



Enclosure 11

Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocol

Prepared by: **Lisa Demers, Superintendent of Education**
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Background

On July 6, 2021, the Ministry of Education released *Policy/Program Memorandum 166 Keeping Students Safe: Policy Framework for School Board Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocols (PPM 166)*. This framework sets a strong foundation for Ontario school boards to build local anti-sex trafficking protocols.

This protocol supports coordinated action by all community partners to prevent, identify and recognize sex trafficking and develop responses to facilitate early and appropriate intervention¹.

Welcoming and engaging school environments lead to positive student experiences, especially when families and communities are intentionally involved in the students' learning². Safe Schools, both physically and psychologically, are a critical element to successfully nurturing positive student experiences.

Due to almost daily contact with students, teachers and other education staff are well placed to educate on prevention and promote healthy relationships, notice troubling changes in behaviour, and connect with students as caring adults.

SCCDSB will train staff to recognize the signs of sex trafficking so they can be better equipped to identify the cues and safely intervene if they suspect a student is being trafficked or involved in trafficking. Education will serve as a key factor in helping survivors of trafficking heal and rebuild their lives, helping to prevent re-victimization and resetting students on a healing trajectory towards positive outcomes.

¹In response to: [Legislative Assembly of Ontario, Private members' motions](#), 42nd Parliament, 1st Session, Motion 122 voted and carried on December 3, 2020.

²Ministry of Education. (2021). [Parent Engagement: Encouraging Parent Involvement in Schools](#)

Definition of Sex Trafficking

Sex trafficking is a form of sexual exploitation and is a crime under the Criminal Code of Canada. It can include recruiting, harbouring, transporting, obtaining, or providing a person for the purpose of sex. It involves the use of force, physical or psychological coercion or deception. Most individuals who are trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation are women and girls, but all people may be targeted.

Indigenous, racialized and students from lower socio-economic status are especially vulnerable to experiencing sex trafficking. The intersections of colonization, intergenerational trauma, systemic discrimination, and barriers to accessing service compound, which increases the vulnerability of being targeted by traffickers.

In the fall of 2021 through the facilitation of the Council of Directors of Education, school boards collaboratively sought legal expertise and support with protocol development for greater consistency and continuity of implementation provincially. As the result of this partnership, boards are working collectively to share resources and implementation strategies.

The Ministry of Education has identified that core and essential elements of the protocol are:

- statement of principles
- strategies to raise awareness and prevent sex trafficking
- response procedures
- training for school board employees
- measuring success: accountability and evaluation

Caring adults and students within schools can promote a sense of student belonging, increase protective factors, help to reduce risk factors associated with sex trafficking, and support early intervention through identification and appropriate response, including connecting impacted persons to supportive services.

School board employees require comprehensive anti-sex trafficking training, so they are equipped to identify the signs of sex trafficking, safely respond to disclosures, be culturally relevant and responsive to diverse student populations, and support the immediate physical and emotional safety needs of students. Training must emphasize how to respond to immediate dangers and the need to avoid actions that will make an individual's situation worse or more unsafe.

Recommendations

That the St. Clair Catholic District School Board receive the report: *Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocol*, for information.