
For incidents related to cyberbullying or incidents occurring on social media.	Student, staff, parent, or community partner can report an incident to any staff member in-person, by email, or by telephone. This staff member is required to relay the information to administration. Emails can be sent to: <a href="mailto:admin@summit-school.com">admin@summit-school.com</a> Administration can be contacted by phone at: 514-744-2867

When any individual observes an act of abuse, bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, or violence, they should immediately notify a behaviour technician, psychologist, or member of administration.

#### 5. ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN FOLLOWING A REPORT OR COMPLAINT

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When any individual observes an act of abuse, bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, or violence, they should immediately notify a behaviour technician, psychologist, or member of administration as well as ensure that all parties are safe and if necessary, receive proper care.

Within 24-48 hours following the report of an incident, the actions to take are:

1. Meet promptly with the people involved in the situation (victim, witness, offender).
2. Conduct a thorough assessment of the situation to determine if it is violence or bullying.
3. Contact parents/guardians and/or community partners as established by the *Multi-Sectoral Agreement* to inform them of the situation.
4. Provide support and guidance to all parties involved.
5. Provide feedback to the person who reported the situation
6. Record the information on relevant form (e.g. incident report, accident report).
7. Implement disciplinary sanction(s) if necessary.

## 6. CONFIDENTIALITY

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Each report of abuse, aggression, bullying, harassment, or violence will be investigated promptly in a way that respects the privacy and confidentiality of all parties concerned, to the extent permitted by the law and to the extent practical and appropriate under the circumstances.

Summit School also respects the confidentiality principles from the:

- *Le respect de la vie privée et la protection des renseignements personnels dans les établissements privés*
- Code of Ethics of professional orders in the school of Social Workers, Speech- Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists.

## 7. MEASURES OF SUPPORT

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- **For the victim:**
  - Referral to and follow-up by nursing when necessary.
  - Individual counselling sessions by psychologist, behaviour technician or social worker to work on strategies to assist the victim.
  - Possibility of physical separation from offender.
  - Referral to outside partners if necessary.
- **For the offender:**
  - Individual counselling sessions by psychologist, behaviour technician or social worker to work on strategies.
  - Possibility of physical separation from victim.
  - Possible implementation of individualized behaviour program.
  - Referral to outside partners if necessary.

- **For the witness:**
  - Individual counselling sessions by psychologist, behaviour technician or social worker to work on strategies.
  - Possibility of physical separation from offender.
  
- **For the parents/guardians of victim:**
  - On-going communication.
  - Possibility of a follow-up in-person meeting.
  - Referral to outside partners if necessary.
  
- **For the parents/guardians of offender:**
  - On-going communication.
  - Possibility of a follow-up in-person meeting.
  - Referral to outside partners if necessary.

## 8. DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

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- **For Students**
  - Disciplinary actions encompass a full range of measures depending on the severity of the incident or repetitive nature of acts. These may include:
    - Reflection
    - Community service
    - Loss of privilege
    - Increased supervision
    - In-school suspension
    - Home suspension
    - Expulsion
    - Police intervention
  
- **For Staff**
  - Human Resources and administration will meet with the parties involved.
  - Disciplinary actions encompass a full range of measures depending on the severity of the incident. These may include:
    - Verbal reprimand
    - Written warning
    - Reassignment
    - Placed on probation
    - Suspension with pay
    - Suspension without pay
    - Termination of employment
    - Police intervention

## 9. FOLLOW-UP

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Depending on the severity of the incident, follow-up will vary and may include:

- Meeting with parties involved to ensure that planned interventions are now in place.
- Verification by administration that the incident has been properly documented.
- Verification that outside resources have been contacted.
- Long-term follow-up will be carried out periodically throughout the year to ensure the continued well-being of all parties involved in the incident.

Summit School Administration keeps copies of all school incident reports. The Anti-Violence and Bullying Committee submits a yearly report to Ministère de l'Éducation following the confidentiality principles from the:

- *Le respect de la vie privée et la protection des renseignements personnels dans les établissements privés*
- Code of Ethics of professional orders in the school of Social Workers, Speech- Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists.

The Anti-Violence and Bullying Committee meets periodically throughout the school year to assess the current situation, review the plan, and make required updates.