



**DIVISION: PROGRAMS**

**Policy #: PROG-304**

**POLICY NAME**

TRAUMATIC/CRITICAL INCIDENTS

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**POLICY STATEMENT**

The Newfoundland and Labrador English School District (NLESD) is committed to supporting students and staff during traumatic incidents or crises and recognizes the need to provide for both their physical and emotional needs during those times. School-based crisis response teams will be established to assist students and staff in the event of a serious injury to, or in the death of, a member of the school community.

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**BACKGROUND**

Traumatic incidents or crises can have a profound impact on the school community. Such incidents can lead to grief, a breakdown of normal coping mechanisms and other complex reactions. Schools can and do play a critical role during and after a traumatic incident. In many cases the school becomes the focal point for students, staff and other members of the school community and school staff must be prepared to respond effectively during a crisis. As such, it is essential that all schools develop a pre-planned, systematic organizational model to provide appropriate supports and resources, to direct decisions, and to ensure a stable and orderly environment.

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**SCOPE**

This policy is applicable to administrators and all other staff in all schools and other buildings within the NLESD.

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**DEFINITIONS**

Critical Incident

A sudden, unexpected, often incomprehensible event that may be personally upsetting and could potentially result in emotional and physical distress. For example: an accident or injury, death of a student or staff member, a missing student, etc.

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**Effective:** September 1, 2014

**AMENDED:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Crisis

A situation that is unpredictable and traumatic.

### District Crisis Response Team

A group of district level staff who provide support to schools in the event of a crisis.

### School Community

The school community refers to the students, parents and other family members, and the NLESD staff who are all directly connected to the school system.

### School Crisis Response Team

A subcommittee of the Safe & Caring Schools Committee that is formed at the beginning of each school year and is responsible for responding to a crisis at the school level.

### School Crisis Response Kit

A compilation of resources, information and recommended items used by a school in the event of a crisis.

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## **POLICY DIRECTIVES**

1. Student Support Services staff shall ensure that a District Crisis Response Team is in place to support schools.
2. The Principal shall ensure this policy and the associated Administrative Procedures/Regulations are shared and discussed with staff as early as possible, but not later than October 15<sup>th</sup> in each school year.
3. The Principal shall ensure the formation of a School Crisis Response Team as early as possible but not later than October 15<sup>th</sup> in each school year.
4. The Principal shall ensure that a crisis response plan is in place and reviewed no later than October 15<sup>th</sup> each year.
5. In the event of a crisis, the Principal/designate will make contact with the District Crisis Response Team to engage support as deemed necessary by the School Crisis Response Team.
6. The Principal shall ensure that a School Crisis Response Kit is established and equipped as per the Administrative Procedures/Regulations outlined for this policy.
7. The Principal shall be responsible for notifying the Senior Education Officer for the school who will, in turn, notify the Director of Education and other designated District personnel of the incident. The Principal shall submit the required documentation..

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