



HASTINGS AND PRINCE EDWARD DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week – Planning Session

“MINUTES”

September 14, 2012



Members present: Eva Viola, Safe Schools CYC, Cathy Portt, Assistant Superintendent, Shelley Steele, Supervisor Safe Schools, Mandy Savery-Whiteway, Superintendent, Human Resources Support Services, Safe Schools, Heather Seres, Principal, Deseronto Public School, Wendy Sutherland, Safe Schools, Terry Swift, Children’s Aid Society, Donald Simmonds, Mental Health Leader, Suzanne Cox, North Hastings O.P.P. Alana Deubel, Central Hastings O.P.P., Hans Verbeek, Belleville Police Services, Stacey Cooper, Napanee O.P.P. Thelma Goodfellow, Trustee, Kerry Donnell, Communications Officer, Dave Allan, Director YMCA, Rebecca Chockly, Bayside Secondary School, Alexandra Milne-Gibson, Bayside Secondary School, Dave Templer, Loyalist College, Gillian McCurdy, Safe Workplace Coordinator, Julie Pohlman- Brogee, CYC Supervisor, Tammy Angelotis, Parent Representative, Maribeth deSnoo, Executive Director The Learning Foundation.

Regrets:

Erna Sorenson, Curriculum Coordinator, Therese McMahon, Curriculum Coordinator, Susan Davies, Curriculum Coordinator, Pierre Martin, ETFO Second Vice-president.

Resource:

Mandy Savery-Whiteway, Superintendent, Human Resources Support Services, Safe Schools, Cathy Portt, Assistant Superintendent, Shelley Steele, Supervisor Safe Schools, Wendy Sutherland, Safe Schools.

Minutes:

Dot Burshaw

Welcome:

Shelley Steele welcomed the committee and introduced Mandy Savery-Whiteway, Superintendent of Human Resources, Safe Schools. Superintendent Savery-Whiteway thanked the committee for taking time from their busy schedules to help lay plans for the upcoming Bullying Awareness and Prevention week and stated that the intent of today’s meeting was to collaborate and work together as a team. Introductions were made and Superintendent Savery-Whiteway welcomed Director of Education, Rob McGall.

Greetings:

Director McGall complimented the committee on their focus and awareness of bullying prevention. This awareness is extremely complex throughout the system and within the community. Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board is committed to providing programs and services to help each student reach full potential. The AiM System plan guides the system in attaining their goals and priorities. Each year the AiM System Plan becomes more refined through the hard work of administrators/staff/students and community partners.

Superintendent McGall explained that everyone's hard work in preparedness will set the stage for our students to achieve beyond their potential. The Ministry of Education also provides ongoing supports and components to make this journey for our students easier. It will enable them to become good, kind and caring citizens. He talked about implementation of full-day Junior Kindergarten and the impact it is already having on our students. Students will reach high levels of academic achievement from the ground up. This board will create a culture of collective responsibility by creating students who are resilient, critical thinkers, and global citizens who can effectively communicate, collaborate and problem solve. He discussed each of the other priorities of the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board, which include creating conditions for student success, advancing mental health initiatives for students, promoting HPEDSB as the service provider of choice, supporting employee growth and wellness and promote safe, healthy, respectful and inclusive schools and workplaces. The board celebrates success through the success of our students and through engaging with our community partners. Director McGall mentioned the nomination and recognition of our Community Response Officers from last year's Great Place Awards. Our community partners are an intricate part of our success. He thanked the staff and community partners for attending today and for their hard work and dedication to this very worthwhile committee.

Superintendent Savery-Whiteway thanked Director McGall.

Discussions:

Accepting Schools Act - Equity and Inclusive Education

Superintendent Savery-Whiteway introduced Assistant Superintendent of Education, Curriculum Services, Cathy Portt to explain the Accepting Schools Act, 2012. She handed out a brochure explaining that Bill 13 came into effect at the beginning of this school year, and that Ministry guidelines have yet to be released. When these changes are released, much work has to be completed by the HPEDSB. To comply with the new requirements, the Ministry is recommending we consider amending the existing policies and procedures related to the Code of Conduct, safe schools/student discipline, and bullying policies and procedures, to include the following purpose statements

1. To create schools in Ontario that is safe, inclusive and accepting of all pupils.
2. To encourage a positive school climate and prevent inappropriate behavior, including bullying, sexual assault, gender-based violence and incidents based on homophobia, transphobia and biphobia.
3. To address inappropriate pupil behavior and promote early intervention.
4. To provide support to pupils who are impacted by inappropriate behavior of other pupils.
5. To establish disciplinary approaches that promote positive behavior and use measures that include appropriate consequences and supports for pupils to address inappropriate behavior.
6. To provide pupils with a safe learning environment.

Assistant Superintendent Portt explained the "new" definition of bullying according to Bill 13. "bullying" means aggressive and typically repeated behavior by a pupil where,

- (a) the behavior is intended by the pupil to have the effect of, or the pupil ought to know that the behavior would be likely to have the effect of,

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- 1) causing harm, fear of distress to another individual, including physical, psychological, social or academic harm, harm to the individual's reputation or harm to the individual's property, or
 - (11) creating a negative environment at a school for another individual, and
 - (b) the behavior occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance between the pupil and the individual based on factors such as size, strength, age, intelligence, peer group power, economic status, social status, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, family circumstances, gender, gender identity, gender expression, race, disability or the receipt of special education; ("intimidation").

Superintendent Savery-Whiteway explained that bullying will be considered an expulsion infraction where the perpetrator has been previously suspended for bullying and creates an unacceptable risk to the safety of another person. She explained the expulsion program as it exists today.

Superintendent Savery-Whiteway asked the committee to break into groups and discuss the primary differences on the new definition of bullying.

Results of the table talk indicated the new definition of bullying is very complex. The results of the school climate surveys will definitely shed some light on how the students are feeling safe and welcome in their schools. It moves equity and inclusive education closer to the work of progressive discipline. Restorative Practices promote and practice the positive behaviours by all members of the learning community, and are the keys to creating a positive learning environment.

Assistant Superintendent Portt referred the committee to the brochure on Promoting A Positive School Climate, A Resource for Schools document. She stated that this resource supports and complements the work schools are doing in numerous areas. It brings together ideas from various initiatives that schools are already involved in and how it is developing healthy and respectful relationships among all members of the school community. She talked about all the fascinating work students are doing through Student Voice and Student Senate committees. She said building a positive school climate means embedding the principles of equity and inclusive education in all aspects of the learning environment to support the well-being and achievement of all students, that success requires an ongoing, comprehensive and collaborative effort on the part of everyone involved.

Superintendent Savery-Whiteway thanked Assistant Superintendent Portt for her presentation.

Committee Input

Superintendent Savery-Whiteway introduced a parent, Tammy Angelotis, who spoke to the committee about a program she developed in one of the schools, "Stand Up Recognition Program".

The purpose of the program is to encourage students from Kindergarten to Grade Eight in our system to motivate and empower others, to have the students willingly perform positive gestures towards others and enhance the lives of their classmates. They want children to recognize positive, stand up behavior and the desire to celebrate it. This also gives students the courage to speak out and raise self esteem.

Stand up behavior is defined as actions that go above and beyond everyday behaviour. For primary students the emphasis is sharing, caring and helping to start the base for when they reach junior grades and up. These students develop skills such as compassion, empathy and life skills that lead them to be positive role models for each other. There are many forms of behaviours that entitle students to be nominated.

The base of the program is a tree that is displayed in a common area of the school. This is called "The Stand Up Tree". Ballots or nomination cards and a nomination box are available to students (ideal place being near the main office). The ballots read the name of the nominee, grade, reason for the nomination, when the information is completed they are then place in the nomination box. At the end of the day/week, the ballots are removed and information is to be written on a leaf and place on the "Stand Up Tree". This can be done by staff and/or volunteer within the school. This gives students an opportunity to see if they have been nominated and/or see who used Stand Up Behaviour. It also gives students a chance to see what types of behaviours are recognized and rewarded. Students can be nominated as many times as desire, however, they only get placed on the tree once to ensure equality. At the end of the month nominations are removed and one student from primary, one student from junior and intermediate are presented with the "Stand Up" trophy and certificate. This program runs continuously during the school year.

Superintendent Savery-Whiteway thanked Tammy very much for her enthusiasm and commitment on this program.

Community Updates:

Interactive/brainstorming/sharing session

Superintendent Savery-Whiteway asked Wendy Sutherland, Safe School's Team to give an update on what has happened with regard to bullying awareness in the schools from last year. Wendy spoke about all the many varied activities that happened during Bullying Awareness and Prevention last year. Some of the activities were; announcements, assemblies, pledges and light-up programs. She shared a story with the committee that one school had an idea to do paper dolls. Students dressed the dolls with their own characteristics. They brought the dolls to school and put them in a circle on a bulletin board. The theme of the visual wall was "we are all different but we all belong together". Wendy said that many of the programs had already been running prior to the week and continues throughout the school year.

Committee members each took their turn and either announced what their workplaces were doing with regard to Bullying Awareness and Prevention or commented on the hard work that the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board is doing with regard to Bullying prevention.

Superintendent Savery-Whiteway introduced Shelley Steele, Safe Schools supervisor to speak on past experiences here at the Education Centre with regard to Bullying Prevention Week. Shelley talked about pink T-shirt day in April. Pink T-shirt day will happen again this year on Wednesday, April 10, 2013. She talked about supplying our students with pencils and tattoos last year during Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week in November. The free student drama, **Stand Up to Bullying** was performed by Grade 7/8 Trenton students at noon and was repeated at Trenton High School at 1:10 p.m. the same day and the public was invited. This was a very powerful event performed by our very own students.

Because of such great discussion and committee input it was determined that the committee would require a second meeting. It will be held Friday, October 12, 2012 at the Education Centre in the Board Room commencing at 9:00 until approximately 11:00 a.m.

Superintendent Savery-Whiteway thanked everyone for attending and commented that as a team, we can all help stop bullying.