

MEMO TO: Superintendents, System Leads, Elementary Principals, Secondary Principals, Elementary Vice-Principals, Secondary Vice-Principals

FROM: Gary Crossdale, Superintendent of Education, Positive School Climates

RE: School Climate/Well-Being Surveys, Violence Risk Assessment Tool – Education Sector, and Positive School Climate Teams

DATE: August 30, 2022

School Climate/Well-Being Surveys, Violence Risk Assessment Tool – Education Sector, and Positive School Climate Teams

Positive School Climates are complex. They are created and maintained with a school commitment to a Whole School Approach.

As outlined in PPM 145, Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour, each school must complete an anonymous School Climate/Well-Being Survey of their students, staff and parents every two years.

The School Climate/Well-Being Surveys: for Student, Parents/Guardians and Staff are tools that assist the Positive School Climates School Team to identify safety issues within the school, in particular the extent of bullying concerns. All surveys will be administered electronically. The School Climate/Well-Being Survey for Students will be administered at school. Time should be provided for staff to complete the School Climate/Well-Being Survey for Staff within the regular constructs, such as at a staff meeting. Parents should be provided with an electronic link in order to complete the School Climate/Well-Being Survey for Parents/Guardians. To support the completion of this survey, schools should consider having computer stations set up at Curriculum or Interview Night. The results of surveys should be shared with staff and parents (for example, the SCC) to gather further input. In addition, the Positive School Climates Schools Team should consider conducting student focus groups to obtain additional information. The resource for [Facilitating Focus Groups](#) is available on SPARK - Accountability & Assessment.

In addition, schools can use questions from the surveys to assess their Well-Being goal(s) during years when the School Climate/Well-Being Surveys are not being implemented. For more information on how to access questions from the surveys, please contact the Accountability and Assessment Department.

Violence Risk Assessment Tool-Education Sector (Site Specific)

Rationale:

A risk assessment is a process of hazard identification, analysis and risk evaluation. A Risk Assessment should be a living document that reflects the current conditions at the work place. In the context of an educational setting this includes the population of the building.

Description:

The Violence Risk Assessment Tool has a number of components that will provide a snapshot of immediate risks to workers in the workplace. The components include, Building Demographics, Nature of the Workplace, Type of Work and Conditions of Work. The tool consists of a checklist and a score system that would determine the level of risk. The checklist is similar to previous Safe Schools Audits used by many schools.

Process:

It is recommended that Positive School Climates Schools Team conduct a Violence Risk Assessment a minimum of once a year. It is highly recommended to complete additional assessments when any working conditions change (population of building, addition of classrooms.)

The Principal will be responsible for completing the Tool through eBASE. The Violence Risk Assessment Tool is housed in the same area as the Health and Safety Workplace Inspection Documents on eBASE. Principals will get an email notification when to initiate the process. The Principal should complete the Violence Risk Assessment Tool with a team consisting of representation from all educational workgroups in the building (collaborative professional input re: PPM159.)

Upon completion, the results will be shared with the Joint Health and Safety Committee.

The results of the assessment should also be shared with workers in the building. The team should address any immediate safety concerns and develop an action plan to address the hazard(s) in order to mitigate risk.

Note: The Workplace Health and Safety Inspection is similar but not the same as the Violence Risk Assessment Tool.

Positive School Climates School Teams (formerly Safe and Accepting Schools Teams)

Schools should strive to ensure that the composition of the Positive School Climates Schools Team reflects the diversity of their school community. When that occurs, the Positive School Climates Schools Team is more likely to create a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, informed by a more comprehensive viewpoint.

Each Positive School Climates Schools Team should include at least one representative from the following groups:

- Teacher
- Student (mandatory for secondary schools)
- Parent e.g., a representative of the School Council
- School staff member (non-teaching, ideally have all workgroups represented)
- School Equity Representative
- School administrator (Principal or Vice-Principal)
- Community Partner

Positive School Climate Teams should also feel free to include other community members, such as a representative from the local police, as deemed appropriate by the school team.

School Climate/Well-Being Surveys

The surveys include Well-Being indicators to support schools in shaping their school learning plans.. Questions from the previous Attitudinal Survey have also been incorporated into the Student School Climate/Well-Being Survey. In addition, during the years that the School Climate/Well-Being surveys aren't being conducted, schools will be able to use questions to assess the progress of work being completed through their school learning plans.

The School Climate/Well-Being Surveys will be available to schools once every two years. This allows for multiple opportunities for implementation, e.g., Staff Meetings and Parent Interviews to engage students, staff and parents.

Who Participates:

- All students in Grades 4 to 12 are eligible to participate in the survey
- In Secondary Schools at least 25% of the student population needs to be surveyed with representation from each grade and ability levels
- All Staff and Parents/Guardians are eligible to participate
- Surveys will be included on Student Chromebooks and other students (Grade 4 to 6) should have access to a computer with assigned links to complete the survey

When:

- If a school has an extenuating circumstance, and wishes an exemption they may request to conduct the survey during an off-year by contacting the System Lead for Positive School Climates. The same process applies if a school wishes to extend the time that the survey is open for completion
- Links will be sent to each school at a date to be determined during the year of implementation
- Each school's survey will be open for a specific time period that will be determined during the year of implementation - the surveys will be open for a minimum of three weeks

Process:

- Principals will receive the links to their school's surveys - once received, the surveys are ready for implementation
- Each school will be assigned their own specific links to the survey - copy and paste the school specific links, and then make it available on the computer(s) that the students, staff or parents will be using to complete the survey (Refer to TIPS for Implementation Handout)

School Climate/Well-Being Survey for Parents/Guardians and Staff

The Positive School Climates Department, in collaboration with the Accountability and Assessment Department also creates School Climate/Well-Being Surveys for Parents/Guardians and Staff for use in the Durham District School Board. Like the School Climate/Well-Being Survey for Students, the School Climate/Well-Being Surveys for Parents/Guardians and Staff are created to assist Positive School Climate Teams to gather data to help make decisions in creating, maintaining and improving safe and caring learning environments for all students.

The School Climate/Well-Being Surveys for Parents/Guardians and Staff will be distributed in the same years as the School Climate/Well-Being Survey for Students.

VIOLENCE RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL - EDUCATION SECTOR

Rationale:

A risk assessment is a process of hazard identification, analysis and risk evaluation. A Risk Assessment should be a living document that reflects the current conditions at the work place. In the context of an educational setting this includes the population of the building.

Description:

The Violence Risk Assessment Tool has a number of components that will provide a snapshot of immediate risks to workers in the workplace. The components include, Building Demographics, Nature of the Workplace, Type of Work and Conditions of Work. The tool consists of a checklist and a score system that would determine the level of risk. The checklist is similar to previous Safe Schools Audits used by many schools.

Process:

It is recommended that School Teams conduct a Violence Risk Assessment a minimum of once year. It is highly recommended to complete additional assessments when any working conditions change (population of building,

addition of classrooms). The Principal will be responsible for completing the Tool through Ebase. The Violence Risk Assessment Tool is housed in the same area as the Health and Safety Workplace Inspection Documents on EBase. Principals will get an email notification when to initiate the process. The principal should complete the Violence Risk Assessment Tool with a team consisting of representation from all educational workgroups in the building (collaborative professional input re: PPM159).

Upon completion the results will be shared with the Joint Health and Safety Committee.

The results of the assessment should also be shared with workers in the building. Your individual site based Action Plan should be completed to address any areas of concern/hazards from your assessment. The team should address any immediate safety concerns and develop an action plan to address the hazard(s) in order to mitigate risk. The School Action Plan should be printed and posted on your Health and Safety Board.

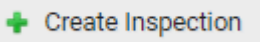
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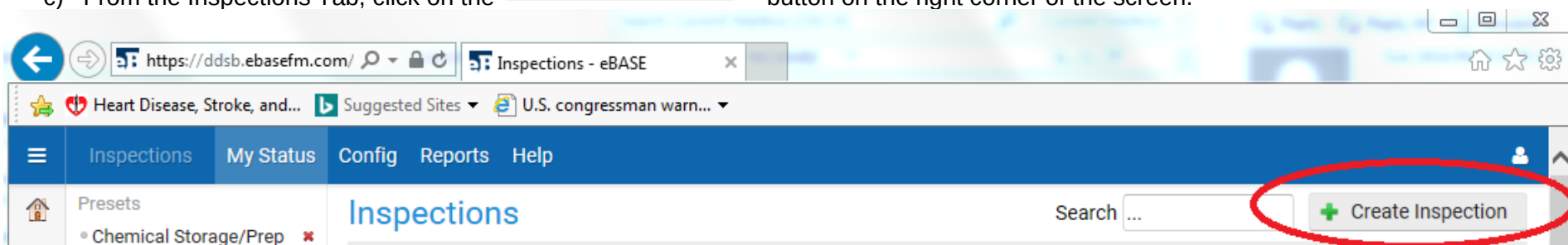
eBase Instructions:

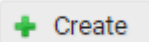
1. Access eBase by typing ddsb.ebasefm.com on your web browser or using the link below: <https://ddsb.ebasefm.com/inspections>
2. You will be prompted to enter your Board login ID and password then directed to the inspection page on eBase (or click on inspection tab).
3. Locate the Violence Risk Assessment Tool Inspection for your school dated Oct. 01, 2020 from the list of Inspections and click on it.
4. Complete all required information on the Assessment Check List and the Overall Rating section of the Assessment.

5. For each item in Section A (Assessment Checklist) that was answered with a “No”, please enter the item in Section B (Action Plan) and complete your School Action Plan to address all areas of concern.
6. Click on “**Submit for Review**”, once you have reviewed the information and are content with the answers, then click on “**Complete**” to finalize the Inspection.

Please note, should Risk parameters at your school change, please create and complete a new inspection by:

- a) Following steps 1-2 from above
- b) Assign to “Open to configure users” and indicate the due date
- c) From the Inspections Tab, click on the  button on the right corner of the screen.



- d) From the dropdown list in the Template field, select the “Violence Risk Assessment Tool” template.
- a) Choose the Facility from the drop down List (if applicable)
- b) Assign it to “open to configured users” and indicate the Due Date
- c) Click on  button on the right corner and the new Inspection Report will appear.
- d) Complete the required information, and click on the “**Submit for Review**” button.
- e) Once you are content with the answers, click on the “**COMPLETE**” button.