

ATTENTION:

TCDSB Placed Under Supervision by Minister of Education

On Friday, June 27, 2025, the Minister of Education placed the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) under supervision. While under supervision, all decisions that would normally be made by Trustees, with the exception of denominational matters, will now be made by the Ministry appointed Supervisor. The Supervisor will refer such denominational matters to the Board of Trustees for decision.

Revisions to Policy made to reflect the role of the Ministry appointed Supervisor will apply while the TCDSB is under Ministry Supervision. All other revisions remain in effect beyond Supervision.



POLICY NAME:

POLICY SECTION:

DATE APPROVED:

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW:

DATES OF AMENDMENTS:

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT:

ACCESS TO STUDENTS IN SCHOOLS

Schools, Students and Learning

June 2007

2025

January 29, 2015; October 18, 2018

October 2025; June 2026

Safe Schools

Policy:

This policy affirms the need for students, teachers, staff and parents/guardians to feel safe in their school community. The purpose of this policy is to outline the steps to be followed where an individual or organization requests access to schools or other Board premises where students may be present.

The policy is in alignment with the Toronto Catholic District School Board's (TCDSB) Multi-Year Strategic Plan (MYSP) and reflects Catholic values rooted in the love of Christ.

Scope and Responsibility:

This Policy applies to all visitors, organizations, or other individuals accessing or seeking access to TCDSB schools or other TCDSB premises where students may be present. The Chief Executive Officer, supported by the Superintendent responsible for Safe Schools and school Principals, is responsible for this policy.

Regulations:

1. Subject to the limitations set out in legislation and this policy, the TCDSB recognizes that the following persons are permitted to be on school premises pursuant to the *Education Act* and Ontario Regulation 474/00, Access to School Premises:
 - i. A person enrolled as a pupil;
 - ii. A parent or guardian of such pupil;
 - iii. A person employed or retained by Board;
 - iv. A person who is on the premises for a lawful purpose;
 - v. A person who is invited to attend an event, a class or a meeting on school premises, provided the person is on the premises for that purpose;
 - vi. A person who is invited onto school premises for a particular purpose by the Principal, a Vice-Principal or another person authorized by the Board policy, provided the person is on the premise for that purpose.
2. In addition to persons listed in Regulation 1, the following persons are permitted to be on school premises, subject to the limitations set out in legislation and in this policy:
 - i. The Ministry appointed Supervisor or designate;
 - ii. A Member of the Provincial Legislature for the school in their constituency; or
 - iii. A member of the clergy for the Archdiocese of Toronto who has pastoral charge of the area in which the school is situated.
3. Where permitted by law, the following persons who may seek access to pupils or may seek to interview pupils in schools or during school related activities, other than school staff and Board consultants, include:
 - i. Custodial parents, guardians and their identified delegates;
 - ii. Non-custodial parents with relevant parenting/access rights;
 - iii. Police;
 - iv. Public Health Nurses;
 - v. Canada Border Services Agents;
 - vi. Children's Aid Societies;
 - vii. Others, as deemed appropriate and as approved by the Principal.
4. Before permitting access, it is the responsibility of the Principal to ascertain the category in Regulations 1-3 that applies to the person seeking access, and to apply these Regulations and related Protocols/Guidelines accordingly. Where the Principal is unclear, the Principal will consult with the School Superintendent and the Safe Schools Department.
5. Given the obligation of the TCDSB (including the Principal, teachers, and other staff) to safeguard the welfare of students, the Principal must be satisfied that the visitor is the person who they purport to be. If required by law or Board policy, the visitor must provide a police record check in accordance with O. Reg. 521/01 to the Principal and

appropriate TCDSB department(s). Unless the visitor is known to the Principal, proper identification should, with sensitivity and discretion, be insisted upon by:

- i. Personal identification of the visitor by someone in the school; and
 - ii. Production of an official government issued identification (e.g., driver's license, passport, etc.); and
 - iii. Verification of information given by the visitor against information contained in school records.
6. Visitors (including, but not limited to, the individuals in Regulation 3) who are not known to the administration of the school shall be requested to produce proper identification. All visitors (known and unknown) must follow locally established school access procedures, including reporting to the office upon arrival and signing the Visitor's Book, stating their name, address and reason for the visit.
 7. Those individuals who are permitted on school premises in accordance with this policy are not entitled to have access to all areas of the school premises. The Principal, Vice-Principal, or other person authorized by the Board shall make that determination.
 8. A pupil subject to suspension or expulsion is denied access to the school and to all school-related activities or events.
 9. In accordance with O. Reg. 474/00, where a Principal, Vice-Principal, or other person authorized by the Board concludes that a person's continuing presence on school premises is detrimental to the safety or well-being of anyone on school premises, that person is not permitted to remain on school premises.
 10. The Board permits access to students by the Toronto Police Service in accordance with the [Toronto Police/School Board Protocol](#).
 11. The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) officers will only enter a school for reasons of national security or serious criminality. These exceptional circumstances will require approval from a senior CBSA official. The Principal will consult with the school Superintendent and Safe Schools Department unless there are exigent circumstances that render advance consultation impractical.
 12. The Regulations of this policy apply to a student who is in the extended society care of the Crown or a children's aid society. Children's aid societies have a legal obligation to afford protection to children in need thereof, and for this purpose, have the power to apprehend such children. Staff should consult the specific policies and protocols (including the Toronto Police/School Board Protocol) of the Board related to these matters.
 13. During a writ period of a federal, provincial or municipal election, no political party, candidates or person seeking candidacy may make public announcements or

have access to TCDSB school sites for political purposes other than to participate in all candidates meetings.

14. The Principal will promptly inform the school Superintendent and Communications Department prior to a visit from notable invited visitors, including elected officials, in accordance with the School Events policy.
15. External health or social service agencies, professionals or paraprofessionals are required to follow the TCDSB Protocol for Partnerships with External Agencies for Provision of Services by Regulated Health Professionals, Regulated Social Service Professionals and Paraprofessionals, and do not have access to students during the school day for the purposes of providing direct service.

Police Record Checks for Volunteers

16. A Principal may engage volunteers in the school to assist with school activities. All school volunteers must abide by the following requirements:
 - i. All volunteers will comply with the TCDSB Volunteer Manual;
 - ii. Volunteers must submit a police record check before volunteering in any capacity. The type of police record check required is as follows:
 - a. A Criminal Record and Judicial Matters Check is required for volunteers for in-school activities or day excursions who will not be responsible for supervising or directing students and who will have only limited contact with students. Some examples of volunteers falling into this category are those performing tasks such as distribution of snacks, supporting fundraising or book fair events, fun fairs, or participating in classroom activities under the supervision of school staff. The Board will provide the letter required for the Criminal Record and Judicial Matters Check fee to be waived.
 - b. A Vulnerable Sector Check is required for volunteers for in-school activities or day excursions who will have direct and ongoing contact with students, including those responsible for supervising or directing students, and those who will be unsupervised with students. This type of check is also required for volunteers for overnight and swimming related excursions and those who coach students. The cost of the Vulnerable Sector Check is at the volunteer's expense, although Principals have the discretion to assume the costs when deemed appropriate. The local Catholic School Parent Council may also choose to fund the cost.
 - c. After a volunteer has completed and provided the appropriate type of police record check, they will be considered a continuous volunteer and need not complete a new police record check for each subsequent volunteer activity. However, a volunteer who has provided only a Criminal Record and Judicial Matters Check must provide a Vulnerable Sector Check if their role changes in a manner that brings them within the requirements of paragraph (b) above.
 - d. Volunteers must provide an updated police record check every five years and provide an annual offence declaration for each year when they are not required to provide an updated police record check.

- iii. Volunteers will perform such duties as assigned by the Principal.

External Speakers

17. If approved by the Principal, school staff may invite external speakers to make instructional or other presentations to and for the benefit of the pupils or the staff of the school. Presentations must be in harmony with the teachings of the Catholic Church and the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations. The Principal, in consultation with appropriate staff, will review the Protocol Governing Access to Students in Schools when considering an external speaker.
18. Parent/Guardians will receive information on the external speaker(s) making the presentation at least 14 calendar days before the date the presentation(s) are to take place and will include:
 - i. Date, time, and location of the event.
 - ii. Title and topic or focus of the presentation.
 - iii. Connections to the curriculum and/or the event's purpose.
 - iv. Names of the presenters, performers, or external speakers and any organizations they represent.
 - v. Information about any handout materials, giveaways, or literature that will be provided.
19. If, at any time, there is a change to a planned event or should arrangements at the school level not allow advance notice of 14 calendar days (i.e., change in speakers, limited planning time), information to parents/guardians will be provided as soon as final arrangements are confirmed.

Cross References:

Legislation

- *Education Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2
- *Police Record Check Reform Act, 2015*, S.O. 2015, c. 30
- O. Reg. 474/00 Access to School Premises
- O. Reg. 521/01 Collection of Personal Information

Ministry of Education Policy/Program Memorandum

- PPM 149 Protocol for Partnerships with External Agencies for Provision of Services by Regulated Health Professionals, Regulated Social Service Professionals, and Paraprofessionals
- Strengthening Academic Achievement and Transparency policy memo

TCDSB Policy /Procedure

- Catholic Parent Involvement Committee policy

- Catholic School Parent Councils policy
- Code of Conduct policy
- Communications policy
- Duty to Report, Duty to Support policy
- Employee Involvement in Municipal, Provincial and Federal Elections policy
- Fundraising in Schools policy
- Permits policy
- Physical Activities within the Physical Education Programs policy
- Political Activities and Campaigning policy
- Protocol Governing Access to Students in Schools
- School Events
- School Excursions policy
- Suspension and Expulsion policy
- Toronto Police/School Board Protocol
- Trespass policy
- Volunteer Manual

Other

- Protocol for Clergy and Laity Visiting the Archdiocese of Toronto

Definitions:

Criminal Record and Judicial Matters Check

A police record check that discloses criminal convictions, findings of guilt under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, and specified judicial matters, including outstanding charges, arrest warrants, judicial orders, peace bonds, probation and prohibition orders, and recent absolute/conditional discharges. It does not include non-conviction information under the *Police Record Checks Reform Act, 2015*, except where authorized by law.

Vulnerable Sector Check

A more in-depth police record check that discloses all of the information contained in a Criminal Record and Judicial Matters Check, and statutorily authorized additional information, including record-suspended sexual offences, certain findings of not criminally responsible on account of mental disorder, and limited non-conviction information, where the individual is in a position of trust or authority in relation to vulnerable persons.

Evaluation and Metrics:

1. The policy will be reviewed every five years.