Proactive Bullying Prevention

Bullying prevention is a collective responsibility embedded within the daily life, routines and learning environments that shape school culture. Safe, caring and inclusive spaces are intentionally nurtured by amplifying student voice, teaching social-emotional skills and ensuring every student experiences a deep sense of value and connection. The following reflection questions are intended to support school teams in our ongoing commitment to upholding Human Rights and Indigenous Rights, identities, well-being, kindness, connection and community and safe learning environments throughout the school year.

Reflection Questions:

- How are community-building routines and regular check-ins fostering trusting relationships, and what evidence do we have that they are helping address patterns of disproportionality identified in the HDSB and our school data?
- In what ways are students actively co-designing classroom agreements, norms, routines and expectations so that they have opportunities to build conflict resolution, authentic relationships and problem-solving skills?
- How are we explicitly teaching, recognizing and nurturing kindness, perspective taking and empathy in all of our classrooms and throughout the school community (such as active inclusion, respectful communication, helping others and conflict resolution)?
- Is mental-health literacy being consistently taught, modelled and expected in all classrooms (i.e., explicitly teaching social-emotional vocabulary, identification and management of emotions, and self-regulation techniques), and how do we know?

Some Examples Include:

- Staff will embed one inclusive community-building routine (morning meetings, circles, check-ins, partner activities) into daily practice.
- Staff will dedicate the first 10 minutes of the week to a collaborative, student-led review of classroom norms, allowing students to anonymously or publicly suggest adjustments.
- Staff will dedicate the final 5 minutes of each day to an intentional recognition routine (such as peer-to-peer shout-outs, kindness circles, or an appreciation board) where students identify, celebrate and uphold the shared values of empathy, active inclusion, and collaboration.
- Staff are explicitly teaching identity-affirming social-emotional vocabulary by co-creating and integrating mental-health classroom resources (e.g., visual representation, anchor charts, UDL strategies).
- All classes will create space in the week to integrate opportunities into the curriculum which foster connection, relationships, and having fun (between peers, classes, cohorts, etc.).

Action/Strategy Identified for Monitoring

- *Meet the students at the door of each classroom*
- *Staff to share a Google Form to share with students about what activities might be appealing for a wellness activity for students - ie. Plants near Mother's Day*
- *Attendance question as a way to build community*
- *Each teacher will co-create classroom expectations and norms*
- *Classrooms will build in intentional time to build relationships (teacher to students, student to student, etc)*
- *What does the ideal classroom "look like, feel like, sound like" - intentional co-constructing*
- *Destreaming committee - establish a routine to ensure clarity ie. agenda*
- *"Gamifying Learning"*
- *Intentional conversations and instructions for mental health strategies*
- *Creating a safe class community for students to share identities/stories*
- *Taking time to visit natural spaces as a way to support self-regulations strategies*
- *Getting to know each class as a unique collection of students who need different supports along the way*
- *Remembering what is "good for some, is good for all"*

Intervention Practices

Responsive and intervention strategies dictate how school communities mobilize the moment bullying or identity-based harm is observed, reported or suspected. In alignment with PPM No. 144 and in order to uphold Human Rights and Indigenous Rights, responsive action cannot simply be punitive or focused on compliance. It requires centering the safety and well-being of the impacted student, timely and appropriate communication with families, consistent with privacy and confidentiality requirements, applying bias-free progressive discipline, and considering relevant systemic factors that allowed the harm to occur.

Crucially, these interventions cannot happen in isolation. To foster genuine reconciliation and a healthy school climate, support must be integrated across all three impacted parties. This requires extending responsive practices to students who witnessed the incident by bolstering whole-class mental health literacy and well-being strategies - such as identifying emotions, stress management, coping and brain-aligned regulation – while explicitly reviewing clear pathways to school-based and community mental health supports through whole-class instruction.

In alignment with the HDSB Bullying Response Protocol and Ministry legislative requirements, all schools must implement and monitor the following core intervention and prevention practices after a bullying incident has occurred. Interventions cannot happen in isolation. To foster genuine reconciliation and a healthy school climate, support must be integrated with all three impacted parties.

- Respond to any student behaviour that is likely to have a negative impact on school climate or learning environments by following the steps of the HDSB Bullying Response Protocol.
- Provide responsive regular check-ins and ongoing support for students who have been harmed, students who engaged in bullying and students who witnessed the incidents, following the requirements of the HDSB Bullying Response Protocol.
    - *Examples Include:*
        - Bolster whole class mental health literacy and well-being strategies such as identifying emotions, stress management and coping, and brain-aligned regulation strategies
        - Review pathways to mental health support (such as accessing school-based support sessions or how to connect with community support) with whole class instruction.
- Identify the underlying microaggressions, lived experiences or behavioural drivers as contributing factors rather than simply punishing the surface action.

Reflection Questions:

- What actionable steps are we taking to help students and staff accurately identify bullying and discrimination, rather than minimizing these incidents as "just conflict"?
- How are we actively partnering with students to co-create plans that ensure they feel safe in the school community?
- How are we empowering and equipping students to safely intervene or speak up when they witness harm?
- Which specific social emotional skills (e.g., co-regulation, conflict resolution) need to be developed, and how can we embed this learning into whole-class instruction?
- How are we structuring the classroom environment to facilitate prosocial reentry and sustain long-term support?

School Goal Examples:	**Action/Strategy Identified for Monitoring**
• Following incidents of conflict or bullying, designated school staff will facilitate a structured conversation within three to five school days to address harm, support the student and monitor the effectiveness of the student safety plan. • Every classroom teacher will explicitly integrate evidence-informed mental health and well-being strategies (such as co-regulation routines, emotional literacy or adaptive coping strategies) into their daily practice, ensuring all students can identify and utilize at least two proactive self-regulation tools. • Every educator will embed at least one structured, inclusive community-building routine (such as morning meetings, community circles, daily check-ins, or collaborative partner activities) into their daily practice, utilizing these routines to ensure at least one intentional, positive interaction with every student daily while systematically identifying and prioritizing students who require additional connection and tier-two well-being support. • To prevent ongoing exclusion, students will receive a collaborative, student-responsive re-entry plan that explicitly connects them to at least one prosocial school opportunity (e.g., leadership roles, clubs, or structured mentorship) to rebuild a sense of belonging.	- *Incidents will be addressed in a timely manner within a reasonable amount of time - all parties will have the opportunity to share their story and understand the consequences (restorative practices) - target, bully and bystanders/witnesses/onlookers* - *Encourage staff to use 1 self-regulation strategy in the class and model it for the students* - *Provide a wellness bin to each classroom (or each department head gets one to encourage people to use it) - HLF grant?* - *Greeting each student outside the classroom each morning and welcoming them in* - *Re-entry plan includes intentional point person to provide support* - *Relationship rebuilding at the start of a semester if the year before didn't go well* - *Addressing specifically what "bullying is" – intent vs. impact*