

Title: **Student Substance Use**
Category: **Health and Safety**
Number: **3240**

I. Rationale:

Both the *Tobacco and Vapour Control Act*, Section 2.2, and the *Cannabis Act* clearly define the laws regarding smoking, the use of tobacco and vapour products and the use of cannabis on school property. The Board of Education of School District No. 46 (Sunshine Coast) recognizes that in order to provide the greatest opportunity for healthy student growth and development, the school environment must be free from the use of tobacco, alcohol, cannabis and other impairing substances. The Board shares responsibility with students, parents and the community for addressing problems associated with the use of such substances. The Board supports a proactive and comprehensive approach to substance use which emphasizes preventative curriculum, early intervention, counselling and disciplinary actions. Given our vulnerable population of children and youth, it is important that staff model and promote healthy living in the workplace.

II. Practices:

- A. Smoking, vaping and the use of tobacco products or cannabis is prohibited on all property owned or operated by the school district and in school district vehicles.
- B. The Board prohibits the use of, or being under the influence of alcohol, cannabis or other impairing substances by students while on school property or at school-sponsored events.
- C. Students are not permitted to smoke, vape or use tobacco or cannabis products or possess/consume alcohol on school buses or at any school function held in other locations.
- D. The exception to this policy is for the ceremonial use of tobacco where the activity has been approved by the Board, and the ceremony is performed in relation to a traditional aboriginal cultural activity, or performed by a group for a purpose approved by government regulation.
- E. Principals and teachers shall strive to ensure that all students receive instruction that promotes substance use awareness, responsible decision-making, positive self-esteem and overall good health.
- F. Principals and teachers shall remain aware of current scientific knowledge and instructional techniques related to substance use education.

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G. Students and parents shall be made aware of available counseling services and other support services outside of the school. Access to community assessment, counseling and treatment services may be facilitated by the school for students and families. In taking or facilitating such action, school personnel shall strive to ensure the confidentiality of those involved. Students should feel free to seek and receive counseling about substance use and related problems without fear of punishment or reprisal.

H. When, in the opinion of the school principal, a student is in possession of, or under the influence of impairing or illegal substances either during the regular school day or at a school-sponsored function, whenever or wherever held, the student may be either sent home or suspended. The length and type of the suspension shall be determined on a case-by-case basis. Where possible, once the student is no longer in an impaired state, the suspension should be in-school.

I. When, in the opinion of the school principal, a student is providing impairing or illegal substances to other students, whether for profit or not, the student may be suspended under the same guidelines as outlined in Regulation #1320.

J. The RCMP may be informed of suspected use or possession of illegal substances.

K. School principals, given reasonable cause, are permitted to search student lockers without the consent of the student.

L. Any illegal substances discovered to be in a student's possession or on school property shall be confiscated immediately by the school principal. At the time of confiscation, other responsible adults shall be made aware of the action that has been taken by the principal. The substance shall be locked in a secure place within the school. The RCMP shall be called immediately to pick up the confiscated material.

M. In making decisions about disciplinary procedures, the principal shall be guided by the concept of "in loco parentis", and shall consider what is best for the individual student as well as the health, safety and well-being of other students and staff members.

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N. Encouragement and support shall be offered to those student organizations and activities that, in the opinion of the school principal, help to develop a positive peer influence in the area of substance use.

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References: Board Policy 11.6; *Tobacco and Vapour Products Control Act* - Section 2.2, *Cannabis Act*