



Video Surveillance in Schools, Facilities and School Buses

POLICY #: F-27

AUTHORITY: 99/25/12-176

POLICY REGULATIONS

Purpose:

To ensure that the use of video surveillance equipment in schools or on Board property supports the safety, security, and well being of students and staff and safeguards against vandalism, theft, damage and loss of property and complies with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act ("Act") and the Guidelines for Video Surveillance Cameras in Schools issued by the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario (July 2009, and as updated from time to time).

The Board has a responsibility to protect and safeguard the well-being of students, staff, volunteers and community members while at school or work or while engaged in school-related activities.

The guidelines have been developed to apply to situations where permanent video surveillance cameras have been placed on school property and/or school buses. The guidelines are not intended to deal with instances where school officials videotape specific events or an isolated instance where a classroom is videotaped for educational or research purposes.

1. Definitions:

- 1.1. Board Property includes school buildings, grounds, and facilities under the jurisdiction of the Board.
- 1.2. Video surveillance equipment refers to video, physical or other mechanical, electronic, or digital surveillance system or device that enables continuous or periodic video recording, observing, monitoring of individuals in school buildings and on school premises.
- 1.3. Personal information is defined as being recorded information about an identifiable individual, which includes, but is not limited to , information related to an individual's race, colour, national or ethnic origin, gender and age.
- 1.4. Covert surveillance is defined as the secret, continuous or periodic observations of persons, vehicles, places, or objects to obtain information concerning the activities of individuals which is then recorded in material form, including notes and photographs.

2. Comments and Guidelines:

- 2.1. Video surveillance is to be used to accomplish three important goals in the NCDSB:
 - 2.1.1. To enhance the safety of students, staff and all school community members.
 - 2.1.2. To protect Board property against theft and vandalism.
 - 2.1.3. To assist in identification of intruders.
- 2.2. The Board recognizes both the legal obligation to provide appropriate levels of supervision in the interests of student safety and the fact that students have privacy rights that are reduced but not eliminated while the students are under the supervision of the school.
 - 2.2.1 The board also recognizes the fact that staff and visitors also have privacy rights that are reduced but not eliminated while on school board property.
- 2.3. The Board shall provide authorization for the use and control of video surveillance equipment on Board property, both exterior and interior, where circumstances have shown that it is necessary and the benefits outweigh the impact on privacy of those observed.
- 2.4. Video surveillance shall be considered for a school only after other means of deterrence have been shown to be ineffective.
- 2.5. Staff, students, parents, and the school council shall be consulted on the use of cameras on school property.
- 2.6. Information obtained from video surveillance equipment shall only be used for the protection of students, staff, and the public or in assisting in the detection and deterrence of criminal activity and/or vandalism.
- 2.7. Video surveillance shall not be used for the purpose of monitoring staff performing their assigned duties.
- 2.8. The Director of Education and/or their designate (ex Privacy Information Management, PIM Coordinator) shall be responsible for the Board's compliance with the Board's privacy obligations under the Act and this policy.
- 2.9. Each site/school using video surveillance equipment must follow, as outlined in Administrative Procedure APT-004, a process to respond appropriately to any breach in privacy or any inadvertent disclosure of personal information.
- 2.10. Employees shall be subject to discipline for knowingly or deliberately breaching the policy or provisions of the Act or other relevant statutes.
- 2.11. Use of surveillance cameras by school bus operators and other service contractors shall be subject to this policy.

- 2.12. Service providers shall be subject to penalties leading up to and including contract termination for knowingly or deliberately breaching the policy or provisions of the Act or other relevant statutes.
- 2.13. The only personnel who may view the videotapes or digital files in the schools are the Director of Education and/or their designate, the Superintendents, the Principals and/or their designates, the Manager of Information Technology and/or their designates, the Manager of Plant and Facilities and/or their designates, the Police Services or other NCDSB staff where necessary in the performance of their duties and only for the purpose outlined in 2.1 above.
- 2.14. An independent review and assessment, of the video surveillance program, to ascertain whether the program is still justified, shall be carried out at each school / facility by the Principals and the Director of Education and/or their designate, the Manager of Information Technology and the Manager of Plant and Facilities at least every three years.
- 2.15. Covert surveillance has the potential of being highly privacy invasive and must only be used as a last resort in a time limited, case specific circumstance. These guidelines do not apply to covert surveillance or surveillance used as a case specific investigation tool for law enforcement purposes where there is a statutory authority and/or the authority of a search warrant to conduct the surveillance.
- 2.16. Where applicable and appropriate, the policy and administrative procedure shall be incorporated into training and orientation programs of the Board and service providers.
- 2.17. The Director of Education is authorized to issue such procedures as may be necessary to implement this policy.

3. REFERENCES:

- 3.1. The Education Act. 2000, 315 (1)
- 3.2. Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 1989
- 3.3. Guidelines for Using Video Surveillance Cameras in Schools, Dec. 2003 / Jul. 2009
- 3.4. Guidelines for Government Organizations: What to do if a privacy breach occurs, 2006
- 3.5. Safe Schools – Prevention of Violence (Policy G-04)
- 3.6. Board Equipment Policy (Policy F-34)
- 3.7. Workplace Violence Prevention (Policy F-13)
- 3.8. Police-School Board Protocol (APE-001)
- 3.9. Video Surveillance Administrative Procedure (APT-004)