



March 2, 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Last week, the Ontario Ministry of Education launched a survey on bullying. The survey will be used to gather information from students, parents/guardians, and school staff so that Ministry and board staff can better understand this complex issue and help find new ways to make schools safer and more inclusive.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to support their children in taking the survey. Participation in the survey provides an opportunity for parents/guardians and students to talk about bullying. [To support this discussion, Information for Parents/Guardians about Ontario's Survey on Bullying is available online.](#) Students under 16 years of age who wish to participate in the survey will be asked to seek permission from a parent or guardian. This will support the Ministry's commitment to ensuring online safety, consent and the privacy of students. The survey is also open to parents/guardians and school staff because they, too, are committed partners in education and may want to offer feedback.

The survey can be accessed at www.ontario.ca/page/consultation-bullying-ontario-schools and will close by March 31, 2020. This survey is [one of the five measures to prevent and combat bullying in Ontario schools announced by the Minister on November 27, 2019.](#)

AMDSB staff remain committed to promoting positive relationships and anti-bullying strategies. All schools have an anti-bullying plan and the board is committed to identifying bullying and prevention strategies. Recently, our Mental Health Team sent newsletters to families that focused on strategies to combat bullying. [They can be found on our website \(under AMDSB Mental Health Newsletters for Families\).](#)

Schools celebrated PINK SHIRT DAY on February 26th. This year's theme was "Lift Each Other Up". When we lift each other up, we focus on respectful relationships and see beyond the images that separate us in order to celebrate the things that unite us as people. We encourage our families and students to provide input about bullying to the Ministry of Education. No one wants a child to be bullied. Let's work together to combat bullying, support healthy relationships, and provide valuable feedback to the Ministry.

Sincerely,

Jodie Baker
Superintendent of Education
Avon Maitland District School Board