

## *Hello from the Caring and Safe Schools Team!*

We want to thank all Principals and Vice-Principals for all of their hard work in making sure their schools were not only caring but also safe during the last school year. As we look to this year, we are encouraged and excited about the work that all of you are doing in developing positive school climates. We know that school climate is dependent on meaningful relationships, is what prevents incidents in schools and bolsters student and staff morale. Our department is not only there to advise in situations that involve discipline, we are also there to help with ideas for creating positive school climates.

## School Climate

School Climate can be defined as the environment, values and relationships found within a school. A positive school climate exists when all members of the school community feel safe, included, and accepted and actively promote positive behaviours and interactions. Equity, inclusion and respect are critical components embedded in the learning environment.

Building and sustaining a positive school climate is a complex challenge requiring evidence-informed solutions. A whole-school approach involving all education and community partners is needed to bring about necessary systemic change.

The following are some characteristics of a positive school climate:

- Students, staff and parents feel safe, and are safe, included and accepted.
- All members of the school community demonstrate respect, fairness and kindness in their interactions, building healthy relationships that are free from discrimination and harassment.
- Students are encouraged and given support to be positive leaders and role models in their school community.
- Open and ongoing dialogue takes place between the principal, staff, parents and students. All partners are actively engaged.
- The learning environment, instructional materials and teaching and assessment strategies reflect the diversity of all learners.
- Every student is inspired and given support to succeed in an environment of high expectations.
- Bullying prevention and awareness-raising strategies for students and staff are reinforced through curriculum-linked programs.

## DID YOU KNOW?

The third Sunday of every November is the start of Bullying Awareness month. Most schools are well on their way in implementing **Bill 13**, [the] **Accepting Schools Act** and bullying prevention and intervention strategies. If you have not already, this is a good time to establish your bullying awareness, prevention and intervention plans in your school. A great place to start these conversations is at your monthly meetings with your Caring, Safe and Accepting Schools Team.



**This year the Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week is:  
November 15-21, 2015**

### Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plans

A caring, safe, inclusive and accepting school climate is essential for student achievement and well-being. For students to reach their full potential, they must feel safe, included and engaged in school. Schools are required to have a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. This Plan should be part of your School Improvement Plan (SIP) in the Community Culture and Caring pillar. Elements of a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan include:

- Education, Awareness and Outreach;
- The use of data to assess, monitor, evaluate and update;
- The use of TDSB Policies and Procedures;
- Prevention Strategies; and
- Intervention and Support Strategies

Our Caring and Safe Schools Leadership team below looks forward to working with you.



### Contact Us

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Our team is also made up of Caring and Safe Schools Advisors, Child and Youth Counsellors and Court Liaison Workers who we rely greatly on in supporting schools, parents and students.

**Your skill testing question on Policies and Procedures for this month is:**

**What are PR 697 and PR 703?**

(Keep track of your score during the school year to see how you do) ☺