

POLICY: TRAGIC EVENTS INTERVENTION PLAN # 1012

SECTION: 1000 : SAFETY Page 1 of 3

APPROVAL DATE: July 19, 2017 EFFECTIVE DATE: July 19, 2017 REVIEW DATE: July 19, 2022

CROSS REFERENCE: Policy 1003 - Emergency Response Plan

A. **POLICY**

1. 1.1 The Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board recognizes that in a school community crises will occur which are often unpredictable and can have a powerful emotional impact on the students, staff and their families.
- 1.2 The Board will respond to these needs with compassion. A tragic events response plan is a proactive, organized, and well-thought out plan which provides clear expectations and procedures for individuals to follow, making coping with fear and uncertainty easier. It leads to an effective and immediate response to short-term and long-term postvention needs.
- 1.3 The Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board is committed to providing the necessary information, skills and personnel required to handle such events by being adequately prepared and by having in place a Tragic Events Intervention Plan. The plan will maintain a school climate that enhances the personal well-being of students and staff during times of traumatic events.
- 1.4 The Board accepts the following definitions:
 - Crisis:** an unexpected event that cannot be prevented and which causes deep emotional reactions within the school
 - Tragic Event:** a serious illness, accident, death or traumatic event that affects more than one student or staff member, and that goes beyond the school resources in terms of coping and responding

B. **GUIDELINES**

2. 2.1 The Tragic Events Intervention Plan will provide a framework for support action in the event of a traumatic occurrence in the school community, which causes serious and sudden grief and disequilibrium. This includes involvement in an accident, serious illness, and death of a student, staff member or other significant person.
- 2.2 The Tragic Events Intervention Plan will provide the support action in a manner that is consistent with Christian beliefs and values in the Catholic tradition that respects the dignity of each school community.
3. 3.1 **Tragic Events Intervention Team (TEIT)**

The Tragic Events Intervention Team will provide direct support to the School Tragic Events Intervention Team in the following ways:

 - the coordination of a systematic and sustained approach to tragic events intervention in the school system;
 - assisting the Principal in preparing a plan of action that would educate, validate and stabilize;

POLICY: <u>TRAGIC EVENTS INTERVENTION PLAN</u>		# <u>1012</u>
SECTION: <u>1000</u> :	<u>SAFETY</u>	Page <u>2</u> of <u>3</u>
APPROVAL DATE: <u>July 19, 2017</u>	EFFECTIVE DATE: <u>July 19, 2017</u>	REVIEW DATE: <u>July 19, 2022</u>
CROSS REFERENCE: <u>Policy 1003 - Emergency Response Plan</u>		

- provision of ongoing in-service to members of the School Tragic Events Intervention Team (STEIT); and
- provision of additional support and resources for the STEIT as required

3.2 The **Tragic Events Intervention Team** may include the following members:

- appropriate Supervisory Officer (Superintendent)
- Health and Safety Officer
- and others which may include Chaplains, Principals and staff

The intent is to have standing representatives attend to the requirements of this policy. Should this not be possible, designates could be called upon to fill the void.

3.3 **School Tragic Events Intervention Team (STEIT)**

The School Tragic Events Intervention Team will provide support to meet the needs of the school community in a time of crises by:

- assisting and supporting the Principal in preparing an appropriate plan of action which includes assisting in the dissemination of accurate information, assisting in returning the school to a state of normal operation and evaluating the plan of action;
- assisting students and staff to understand the grieving process; and
- identifying students and staff who may be in need of further monitoring or intervention.

3.4 Each school Principal shall establish a **School Tragic Events Intervention Team**. The size of the staff will determine the number of persons forming the team. Suggested team membership is:

Elementary Schools

- Principal/Vice-Principal
- Staff member(s)
- Mental Health Lead
- School Social Worker
- Parish Priest

Secondary Schools

- Principal/Vice-Principal
- Chaplain
- Mental Health Lead

POLICY: TRAGIC EVENTS INTERVENTION PLAN # 1012

SECTION: 1000 : SAFETY Page 3 of 3

APPROVAL DATE: July 19, 2017 EFFECTIVE DATE: July 19, 2017 REVIEW DATE: July 19, 2022

CROSS REFERENCE: Policy 1003 - Emergency Response Plan

- School Social Worker
 - And others which may include experienced teachers familiar with the student community and a priest familiar with the student community
4. Debriefing and evaluation of the intervention should take place after each tragic event. Members of the School Tragic Events Intervention Team will evaluate the tragic event's response one week after the occurrence.

C. **CONCLUSION**

5. Grief is our response to loss. A climate that fosters openness and freedom to grieve is essential to the healing process. The Tragic Events Intervention Plan is the response of the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board to establish a framework of support for individuals adversely affected by a tragic event which causes sudden grief and disequilibrium in the school community.