



September 2019

Dear Parent/Guardian:

In TDSB schools and classrooms across the city, students and staff are establishing the foundations for a successful year. One of the ways we know we can help students be successful is to create a safe environment in which to learn. Though no-one ever wants to see an emergency happen at a school, it's important for school staff to be equipped to deal with those situations, should these occur.

Equally important is the need for parents/guardians to be informed if an emergency should ever occur and to have as clear as possible an understanding of what is happening at their child's school.

The Board's Safe and Caring Schools Team recently undertook the task of updating the Board's Threats to School Safety Procedure to provide a better framework to help prepare schools to effectively manage emergencies and to reflect a significant change in the terminology associated with lockdown procedures.

The change in *lockdown* terminology was done to provide some clarity on the meaning of common terms associated with the procedure and reduce the panic that parents/guardians often feel when they hear their child's school is in lockdown.

The revised terminology is now being implemented at the TDSB and will be used by all schools in conjunction with the Toronto Police Service. The revised terms are as follows:

- **Hold and Secure** - The term Partial Lockdown has been replaced with the term Hold and Secure. Hold and secure means that all movement in and out of the school is restricted, however movement within the school is not restricted and the external danger near the school poses no immediate threat to the students or staff unless they leave the building.
- **Lockdown** - A lockdown is the most serious response to a threat to school safety and should be used only when the danger is inside the school or on school property and poses an immediate and serious threat to staff and students.

The updated *Threats to School Safety Procedure* (PR.695) is available on the Safe and Caring Schools webpage on the Board's website at www.tdsb.on.ca.

The TDSB is committed to making each and every one of our schools caring places that are safe for learning and a part of that commitment is keeping our parents/guardians informed.

Sincerely

Michael Harvey
Principal