Caring & Safe Schools

March 2015 Issue #5

Caring and Safe Schools Celebrates Student Success

Twenty students were recently honoured by the TDSB's Caring and Safe Schools Office at a recognition lunch for overcoming challenges and getting back on track for success. Most have transitioned back to school programs after receiving support through Caring and Safe Schools Programs following a variety of issues and setbacks. Many are now ready to graduate this year or next and looking forward to exploring a number of exciting opportunities for the future.

Five students from each quadrant of the TDSB were selected by Caring and Safe Schools staff. Selections were based on criteria such as success in accumulating credits, conflict resolution using various strategies, accessing appropriate supports and resources, involvement in extracurricular activities and regular attendance.

Students and their guests heard an inspirational message from keynote speaker Kevin King. Kevin King told the students that hard work would reap benefits over the long haul, sharing a story about the Chinese bamboo tree, which doesn't grow much in its first several years, despite attentive watering and fertilization. Then, in year 5 of the growth cycle, the tree takes off within a few weeks. "So did it take 6 weeks to grow so much or 5 years?" he asked. "We think what we see is real, but there's stuff going on that we can't see," he told them. "You have to be patient and believe in what you want to achieve and it will happen."

It is important to recognize and celebrate students' success. Each student, in their own way, has made positive changes that will impact their lives. These young men and women, with support from positive role models both inside and outside of school, are speaking up, taking control of their own lives and being the architects of their own futures.

A special thanks to the Caring and Safe Schools staff who organized this event.

Congratulations Everyone!

Q & A: Contacting Parents/Guardian of Students Involved in an Incident that Impacted School Climate

Q. Can principals tell the parents of victims that the student who harmed their child has been suspended or expelled?
A. Yes. In fact principals are required to inform the parents of victims of:
(a) the nature of the activity that resulted in harm to the pupil;
(b) the nature of the harm to the pupil; and
(c) the steps taken to protect the pupil's safety, including the nature of any disciplinary measures taken in response to the activity.

Q. Is there anything that the principals cannot tell the parents of a victim?
A. Yes. The Education Act states that the principal shall not disclose the name of or any other identifying or personal information about a student who engaged in the activity that resulted in the harm. For example, a principal may share that the aggressor received a suspension or that his/her parents have been called, but must not share information regarding a referral to counselling or any other personal information.
Source: "Safe Schools Questions and Answers" - Ministry of Education (May 2010):

Please click here for full Q & A http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/memos/may2010/Bill157_QsAs.pdf

School Climate Surveys

Every two years, as required by the Ministry of Education, students, staff and parents/guardians are able to complete a school climate survey. The information shared in this survey data is then used to assist each school, to establish plans for bullying prevention and intervention, progressive discipline and can inform the school code of conduct.

This year, between March and June 2015, Grade 7-12 students will complete the TDSB's online Student School Climate Survey. As well, during this time, schools will invite parents/guardians/caregivers and all school staff to complete the TDSB's online School Climate Surveys for parents and staff. Please work with your school staff and parent community to ensure that your survey results reflect as many voices as possible.

Non-Discretionary and Discretionary Student Transfers PR. 540

At times, it is necessary for a student to be moved from their current school to another school where they can continue their education. Moves, such as these, can be disruptive and cause distress in the lives of our students and their families. The Toronto District School Board has a procedure that details when these moves are to occur, who is involved in these moves and how these moves are to occur.

It is important to remember that no student sets out to be transferred under this procedure. While the circumstances surrounding any transfer may be concerning, Caring and Safe Schools staff take the responsibility of facilitating these transfers seriously and endeavour to find an appropriate placement for students involved in this process based on their strengths and needs.

Information surrounding the need for these transfers is shared with the receiving school Principal. In turn, that Principal is to determine what information will be shared with the appropriate staff in their school.

School administrators are asked to take time to review PR 540 Non-Discretionary and Discretionary Student Transfers as part of their regular review of TDSB Policies and Procedures. Should you have any questions about the information found within this procedure please do not hesitate to discuss them with your area Caring and Safe Schools Administrator.

Caring and Safe Schools Professional Learning Opportunities

Principals and Vice Principals are required to participate in the training exercise ***Understanding Bill 13, "the Accepting Schools Act" and Bullying Prevention and Intervention*** which can be accessed through KEY to Learn.

We are pleased to inform you that, in conjunction with TPS and TCDSB, we have been given ten spaces per session for Principals or Vice-Principals to attend Threat Assessment Awareness Training. The dates for these sessions are April 13, 2015 and April 23, 2015. There is no coverage available. If you are interested in attending please email Donna Day at donna.day@tdsb.on.ca to reserve your spot. Spaces will be allocated on a first come first serve basis. All of the sessions are being offered at the TCDSB A.P.P.L.E. Program site at 55 Salisbury Ave., Toronto.

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