

Provincial School Code of Conduct

August 2025

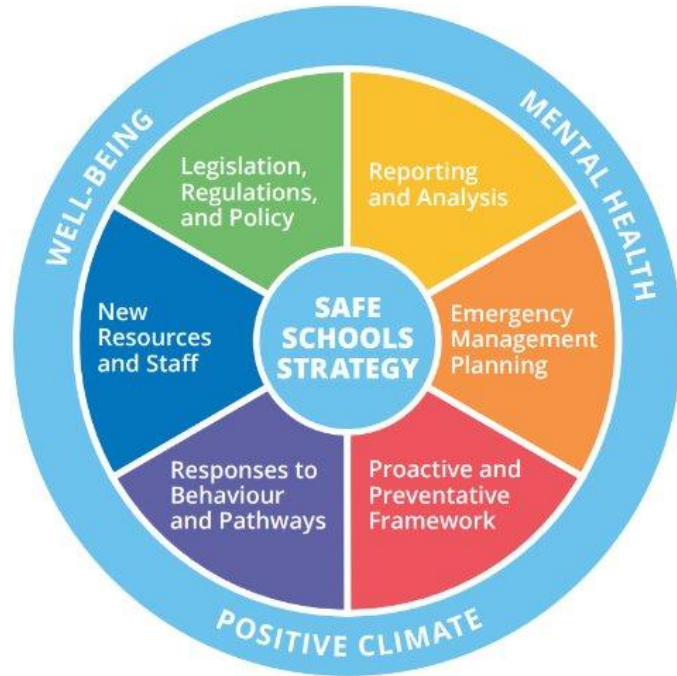


Land Acknowledgement

Goals for this Session

- 1 Review the Policy
- 2 Review the Role of the School Administrator within the Code
- 3 Understand how the Guide for Responding to Unacceptable Behaviour supports Policy implementation
- 4 Review student information system updates and enhancements as they apply to all staffing roles
- 5 Review Intensive Behaviour Support

New Provincial School Code of Conduct Policy



- **The Code of Conduct is founded on guiding principles that ensure a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment for all members of the school community to learn and work.**
- Commitment to update as part of Province's response to growing concerns about the number of behavioural incidents in schools
- Establishing and maintaining safe and inclusive learning and working environments in our school communities results in improved wellbeing and student achievement
- The Code of Conduct is one piece of the larger approach to safe schools

Connecting Our Work

Provincial School Code of Conduct				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and maintain safe and inclusive learning and working environments. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish expectations for acceptable behaviour. Provides guidance on how schools should respond. 				
Inclusive Education Policy	Student Success Planning	NS Educational Leadership Standards	NS Teaching Standards	EMP & OHS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Inclusive Education Policy reflects the importance of the well-being of all students and the impact it has on their achievements. Inclusive schools are equitable, and culturally, linguistically, and socially responsive. They have structures, processes, and practices that are student-centred, appropriate, and collaborative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Student Success Planning Framework is developed to guide the public school system in Nova Scotia in using an equitable and systematic way of planning school improvement with identifying measurable goals that are rigorous yet attainable. 	<p>Leading a safe and positive environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational leaders ensure safe, fair, and respectful environments where all members are welcomed, accepted, valued, and have a sense of belonging. 	<p>Teachers create safe and positive learning environments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers create and maintain positive learning environments that are equitable, inclusive, and safe. Teachers follow the Provincial School Code of Conduct and other policies associated with student behaviour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OH&S reporting is key when staff is impacted by an incident of unacceptable behaviour; more work is happening in this area Emergency management plans need to be updated Violence Risk Prevention Plans need to be updated Create and maintain strong partnerships with law enforcement, emergency services, and community safety partners to support and strengthen Emergency Management Planning.

Nova Scotia Educational Leadership Standards



Educational leaders ensure safe, fair, and respectful environments where all members are welcomed, accepted, valued, and have a sense of belonging.

Teaching Standards for Nova Scotia – Comprehensive Guide

- 1 Teachers know, respond to, and engage their students.
- 2 Teachers know their subjects and how to teach them.
- 3 Teachers use 'Assessment *for* and *of* Learning' to guide teaching and learning.
- 4 Teachers create safe and positive learning environments.
- 5 Teachers participate in professional learning throughout their careers.
- 6 Teachers model and promote professionalism in teaching.



Highlights

- Unacceptable Behaviour Categories – some have changed
- Unacceptable Behaviour Categories Definitions – some have been updated
- Scope of Policy now Includes Pre-Primary
 - Guidance Unique to Pre-Primary for ECEs
- Support Staff can enter Incident Reports
- Guiding Matrix and Category Tables
- Debrief guide document to guide how we respond to support school staff
- Ability to record primary and secondary incidents
- Guide document has specific consequences and response for students from Primary to Grade 6, and another for students from Grade 7 to 12
- Some categories have sub-categories to clearly articulate the nature of the unacceptable behaviour
- Feedback loop to ensure staff are aware that an incident has been received by the administration
- Principals still have the authority to suspend for up to 10 days
- Principals still have ability to recommend suspensions beyond 10 days
- Suspension process remains essentially the same, guided by Education Act (some process alignment provincially)
- Re-Entry plans to support the return of students suspended for significant periods of time



Policy Statement & Objective



The objective of the Provincial School code of conduct is to establish and maintain safe and inclusive learning environments in our school communities.



The code of conduct establishes expectations for acceptable behaviors and provides guidance on how schools should respond to and accurately record incidents of unacceptable behaviour.



The code provides predictable consequences and a pathway for addressing unacceptable behaviours in schools.

Guiding Principles



Roles & Responsibilities: Administrators

- Show care for the school community and commitment to well-being and student achievement in a safe, inclusive, and accepting learning and working environment
- Communicate the Code of Conduct regularly and meaningfully to children, students, staff, parents, and other members of the school community
- Implement positive behavioural interventions and supports to establish clear school-wide expectations
- Participate in professional development and be familiar with the Code of Conduct and positive behaviour interventions and supports
- Monitor incidents of unacceptable behaviour/school violence at their school to identify areas requiring strategic response
- Report, investigate, and accurately document incidents of unacceptable behaviour
- Provide appropriate supports to those who experience harm as a result of unacceptable behaviour
- Model acceptable behaviours



Section 5: Policy Directives

- Pre-primary
- Communication
- Acceptable Behaviour
- Minor Misbehaviours
- Responding to Unacceptable Behaviours
- Suspensions
- Responses Specifically Forbidden
- Recording of Incidents
- Students who Require Intensive Behaviour Supports



Policy Directive: Pre-Primary



5.1

- The provincial pre-primary program is delivered in schools and is part of the school community.
- All pre-primary programs will adhere to developmentally appropriate practices outlined in administrative procedures and **Section 4 of the Guide for Responding to Unacceptable Behaviours.**



PowerSchool Update:

Incidents can now be entered for Pre-Primary students

Policy Directive: Communication



5.2

The expectations of acceptable behaviour and the consequences of unacceptable behaviour will be routinely communicated to the school community.

Policy Directive: Acceptable Behaviours



5.3

All members of the school community are expected to act in ways that promote a safe, caring, positive, and inclusive environment.

Policy Directive: Minor Misbehaviours



5.4

Staff will routinely address minor misbehaviours without completing incident referrals. Repeated minor misbehaviours may reach the level of Unacceptable Behaviour if frequent in nature.



***Minor misbehaviours are
NOT recorded as incidents
in PowerSchool***

Policy Directive: Responding to Unacceptable Behaviours



5.5

Unacceptable behaviours will be addressed promptly, consistently, and equitably.

5.6

When responding to unacceptable behaviours, staff will:

- Refer to the **Guide for Responding to Unacceptable Behaviours** and associated administrative procedures to identify and implement reasonable, equitable, and timely responses
- Accurately report the incident and response through the provincial student information system

Connections

Code of Conduct

NEW (see page 2 for a full list of unacceptable behaviours):

For greater specificity in reporting and tracking, the following categories* of unacceptable behaviour have been added:

- Inappropriate language
- Interruption of the learning environment
- Physical aggression
- Threatening behaviour
- Unapproved mobile device use

Guide for Responding

For Grades P-6:

All categories of unacceptable behaviour, suggested responses, and suggested consequences are defined in the Guide on pages 12 to 24.

For Grades 7-12:

All categories of unacceptable behaviour, suggested responses, and suggested consequences are defined in the Guide on pages 28 to 42.

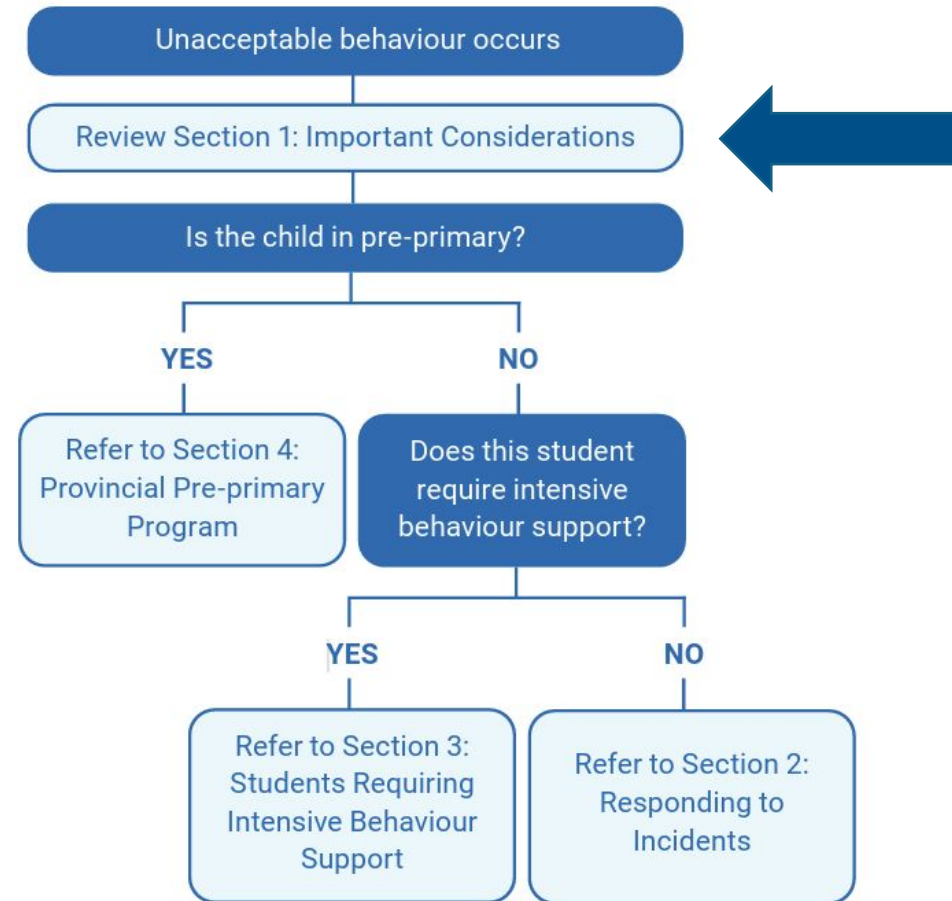
Note: Some category descriptions have been updated



PowerSchool Update:

Incident categories and descriptions are updated and aligned

Decision Making Pathway



Found in the introductory pages of the **Guide for Responding to Unacceptable Behaviours**

Connections

Code of Conduct

Section 3 - Guiding Principles:

- Responsibility
- Equity
- Restorative and Relationship Building
- Clarity and Consistency

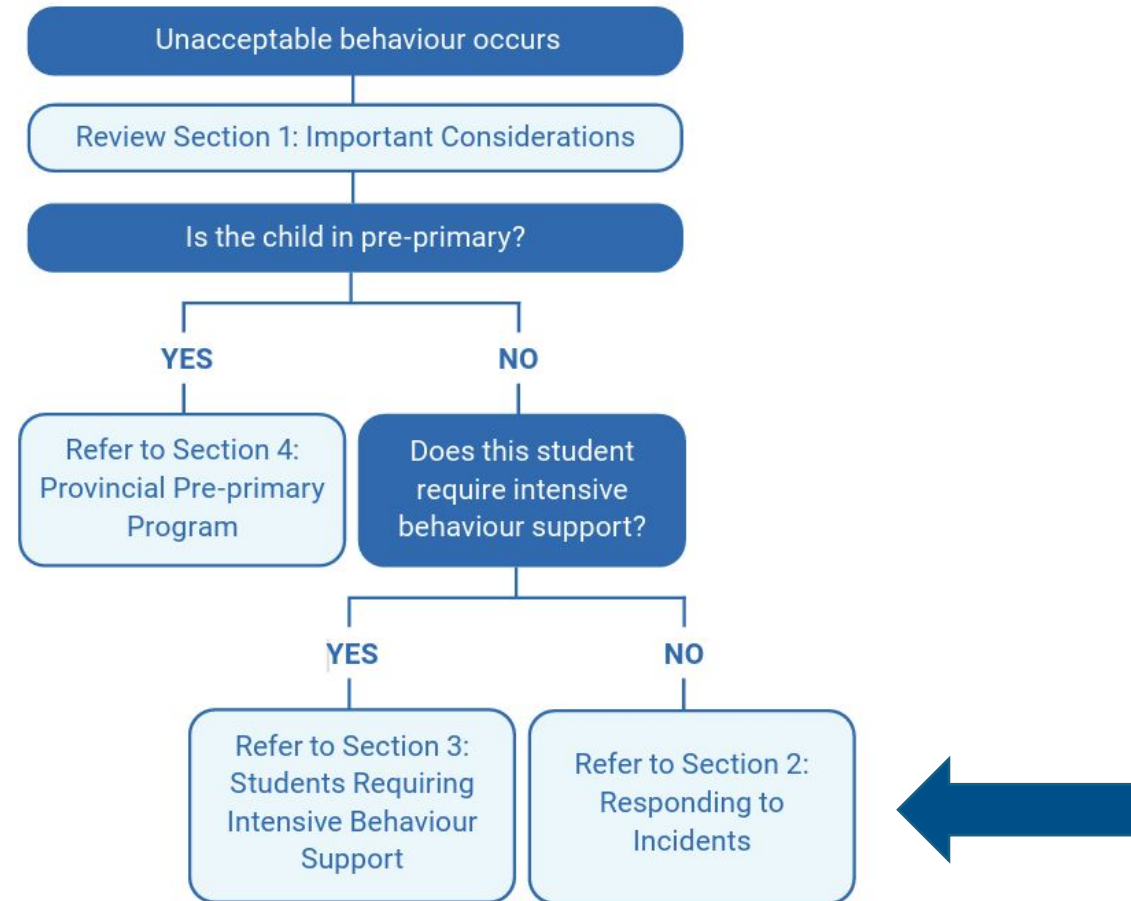
Guide for Responding

Section 1 – Important Considerations based on the Guiding Principals

(Described on pages 2 to 5)

- Trauma (Adverse Childhood Experiences)
- Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Practice
- Age and Stage of Development
- Impact of Suspension on Well-being and Achievement
- Mental Health/Well-being and Addictions

Decision Making Pathway



Found in the introductory pages of the **Guide for Responding to Unacceptable Behaviours**

Responding to Unacceptable Behaviour

The new process helps ensure that school administrators across the province respond to similar behaviours with consistent, balanced consequences – supporting fair decision-making that is neither overly punitive or lenient.



The incident decision making matrix requires administrators to reflect on an incident of unacceptable behaviours in 2 important ways (*Guide page 9*):

1. What was the impact on the other student(s), staff, or environment?
2. What stage of development is the student at and how well do they understand the situation?

Connections

Code of Conduct

Sections 5.5 & 5.6:

Understanding the incident decision-making matrix will provide clarity and consistency when applying consequences for unacceptable behaviours provincially.

Guide for Responding

Section 2: Responding to Incidents

(described on page 9)

The Incident Decision Making Matrix will aid in determining impact of an incident and the student understanding and developmental stage. These factors will lead to a suggested range of consequences, as determined by the severity (1-5).



PowerSchool Update:

Administrators will indicate the determined severity of incident (1-5) when recording action taken

Responding to Incidents

An Administrator may lead this process, however, the TST and SPT *can also* work together to:

Step 1: Determine Impact



Impact	Student Understanding & Developmental Stage
Consider impact on student, staff, or facility safety and well-being; also consider frequency of incident recurrence.	Consider intentionality, neurotypical processing, age/stage of development, and frequency.
No Impact: The incident had no impact on the health, safety, or well-being of student(s) or staff, and did not interrupt school operations.	No Understanding: Student does not understand the consequences of their actions.
Minor Impact: The incident caused minor harm, damage, and/or interruption and may involve one student or staff member.	Limited Understanding: Student has limited understanding of the behaviour's potential for harm.
Moderate Impact: This incident caused moderate harm with possible need for assistance and may impact more than one person.	Basic Understanding: Student understands harm but acted without fully reflecting on impact (need for further coaching).
Significant Impact: This incident caused a disruption of class or school operations or serious harm and may impact multiple individuals (debrief should be considered).	Moderate Understanding: Student has clear intent to harm or attract attention through actions (repeated offences).
Severe Impact: This incident caused a disruption or cancellation for the whole school or serious harm to student(s) or staff and/or required outside interventions (debrief is required).	Full Understanding: Student has premeditated actions without regard for harm to persons or school facilities (repeated offences).



Step 2: Determine Student Understanding & Developmental Stage

Step 3: Apply this to the Incident Decision Making Matrix
(see next slide)

Step 3: Incident Decision-Making Matrix

Use the **Impact** and **Student Understanding & Developmental Stage** from Steps 1 and 2 to complete the matrix below and determine the incident's severity.

		Student Understanding & Developmental Stage →				
		No Understanding	Limited	Basic	Moderate	Full
Impact ↓	No Impact		1	2	2	3
	Minor	1	1	2	2	3
	Moderate	2	2	2	3	3
	Significant	2	2	3	4	4
	Severe	3	3	3	4	5



PowerSchool Update:

Administrators will indicate the determined severity of incident (1-5) when recording action taken

Debriefing



Administrators will debrief members of the school community impacted by the incident, when required, and record this in PowerSchool. If this has not been completed within one week, and indicated in PowerSchool, an email is generated.



Message to Administration regarding debrief to be completed.

Message Subject: Debrief to be Completed

Message:

The following Incident response included a decision to conduct a debrief with impacted individuals. Please confirm that the debrief has been completed by opening the report and confirming the date of completion.

[REPORT #] [DATE SUBMITTED] [STUDENT NAME]



PowerSchool Update:

Debriefs will be recorded in PowerSchool. Not all incidents require a formal debrief.

Policy Directives: Suspensions

Applies to students from Grade primary to Grade 12 as per the ***Education Act***.



An administrator may consider suspending a student, out of school, for up to 10 school days



Where the severity of an incident merits, an administrator may recommend to their RCE/CSAP that a suspension be extended for a period greater than 10 days.



The student or the student's parent(s) may request a review of the suspension by the RCE/CSAP within five school days of receiving the notice of suspension.



Any student who is suspended for more than five days will have a plan for **re-entry*** into the school setting.



***Re-entry** planning will be a collaborative process with the student and family and documentation will be uploaded in the student information system (TIENET).

Re-entry Planning



Section 5.10

This plan will be developed in collaboration with the student and their parent(s)/caregiver(s) for any student suspended more than 5 days. As part of the re-entry process, relevant information will be shared as required, while respecting the privacy, dignity, and confidentiality of students and families.



TIENET Update:

Re-Entry Plan will be uploaded in a Student's Document Library, in a new section titled **Behaviour Interventions**

Intensive Behaviour Supports: Alternative Learning Settings & Adapted Schedules



Section 5.14

When it has been determined that a student is not able to consistently demonstrate expected school behaviour, intensive supports will be identified, and a Behaviour Intervention Support Plan will be developed.

The plan will include the supports required and the most appropriate pathway(s), including possible alternative learning settings, or adapted schedules.

Intensive Behaviour Supports: Alternative Learning Settings



Section 5.14

Alternative learning settings refers to a range of locations within the school where students can work alone or in small groups. These areas help students feel better and do well in school. A **SPT** *must* convene.

Intensive Behaviour Supports: Adapted Schedules



Section 5.14

Adapted Schedules refers to the **temporary** change of the school day schedule for a student which could include a delayed start time, partial day, or early departure. A **SPT** *must* convene.

Policy Directives: Recording of Incidents



Section 5.12

All unacceptable behaviours must be accurately recorded in the student information system.



Video: *Recording Behavioural incidents in Power School Requires GNSPES login Credentials*

Link: [Click Here](#)



PowerSchool Update:

All teachers and support staff now have clear responsibility to report/record incidents.

Summary of PowerSchool Enhancements



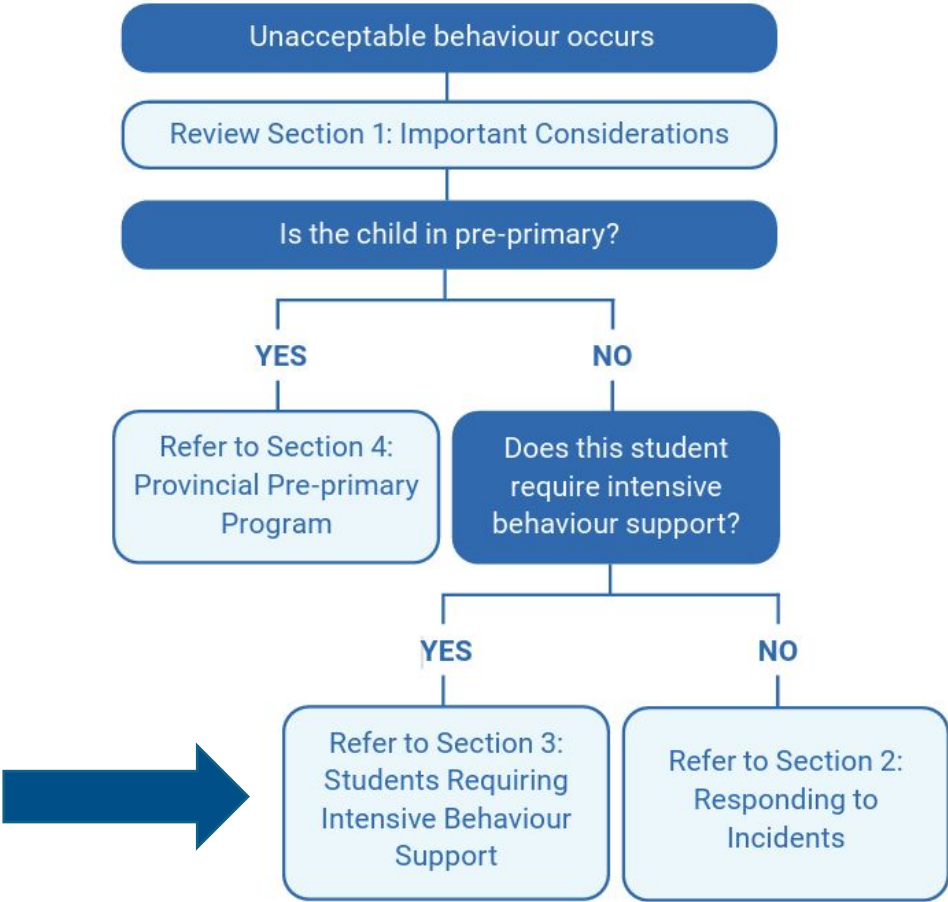
For ALL Staff Entering Incidents:

- Ability to report a Primary Incident Category and a Secondary Incident Category
- Some categories have a 'sub-incident' drop down
- Ability to indicate if location required an evacuation
- Time of Day dropdown now contains "Early" and "Late" Morning Instruction
- Changed wording from 'Incident Target' to 'Person(s) Impacted'
- If a 'student' is a 'Person Impacted', can select student name
- Staff will receive an email notification once an action has been entered by administration.

Specifically for Administration:

- Verification if Student has a Behaviour Intervention Support Plan
- Indication of severity (1-5 using Matrix) when recording action taken
- Updates to Actions/Consequences (No further action required, Revisiting behaviour intervention, Debrief)
- Will receive an email if incident report is not addressed within a week (i.e., no actions added)
- Will record when debrief is complete
- Minor updates to suspension letters (description in letter is drawn from description under Actions/Consequences as entered by administration)
- Behaviour Incidents Custom reports updated to align with PowerSchool updates

Intensive Behaviour Supports



Found in the introductory pages of the **Guide for Responding to Unacceptable Behaviours**

Connections

Code of Conduct

Sections 5.14 to 5.16: Students who Require Intensive Behavioural Supports

When it has been determined that a student is not able to consistently demonstrate expected school behaviour, intensive supports will be identified, and a Behaviour Intervention Support Plan will be developed.

Guide for Responding

Section 3: Intensive Behaviour Support (pages 45-48)

This section is based on sections 5.14 to 5.16 of the Provincial School Code of Conduct Policy. It sets expectations for intensive and supportive planning for students who may not be able to consistently demonstrate expected school behaviour. This section provides guidance on how to create a safe, relational, student-centred and inclusive learning environment for these students, while ensuring they receive high-quality and evidence-informed interventions

Incident Response for Intense Behaviour Support



Impact	Description	Response
Minor	<p>The behaviour results in limited disruption and/or poses limited risk to the environment, health, or safety.</p> <p>EXAMPLE: verbal or repetitive behaviours that interfere with learning, and refusal to follow instructions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • document in the student information system the behaviour and proactive and preventative supports provided, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – predictable routines – visual schedules – co-creating behaviour expectations – structured breaks
Moderate	<p>The behaviour results in moderate disruption and/or poses a moderate risk to the environment, health, or safety.</p> <p>EXAMPLE: threats of injury, light pushes, moderate destruction, and fleeing nearby</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop a Behaviour Intervention Support Plan, which will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – be responsive and individualized (evidence-informed and data-driven) – include requirements for reporting and review – include roles and responsibilities of classroom teachers (or Learning Support Teacher) and, as appropriate, specialists and paraprofessionals and external agencies – focus on transition planning • <u>may</u> require consideration of a time-limited alternative learning environment and/or adapted schedule
Severe	<p>The behaviour results in significant disruption and/or poses a significant risk to the environment, health, or safety.</p> <p>EXAMPLE: fleeing off school campus, classroom evacuation, significant destruction of property, and physical violence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop a Behaviour Intervention Support Plan, which will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – be responsive and individualized (evidence-informed and data-driven) – include requirements for reporting and review – include roles and responsibilities of classroom teachers (or Learning Support Teacher) and, as appropriate, specialists and paraprofessionals and external agencies – focus on transition planning • <u>will</u> require consideration of a time-limited alternative learning environment and/or adapted schedule

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS): Model for Behaviour

Tier 1	Proactive, Preventative, and Pro-Social Includes setting clear, school-wide expectations and using proven, research-based curriculum and teaching strategies in the classroom setting.
Tier 2	Focused small-group support and short-cycle interventions that increase in intensity based on student needs. These supports are delivered in flexible and dynamic learning environments—including classrooms, shared common spaces, playgrounds, etc. – to meet students where they are.
Tier 3 (BISP – A)	When the SPT (including parents/guardians) determines that individualized approaches and/or interventions are required to address behavior and social communication needs to support positive student engagement, well-being and achievement.
Tier 3 (BISP B)	Individual interventions developed by SPT, including specialists (e.g., Behaviour Specialists, BCBA Specialists, School Psychologists) and delivered by Learning Support Teachers

Key Takeaways

- 1 Prepare to communicate that the purpose of the revised Provincial School Code of Conduct Policy is to support safe and inclusive school communities across the province.
- 2 Develop a plan to support new staff members using PowerSchool for incident recording
- 3 Be ready to communicate an alternate method to record incidents for those staff members not using PowerSchool
- 4 Think about Student Success Planning and create a plan to revisit aspects of the Code and the Guide
- 5 Practice using the **Incident Decision Making Matrix** in Section 2 of the Guide

Thank You