

SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION	No.: C-314
	Effective: Feb. 26/91 Revised: May 23/95; Nov. 25/25 Reviewed: Apr. 1/25; Apr. 22/25; Oct. 7/25; Oct. 28/25; Nov. 25/25

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS

1. Background

These regulations outline a comprehensive approach to supporting a safe, healthy and caring school environment; one free from the use of alcohol and other drugs. The district shares responsibility with students, parents and the community for addressing problems associated with substance use.

The District prohibits the use of intoxicants by students while on school property or at school-sponsored/related events. The district supports a proactive and comprehensive approach to substance use which emphasizes prevention, early intervention, counselling, and disciplinary actions.

The Federal Cannabis Act made it legal for adults to purchase, possess, use, and grow certain amounts of cannabis in Canada. In BC, the government enacted the Cannabis Control and Licensing Act (CCLA) and the Cannabis Distribution Act, which regulate how cannabis may be sold, distributed and consumed in BC. The legislation includes significant restrictions aimed at preventing access to cannabis by persons under the age of 19. In particular, the CCLA prohibits the consumption of cannabis in or on school property, or within a prescribed distance from school property.

2. Definitions

Intoxicant - alcohol, drugs prohibited or restricted under the *Food and Drugs Act, Cannabis Control and Licensing Act, Cannabis Distribution Act and the Narcotic Control Act*, and other inebriating substances such as misused prescription drugs.

Under the influence of - indicating evidence of having consumed an intoxicant or exhibiting a degree of intoxication while under school jurisdiction.

In possession - having an intoxicant on the student's person or elsewhere under their control (e.g. in a locker, or a vehicle) while under school jurisdiction.

School Function: Any assembly, meeting or gathering of students, or student field trips for school purposes under the supervision or direction of the Board, representatives of the Board, teaching staff, supervisory staff, or authorized volunteers in the course of their duties.

3. Procedures

3.1 A breach of this policy shall follow trauma-informed practices to determine the most appropriate intervention for students and may result in a period of suspension from school; however, in keeping with the Board's primary goal of education, the length of the suspension will be determined, in part, through the principles of equity and fairness. All

incidents involving alcohol or other drugs shall be reported to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student and may be reported to the police.

3.2 The District will:

- a. Provide students with age-appropriate instruction on the prevention of substance use.
- b. Encourage and support the identification of early intervention into problems of substance use by students through utilization of school as well as community resources.
- c. Provide fair and equitable response procedures and consequences regarding substance related infractions.
- d. Provide continued support for the services provided by school-based support personnel.
- e. Provide appropriate support and intervention, within its resources, to students who possess/use and/or distribute drugs and alcohol. The focus will be the early identification of at-risk students who display irregular behaviour, inappropriate decision-making, and declining personal performance. Intervention will be made available to at-risk students and/or first-time offenders by counsellors and community agencies, as appropriate. Positive and confidential help will be given to students who voluntarily seek assistance in overcoming substance use and problems.

3.3 The principal of each school will advise all staff that they have a responsibility:

- a. For the immediate reporting to a principal or vice-principal of any student who is suspected of being in direct or indirect possession of or having consumed an intoxicant while under school jurisdiction.

Note: Indirect possession would include having another person store or possess the substance.

- b. When in the course of their duties, identify students who, as a result of irregular behaviour patterns and/or declining personal performance over a reasonable period of time, are suspected of using intoxicants. Such identified students should also be brought to the attention of the school-based team.
- c. When a principal/vice-principal determines that a student's substance use or other risk factors may put the student at extreme risk of harm, to report the concern to the Ministry for Children and Family Development (MCFD) – child protection branch, as per policy C-410, Child Abuse.

3.4 When a school principal or vice-principal has reason to believe that a student, while attending school or involved in an official school function, is in possession of or is under the influence of a substance as defined above, the principal will:

- a. Ensure the personal safety of the student and others.
- b. Determine an appropriate course of action. This may include disciplinary processes and/or the development of an intervention and support plan as appropriate.
- c. Dependent on the individual circumstances and the age and grade of the student, the principal will consider the following in the development of an appropriate plan of action in consultation with counsellors and parent/guardians:
 - i. Referral to the school-based social worker, counsellor, student engagement facilitator or other resource as may be available.

- ii. Referral to community agencies.
- iii. Suspension of five days or less, or suspension greater than five days and referral to the District Student Review Committee.
- iv. Notification of police when deemed appropriate by the principal.

3.5 At least once annually at the start of the school year, school principals will inform parents/guardians in writing that school lockers are the property of the school district and, as such, may be subject to search.

4. Consequences:

4.1 The possession, consumption/use, sale or distribution of alcohol and/or drugs at school functions or while under the jurisdiction of the school will result in appropriate consequences pursuant to Policy and Administrative Procedures for C-309, District and School Codes of Conduct and C-319, Student Suspension.

5. Selling, Supplying, or Making Available Intoxicants

5.1 Where there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a student is in possession of a substance purported to be an intoxicant for the purposes of selling, supplying, or making available while under the jurisdiction of the school, the principal should normally suspend the student indefinitely, inform the parents/guardians, refer the student to the District Student Review Committee and report the incident to the police and to the Superintendent of Schools or designate.

5.2 If the offender is charged with a crime related to selling, supplying or making available drugs or alcohol, either on school property or when under the jurisdiction of the school, the District Student Review Committee will consult with police and the Crown Prosecutor's office prior to determining the student's educational placement.

6. When any intoxicant comes under the control of a principal/vice-principal in dealing with an incident covered by this policy, the police may be contacted to determine the disposal of the seized intoxicant.

All disposal of seized intoxicants should be witnessed.