

## **WILDLIFE INCIDENTS AT SCHOOLS**

### **Background**

Given the close proximity of many School District 72 schools to forested areas, it is important that staff and students be aware of how to respond to wildlife sightings (i.e. – bears, cougars, etc.) in the interest of safety.

### **Procedures**

#### **1. Student Safety**

- 1.1 At the first word of a wildlife sighting at or in close proximity of a school, the principal will take precautions to ensure student safety as appropriate to their level of school. Examples may include increased supervision on the playground, students kept out of fields and away from treed areas or in the gym during recess.
- 1.2 Specific consideration should be given to students with mobility challenges and/or special needs.
- 1.3 Safety precautions should remain in place for the remainder of the day unless otherwise informed.

#### **2. Notification**

- 2.1 The principal and/or designate is to report the sighting to conservation officers (Wildlife Conservation Office 1-877-952-7277). Be sure to request that they provide the school district with updates. If there is an immediate threat (i.e. the animal is presently on the playground) the school should also call the RCMP.
- 2.2 Immediately after notifying the Conservation Office, and if necessary the RCMP, the principal and/or designate is to notify the superintendent of schools. Be prepared to provide all the facts: the time of the sighting, the location, what authorities have been notified, if the authorities are on scene, and what precautions have been put in to place.
- 2.3 The superintendent's office will notify the appropriate surrounding School District 72 schools and the maintenance operations department.
- 2.4 The school principal, or designate will notify any on-site daycares and/or strong start programs.
- 2.5 The school principal, or designate is to notify the superintendent of schools of any changes or new developments.

#### **3. Communication with Parents**

- 3.1 A wildlife special announcement is to be activated on the school website. This can contain the same information as 3.2 (letter to parents).

- 3.2 A letter to parents should be sent home with students that day. If the incident occurs at the end of the day, a letter should be sent home as soon as possible the next day. Communicate the facts, and provide information about any safety precautions put in place (SD72 Form 123-1 Wildlife Alert).
- 3.3 Should there be concerns with transportation, schools will contact parents.

Related Forms: [SD72 Form 123-1 Wildlife Alert](#)