



Date: January 24, 2024 **Agenda Item:** 8.3

To: Board of Trustees

From: Shawna Warren, Superintendent

Originator(s): Lisa Lacroix, Associate Superintendent, Human Resources
Rita Raposo, Director, Human Resources

Governance Policy: [Board Policy 110: Welcoming Inclusive, Safe and Healthy Environments](#)

Additional Reference: [AP245: Health and Safety](#)
Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Act, Code and Regulations
Alberta Workers Compensation Board Regulations

Assurance Domain: Learning Supports
Governance

Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard (SLQS)

SLQS Competencies ([SLQS](#) / [Board Policy 700](#)):

Building Effective Relationships
School Authority Operations and Resources
Supporting Effective Governance

Subject: **Workplace Safety Report**

Purpose:

For information.

Background:

Section 33 of the Education Act, states that “(1) A board, as a partner in education, has the responsibility to (d) ensure that each student enrolled in a school operated by the board and each staff member employed by the board is provided with a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging”.

The Occupational Health and Safety Act defines the Board's legislative duty to take all reasonable and practical measures to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of employees. Additionally, the Act mandates the Board to ensure that workers involved in the employer's tasks receive adequate training in all aspects necessary to carry out their work in a healthy and safe manner.

The Alberta Workers' Compensation Board Regulations stipulate that the Board has a responsibility to work collaboratively with employees to prevent workplace injuries. In the event of workplace injuries, it is mandated that they be reported promptly. Furthermore, the

Board is obligated to reinstate the employee either to their original position or an alternative job following a workplace injury, ensuring a secure and supportive return to work.

Sturgeon Public School Division (SPS) is committed to building and preserving a safe, productive and healthy working environment for staff, students and school community and is responsible for ensuring the legislative requirements of the Education Act and the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act are followed in Sturgeon Public School Division. The following report is in response to this commitment and these responsibilities.

Report Summary:

SPS complies with regulations set forth in the legislative requirements and has enacted measures to ensure the safety of students, employees and community at all SPS facilities. The following report is a summary of programs, practices and statistical information for SPS staff and students.

Administration is prepared to respond to questions at the January 24, 2024, Public Board meeting.

Attachment(s):

1. Workplace Safety Report



Workplace Safety Report

Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)

The province of Alberta continues to emphasize the significance of occupational health and safety, expecting employers to adhere to these standards to safeguard employees, students and visitors from workplace incidents.

The Occupational Health and Safety Act states:

2 The purposes of this Act are

- (a) the promotion and maintenance of the highest degree of physical, psychological and social well-being of workers,
- (b) to prevent work site incidents, injuries, illnesses and diseases,
- (c) the protection of workers from factors and conditions adverse to their health and safety, and
- (d) to ensure that all workers have
 - (i) the right to be informed of work site hazards and the means to eliminate or control those hazards,
 - (ii) the right to meaningful participation in health and safety activities pertaining to their work and work site, including the ability to express health and safety concerns,
 - (iii) the right to refuse dangerous work, and
 - (iv) the ability to work without being subject to disciplinary action for exercising a right or fulfilling a duty imposed by this Act, the regulations or the OHS Code.

Joint Worksite Occupational Health and Safety Committee:

The Joint Worksite Health and Safety Committee is mandated by the Occupational Health and Safety Act. This committee aims to ensure safety compliance and provide Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) recommendations to the Superintendent. The Act permits school divisions to form divisional Joint Worksite Occupational Health and Safety Committees, replacing the previous model of site-based committees at individual schools/work sites.

Membership in the committee is diverse, including representatives from all Union and Employee groups (ATA, CUPE, GEC), as well as members representing various employee roles within the division. The Occupational Health and Safety Act ensures equal representation on the Joint Worksite Occupational Health and Safety Committee.

The committee members are:

Lisa Lacroix - Employer Co-Chair
Jennifer Brimacombe - Employee Co-Chair
Rita Raposo - Secretary
Paul Froese - ATA Representative

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Kelly Salisbury - CUPE Representative
Kathy Huculak - GEC Representative

Complaints to Joint Worksite Health and Safety Committee (JWHSC) Members:

Employees report potential safety issues to the site's Occupational Health and Safety Representative who forwards on to school administrators, and work orders are subsequently submitted to facilities for resolution. Workers may also refer a complaint directly to the school administrator.

Workers may also report complaints to their local union representative or directly to any member of the Joint Worksite Health Safety Committee.

OHS Complaints:

Filing a complaint differs from reporting unsafe work. Filing a complaint is a formal process. A complaint results in a government investigation of workplace hazards. Filing a complaint means you are reporting unhealthy or unsafe hazards to Alberta OHS. Reporting unsafe work is a school-based process. Alert your School Representative or Principal to unsafe or harmful hazards at school.

Workers and visitors at work sites in Alberta have the option to directly submit complaints to Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) if the concerns have not been resolved at the school level. Complainants can choose to remain anonymous or disclose their contact details. An OHS Officer, along with representatives from the Division and the school conducts an investigation without revealing the complainant's identity, regardless of whether they opted to remain anonymous.

Anonymous OHS Investigations:

In instances where an anonymous Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) complaint is lodged, OHS encounters limitations in conducting a specific investigation. The OHS Officer, under such circumstances, examines Sturgeon Public School Division Policies, Procedures, processes, protocols, and relevant documents such as safety manuals and training materials. Upon the conclusion of the investigation, a comprehensive written report is generated. These reports are shared with both SPS and the Worker Co-chair.

OHS Investigation:

When a specific complaint is filed, providing detailed information including the date, incident description, and individuals involved, the OHS Officer initiates a comprehensive review. This includes an examination of SPS Policies, Procedures, processes, protocols, safety manuals, and training materials. The investigation also involves a scrutiny of Accident/Incident reports and other pertinent documentation related to the incident, along with a review of prior Accident/Incident reports. Staff members may be interviewed as necessary. Following the completion of the investigation, a detailed written report is produced. Similar to anonymous investigations, these reports are shared with both SPD and the Worker Co-chair, and may include recommendations.





Complaints and Investigations Update:

As of January 2024, one Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)/Joint Worksite Health and Safety complaint has been received.

Extreme temperature variations within the IT Department Offices. To address this issue, the Facilities Department has initiated an investigation to determine the root cause and is actively developing a mitigation plan. In instances where temperatures fall below a comfortable working range, employees have been temporarily transitioned to remote work arrangements to ensure their well-being and productivity.

Annual Inspections:

Human Resources is currently working with the Facilities Department to create an annual inspection template for inspections to be consistent in the Division.

Reported Employee Incidents

2021 - 2022	123
2022 - 2023	127

