

**SAFE SCHOOL ACTION PLAN FOR THE YEAR 2020-2021**



Level of instruction: Elementary, Kindergarten – Grade 6

Number of students: 575

Date of Action Plan revision: May 26, 2020

Date of Governing Board approval: May 28, 2020

Principal's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Governing Board Chairperson's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Quebec Education Act (QEA)**

**Bullying:** Any repeated direct or indirect behavior, comment, act or gesture, including in cyberspace, whether deliberate or not, which occurs in a context where there is a power imbalance between the persons concerned and which causes distress and injures, hurts, oppresses, intimidates or ostracizes.

**Violence:** Any intentional demonstration of verbal, written, physical, psychological or sexual force which causes distress and injures, hurts or oppresses a person by attacking their psychological or physical integrity or well-being, or their rights or property.

**EMSB Safe Physical and Cyber Environment Policy (2013)**

The English Montreal School Board (EMSB) believes that every member of its community has the right to learn and work in a safe physical and cyber environment. The EMSB advocates a strong safety and prevention focus which includes student education and support, as well as professional development as per the Quebec Education Program (Q.E.P.) and the EMSB's Strategic Plan.

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### **Our Safe School Action Plan**

This plan outlines the measures for preventing and responding to acts of bullying and violence in our school in accordance with the EMSB Safe Physical and Cyber Environment Policy and the Quebec Education Act (QEA).

Willingdon School is committed to providing students with a safe, inclusive and caring learning environment. All members of our school community are expected to act with respect and kindness toward others. Furthermore, we expect that all members of the Willingdon community to be vigilant in reporting incidences of bullying that they are made aware of. The Willingdon administration will take the necessary steps in investigating reports and ensuring safety for those concerned.

### **Safe School Team**

Our Safe School team is working to ensure safety and maintain a positive school environment. Every year, members of our team review and update our Safe School Action Plan.

Our Safe School Team members are:

- Carmen Nicolas, Principal, Coordinator
- Steve Spetsieris, Vice-Principal
- Maya Doughan, Vice-Principal
- Lara Belinsky, cycle 2-3 Teacher
- Jon Stein, Cycle 1 teacher
- Gabriel Latino, Cycle 1 teacher

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### School Climate

Assessing the school climate helps us understand how safe students feel in their learning environment and allows us to reflect on what improvements we can make to reduce the potential of bullying and violence. Our school collects data from the following sources:

- OurSchool Surveys (Tell Them From Me student surveys)
- Bus incident reports
- Behavioural Incident Reports
- Mindful student reflections

Based on our data analysis, we have established the following priorities for the coming school year:

- To maintain a safe space at the new senior campus where cycle 3 students are becoming responsible young adults and develop their positive leadership skills.
- To maintain a safe space at the junior campus as well now that it houses less students permitting the grade 4 students to take on leadership roles and for the overall student body to come into the space.
- To Increase the sentiment of safety during lunch time and recess with effective supervision practices and procedures that model expected positive behaviour.
- To increase awareness on safety on and off line by using the Kids-n-know by providing a series of information sessions to staff, parents and students.

### Prevention

As part of a wider effort to increase protective factors and educate on issues related to bullying and violence, our school will:

- Adopt practices from the Toolbox Project across all grades to develop social-emotional intelligence ( self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, motivation and social skills)
- Communicate the school code of conduct during assemblies, in the student agenda and on the school website. We underline that all act of bullying, in particular those motivated by racism, homophobia or targeting sexual orientation, sexual identity, a handicap or a physical characteristic will result in serious consequences.
- Encourage lunch monitors to wear a vest during lunch supervision so that they can be identified quickly by the students.
- Provide information sessions for staff, students and parents on the topic of digital citizenship and internet safety.
- Kindergartens students have lunch in their respective classes. A lunch monitor will be assigned to each class.

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- Maintain student-centered clubs such as Green Committee, Athletic Council and Student Council that promote pro-social behavior and increase student engagement.
- Develop strong leadership groups (student leaders) at both campuses.

### **Prevention (continued)**

- In the year to come, as was the case this year, we will continue having classrooms open at lunch every day for students to enjoy a quiet environment. Zen Lunch was embraced by our staff as an escape for those students who find the lunch room too hectic.
- Lunchtime social clubs at junior campus, organized by our support staff (B.Tech & CCW), catered to lots of different groups of students and sought to alleviate the social drama that inevitably can build during the school year. New students, foreign students, girls club, children who struggle to make friends, children in conflict, older kids and younger kids - so many groups were given opportunities to enjoy pleasant, open, non-judgmental social lunch and conversation.
- At the senior campus, 15 lunch clubs ran weekly by teachers, where students were encouraged to develop their passions and be positive role models to the rest of the school population.
- TANDEM (feat. Joseph Lambert) is an initiative offered by the NDG-YMCA and hopes to provide students with some important skills to navigate their school life and the world. Topics discussed this year included Stranger Danger in Cycle 1, Bullying in Cycle 2 and Digital Citizenship in Cycle 3.
- Pink Shirt Day will remain celebrated at both campuses. This year, CCS gave anti-bullying workshops at junior campus. The grade 4 Anti-Bullying committee took an active role in promoting healthy and safe relationships amongst students.
- Cycle 3 Homeroom reps worked all year on instilling a positive environment at the new campus and gave multiple presentations on anti-bullying and being a positive leader. This initiative will continue in the year to come.
- Parent volunteer visited cycle 2 classes and offered practical skills to deal with conflicts ranging from dysfunctional friendships to bullying. The students learned to use their voice to defend themselves and to be agents of change in and out of school. We plan to continue this endeavor in the year to come.
- Parent volunteers in all grade 6 classes shared their unique experiences on how to be a responsible young adult. We plan to continue this endeavor in the year to come as well.
- Community Service has become a regular consequence for students who acted outside of our code of conduct. This approach has given administration a tool to communicate our message without punitive outcomes and with pro-active solutions that benefit the school. This service included beautifying the school, providing mentorship to underclassmen, assistance to the school's caretakers and more.
- Structured play has made our school yard at junior campus safer and less chaotic for many of our students. Ms. Mariola, Ms. Jenna and the rest of the support staff have crafted many organized activities for the school yard during morning and lunch recess periods that have allowed students to avoid pitfalls inherent to unstructured periods of the school day. We have observed that conflicts have been identified more frequently and, as a result, our support staff has been able to deal with them more effectively. The students have shown an improved ability to express their issues with staff and to resolve conflicts with an eye toward equitable outcomes.

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- Visits from our Socio-Community Police Officer at the senior campus encouraged cycle 3 students to be safer and more responsible citizens. We plan to continue our partnership with the Socio-Comm in the year to come.

### **Collaborating with Families**

Families are instrumental in helping schools prevent, detect and resolve incidents of bullying and violence. Through such means as organized events, distribution of information sheets, newsletters posted on the school website, presentations and individual meetings, our school will actively support and encourage families to:

- Be active partners in the educational process
- Collaborate with the School team in finding solutions if their child is involved in acts of bullying or violence
- Recognize signs of distress in their child
- Understand the difference between conflict and bullying
- Report suspected acts of bullying or violence to the school administration
- Reinforce The Tool Box project at home

### **Response Procedures**

Our school is committed to ensure that professional and teaching staff members receive ongoing training on how to respond appropriately when witnessing or being made aware of harmful behaviours. Claims of bullying and violence will be investigated according to guidelines established in our school. Emphasis will be on assuring safety, promoting accountability with consideration to mitigating factors, and repairing harm.

### **Reporting Procedures**

The protocol for reporting incidents of bullying and or violence will be described in the student agenda and on the school's website. The protocol will explain that:

- Students are provided with confidential, safe, and age-appropriate ways to report an incident (e.g. by talking to a staff member such as teachers, lunch monitors, behavioural technicians & administrators).
- Staff members complete a student incident report form to alert the administration to investigate and follow up promptly in accordance with formal procedures after an incident has occurred. Parents are always informed accordingly.
- Parents/guardians can report to their child's teacher, school administrator, behaviour technician or other school staff in person, with a direct phone call or by email.

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### **Measures to Protect Confidentiality**

Our school pledges to take steps to protect the confidentiality of persons involved (victim, perpetrator, witness) in a bullying or violent incident. Our staff and families will be reminded that they are to share information about an incident strictly on a need to know basis with consideration to the feelings and privacy of individuals. Reports will be kept confidential in a secure location.

### **Supervisory & Support Measures**

Our school professionals and staff may take the following steps to support any student who has been involved in, targeted or affected by bullying behaviors:

- Consultation with appropriate school professionals: psychologist, social worker, nurse, spiritual animator, behaviour technicians, childcare workers, supervisors, teachers and administrators
- Meetings with family to reinforce social skills building activities at home
- Continue providing relevant learning opportunities for students.

### **Disciplinary Measures**

If after investigation, claims of bullying or violence are confirmed, the principal or designee will determine what disciplinary measures will be required. The school's disciplinary measures will be formative, fair (considering the nature, severity & frequency of act as well as any other mitigating factors) and respect legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of students.

In line with the EMSB Safe Physical and Cyber Environment policy, police may be contacted when a criminal act or threat of a criminal act may be involved.

### **Follow-Up Measures**

Our school will take necessary steps to protect students from harm or retaliation after an incident has occurred. The school will ensure a proper follow-up by:

- Documenting the investigation process, interventions and communications with parties involved.
- Maintaining communication with families and students involved in the incident.
- Verifying that psychosocial support services are offered as required.
- Checking in with students to ensure well-being and to prevent escalation or retaliation.
- Providing educational services to the wider school population if the incident reflects a larger problem within a grade level, cycle or the school at large

## ***SAFE SCHOOL ACTION PLAN FOR THE YEAR 2020-2021***

### **For more information or inquiries, please contact:**

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(514) 484-2881

### **Resources**

We encourage members of our school community to be informed on bullying and violence prevention by consulting the following:

- <http://www.prevnet.ca/>
- <http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/en/current-initiatives/bullying-and-violence-in-the-schools/>
- [www.NeedHelpNow.ca](http://www.NeedHelpNow.ca)