



## **ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINE**

Title: **SAFE SCHOOLS: Bear Protocol**

**Effective Date: December, 2008**

**Responsibility: Superintendent of  
Program and Schools**

While this is a “bear” protocol, it is understood that it applies to any wildlife deemed to be potentially dangerous to students and staff. This would include cougars, rattlesnakes, etc.

The following procedures have been put into place at Near North District School Board to ensure the safety and protection of all staff and students from the potentially precarious situation that exists with bears and humans.

As a precautionary measure, during the months of September, October, April, May, and June when bear sightings are highest, all staff who are responsible for outdoor supervision of pupils during the school day are required to have a whistle with them at all times. A bear drill procedure shall be conducted at least twice per year, early in September and March.

### **A. BEAR WARNINGS**

If the authorities, a parent or community member notifies the school that a bear has been sighted in the vicinity of the school:

- The secretary will phone the proper authorities to get accurate information and advice regarding the bear sighting.
- To report bear problems call 1-866-514-2327 or North Bay MNR District Bear Wise Program Office: 475-5543 (March – December, during business hours – 8:00 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.)

#### **In an immediate emergency call: 911**

- The principal upon verification of a bear sighting from the proper authorities or with a clear understanding that the animal is in the vicinity will inform all students and staff about the bear sighting.

Our mission is to educate learners to their fullest potential in preparation for life-long learning.

## **B. BEAR SIGHTINGS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY**

### **I. DURING THE SCHOOL DAY:**

- If a bear is sighted immediately outside of the fenced area that borders the school property or within the school grounds while students are outside at recess nutrition break or lunch hour, staff members on supervision duty will blow their whistle three times as a warning to the students.
- Upon hearing the warning the students must immediately walk slowly off the playground area and go directly into the school. The supervisor on duty must ensure that all students have vacated the school playground. **Students and staff should not run as this could encourage a bear to give chase.**
- Students must enter the school immediately and proceed quietly to their classrooms.
- All staff and students working within the school during the warning must also proceed immediately to their classrooms.
- All teaching staff are required to take attendance promptly and must notify the office that all students are present and accounted for.
- Proper authorities will be immediately be contacted by the secretary or principal/designate.
- If the problem bear still persists on school property during the day students will not be allowed to go outside or leave the school building unless supervised by a parent/guardian.

### **II. DURING SCHOOL DISMISSAL:**

- If the problem bear still persists on school property at dismissal time students who normally walk home will be picked up by their parents/guardians.
- The secretary will notify the transportation carrier to have students picked up at a safe entrance of the school.
- The principal/designate will be responsible for insuring the buses relocate to an alternate entrance of the school to pick up students if appropriate.

### **C. DUTIES OF THE PRINCIPAL WHEN A BEAR IS PRESENT:**

- Shall notify staff and students of dismissal procedures.
- Ensure staff remain with students until all students have been picked up by a parent/guardian or transported home by bus.
- All educational assistants who have no specific responsibilities with a special needs student, and teachers without classroom responsibilities at dismissal time, shall assist the principal with bus students at the appropriate entrance of the school.
- Bus students will be called down to a safe entrance, if appropriate, by the principal. Students will be escorted out to the bus by an adult.
- Make sure that yard supervisors carry a whistle during bear season.
- Ensure the no attractants (e.g. someone's leftover lunch) are left in the school yard.
- Conduct a bear drill in early September and March of each year.
- Review the bear procedure at September staff meeting. Copies are to be made for all staff.
- Ensure that staff and students are compliant with the bear protocol.

### **D. DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY WHEN A BEAR IS PRESENT:**

- Notify the proper authorities of bear sightings.
- Notify the transportation carrier to pick up students at the alternate entrance of the school.
- Activate the emergency phone list plan to notify parents/guardians of walkers who will need to be picked up at the school.
- The secretary will be responsible for answering any incoming telephone calls and relaying and messages to staff/students as required.

### **E. PREVENTION:**

- Reduce garbage odours
- Keep garbage in bear-proof containers (steel is best)

- Our mission is to educate learners to their fullest potential in preparation for life-long learning.
- Do not fill bird feeders until late Fall, and empty them in the spring when bears wake up from hibernation and are hungry.
- Refrain from planting trees and shrubs that bear fruit as bears are attracted to them.
- Keep picnic tables clean of lunches

For more information on bears visit the Ministry of Natural Resources website at [www.bears.mnr.gov.on.ca](http://www.bears.mnr.gov.on.ca).