

Definition of Disruption

For this Framework, disruption refers to any extreme behaviour exhibited by a student (such as throwing objects, hitting, kicking and/or behaviours that result in a room clear or a shelter in place). This behaviour is notable because it is either heard or seen by others and occurs in shared environments such as classrooms, hallways, bathrooms, workspaces, playgrounds, or during field trips. These disruptions impact the learning environment, social-emotional climate of the setting, and the health and safety of students and staff.

Preamble

In our school and district, we recognize that dysregulation is a normal aspect of human behaviour. There are times when dysregulation may manifest as disruptive behavior that can be unexpected, loud, shocking, or unsafe. These disruptive behaviors are not indicative of a student's character or inherent worth. We understand that dysregulation can stem from a myriad of factors, and its presentation may vary from one student to another.

As an organization committed to learning, safety, and care, our goal is to create a clear and consistent framework that supports every member of our community: students, staff, and parents/guardians. This framework is designed to guide staff and students through moments of disruption with understanding, compassion, discretion, and appropriate next steps. It also provides parents/guardians with an understanding of how disruptions will be addressed and responded to in the school. By acknowledging the complexity and unpredictability of dysregulation, we aim to foster an environment where each student's needs are met, where both students and staff feel supported during challenging moments, and where parents/guardians are provided with appropriate information to be able to follow up and support their child(ren).

Response Framework

Response for the student who disrupted the learning environment	• The immediate response to the behaviour will follow the student's safety/behaviour plan. • If there is no safety/behaviour plan to inform the response, staff will either support the student from the environment using the Crisis Prevention Institute/Ukeru Systems techniques or remove students/staff from the immediate area to maintain safety. • The student will be given a structured opportunity and space to de-escalate in a designated area with support as needed and as appropriate for staff safety. • Arrangements will be made for the student to go home for the remainder of the day.
Response for the students who may have been impacted by the disruption	A teacher (preferably the classroom teacher) will facilitate a restorative circle discussion to provide space for students (those who were in the space of the disruption and those who heard/witnessed the disruption) to process the incident. Circle Introduction: <i>"We witnessed/heard/saw a disruption in our class/school community. We are a community that takes care of one another. We have come together in this circle to reflect on what happened, share how we are feeling, and discuss what we need to move forward."</i> Circle Prompts: ◦ <i>"How did you feel during the disruption, or how are you feeling now?"</i> ◦ <i>"What do you need right now to feel safe and supported?"</i> ◦ <i>"How can we support each other moving forward?"</i> Closing Reflection: <i>"Your thoughts and feelings are important. It's okay to continue having emotions about what happened. Let's brainstorm who you can talk to if you need support moving forward. Remember, you can also talk with your parents or caregivers at home."</i>

Response for the staff who were impacted by the disruption	A member of the school leadership team will connect with impacted staff to: • See how they are doing and what they might need with prompts such as: ◦ <i>“How did you feel during the disruption and how are you feeling now?”</i> ◦ <i>“What do you need right now to feel safe and supported?”</i> • Review what is and will be occurring for the student: for the remainder of the day and re-entry, and a review of applicable plans. • The staff member will be reminded of their right to complete a Threat Violence Report (TVR) and reminded of the supports available to them (provide the document that lists supports available).
Communication to the parents/guardians of the student who caused the disruption (phone call, virtual, or in-person)	Principal or vice-principal will contact the parent/guardian to communicate: • What occurred. • Next steps for the student and family. That the child needs to be picked up immediately and if there are any class/school events that the child will miss.
It is understood that the next points may have to occur at a time separate from the above depending on the circumstances and need for additional information	Additional follow-up with the family: • Actions taken to support the students and staff affected by the disruption. • A summary of what will be shared with the families of impacted students. • Share what the re-entry plan will be.
Communication to the parents/guardians of students who may have been impacted by the disruption (by email after student has been dismissed)	The principal or designate will provide a neutral, informative message: <i>“Today, there was a disruption in your child’s learning environment. We discussed what happened, and students were encouraged to share their thoughts and feelings, with the following prompts:</i> • <i>‘How did you feel during the disruption, or how are you feeling now?’</i> • <i>‘What do you need right now to feel safe and supported?’</i> • <i>‘How can we support each other moving forward?’</i> <i>We wanted to ensure you are aware of this and have the opportunity to follow up with your child as you see appropriate.</i> <i>We appreciate that this email may create additional questions and we encourage you to discuss with your child what occurred from their perspective. Due to privacy, we are limited in what we can share with you. If you do have questions related to your child in this situation, please ask the principal/vice-principal.”</i>
Before returning to the learning environment, the student will engage in a re-entry process focused on understanding the impact of the behaviour(s) demonstrated and repairing harm. If the student has a safety plan, it will be reviewed and changes will be made as needed. If the student does not have a safety plan, discussions will take place to determine if one is required.	

Strategy to bring the student and staff back together as part of the re-entry process	This step needs to occur before the student returns to their classroom or program. There is flexibility in how this step occurs to ensure it is developmentally appropriate and safe for students and staff; however, a re-entry and repair process must occur. Strategy 1 • Staff share one way they were impacted by the disruption using I statements. ◦ For example: ◦ <i>“I was scared when...”</i> ◦ <i>“I was hurt when...”</i> ◦ <i>“I was worried when...”</i> • The student re-entering shares: ◦ How they were impacted by the disruption. ◦ What they are going to do to have a positive day. • Staff members share: ◦ How they will support the student in having a successful re-entry. Strategy 2 A discussion focused on repairing the relationship between staff and the students. • How are you feeling about what happened? • How are you feeling about going back? • What do you need for today to be a successful day? Staff share using I statements. The questions above are prompts to support the discussion with the student.
Strategy to support the student and their peers to come back together	Upon the student’s return, a re-entry process with their peers is recommended. The school team will determine how it will occur to create a safe and positive re-entry (with one peer, two peers, or a small group). Re-entry Circle Prompts: • Up to three students express their feelings using I statements (e.g., <i>“I felt scared when the classroom was cleared.”</i>) • The student re-entering shares their own I statement(s) about how the disruption affected them. • The student re-entering shares their hope or intention for the day. One peer shares a hope or intention for the day to foster a sense of community and belonging.

FAQ for Principals and School Staff: Framework for Responding to Disruptions

Why are we implementing this framework?

To ensure consistent, compassionate, and safety-centered responses to disruptive behaviours in shared learning environments. This framework provides clarity for staff, support for students, and confidence for families that challenging situations are being handled with care and professionalism.

How does this framework align with our broader commitments to inclusion, equity, and student well-being?

It recognizes that dysregulation is a normal part of being human and not a reflection of a student's worth. It supports individual student needs while also maintaining the safety and emotional well-being of the broader learning environment.

How does this support staff safety while still being trauma-informed and restorative?

The framework emphasizes de-escalation, structured re-entry, and clear communication. Staff are supported in responding to dysregulated student behaviour in ways that preserve dignity and reduce harm.

How was this framework developed?

The framework was developed by a district-level committee that included representatives from CUPE, MRTA, MRPVPA, DPAC, and the Superintendent of Schools.

What qualifies as a “disruption” under this framework?

Any extreme behaviour that jeopardizes the physical or emotional safety of others and results in actions such as room clears or shelter-in-place protocols.

What should staff do if there is no safety or behaviour plan in place for the student?

Use general de-escalation strategies, ensure the safety of others, and involve administration to coordinate next steps.

Is the student always expected to go home for the day following a disruption?

Not always, but this is often the case when safety has been compromised. It allows time for regulation, planning, and communication with families.

What does a “re-entry” process involve?

Reflection, acknowledgment of impact, and a shared plan for a positive return. It may include check-ins with staff and peers, and must occur before the student returns to their classroom or program.

What happens if a student refuses to participate in the re-entry process?

Flexibility is important. Staff should continue offering opportunities for reconnection and use developmentally appropriate language and supports.

Who contacts the parents or guardians after a disruption?

The principal or vice-principal contacts the family of the student who caused the disruption as soon as possible.

What should be shared with families of impacted students?

A neutral, informative message that acknowledges the disruption and invites families to follow up with their child and the school if needed.

How do we support classroom staff and students affected by the disruption?

Through restorative conversations, emotional check-ins, and participation in the re-entry process. Follow-up supports can be individualized based on need.

What if a parent is upset that their child was exposed to a disruption?

Acknowledge their concern, share the steps taken to ensure safety and restoration, and reinforce the school's commitment to care and communication.