



Student School Climate Survey Current State and Future Focus

October 3, 2023



Creating and Sustaining Healthy and Equitable School Climates Across the District

“The effect of positive school climate not only contributes to improved academic outcomes among diverse groups of students, but its effect seems to persist for years.”

National School Climate Center

“School climate can serve as a protective factor that supports positive life outcomes for young people.”

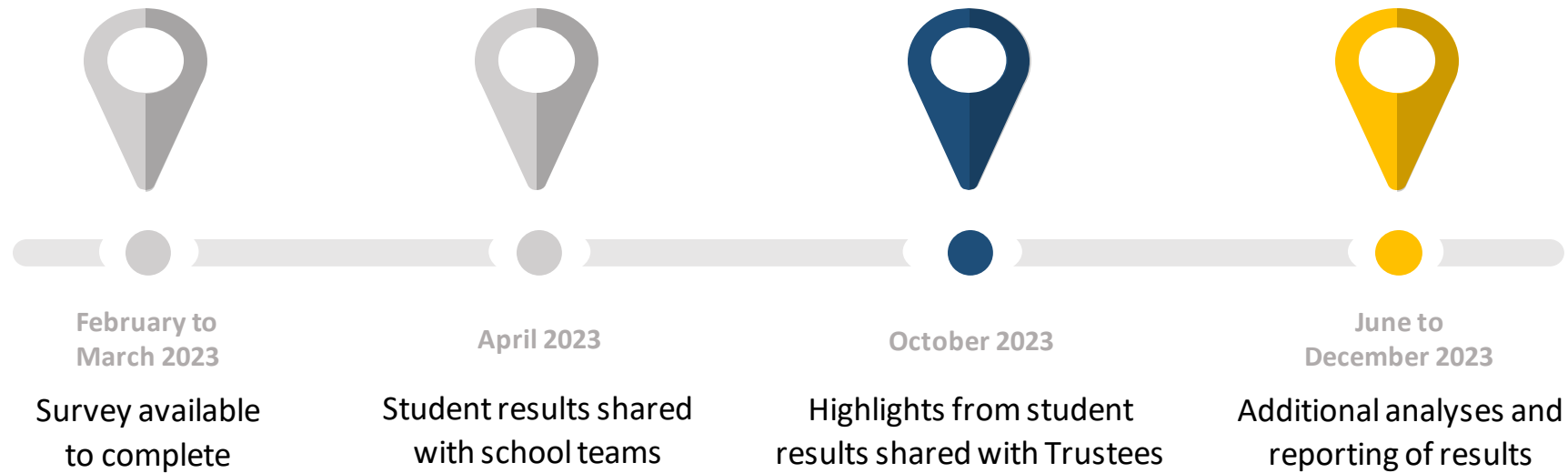
National School Climate Center

“Positive school climates are inclusive and protect and celebrate diverse identities.”

Centre for School Mental Health, 2019

2022-2023 School Climate Surveys in Thames Valley

Understanding the Current State and Determining Future Focus



28, 000+
student voices
reflected in the
district results

What student responses can tell us about what is going well:

- Healthy, supportive relationships between students and school staff.
- Staff hold high expectations of students and provide personalized support when needed.
- Wide range of opportunities for students to participate in classroom activities, school events, and extracurriculars.



What student responses can tell us about what needs to improve:

- Healthy relationships between and among students.
- Students' abilities to identify and manage emotions, as well as know how to cope with stress.
- Perceptions of vaping, alcohol, and drug use in general and while at school.





Future Focus: Key Programming 2023-2024

Delivery Model

- Implementation Coaches
- Enhanced support for school communities

Healthy Relationships and Mental Health Literacy

- Enhanced curriculum supports
- Partnership with Public Health Units

Future Focus: Key Programming 2023-2024



Restorative Practices and Conferencing

- Professional Learning
- Community partnerships

Vaping Taskforce

- Multi-disciplinary team
- Best practices for educating students and families



Thank you.

2022-2023 Student School Climate Survey

Summary of District-Level Results

Report Prepared for
Thames Valley District School Board Trustees

October 2023

Background Information

This report contains highlights from the student version of the School Climate Survey conducted between February 13 and March 10, 2023.

School climate exists in every school. The quality of the school climate contributes to the academic, social, and emotional well-being of students. It includes both the learning environment and the relationships within a school and broader school community. Benefits associated with a healthy school climate sustained over time have been well-documented in the research literature (Aldridge & McChesney, 2018; Kutsyuruba et al., 2015; Centre for School Mental Health, 2019; National School Climate Center, n.d.; Maxwell et al., 2017; Thapa et al., 2013).

Measuring school climate is critical for improving experiences at school. Collecting high quality data allows schools and the district to learn from members of school communities to identify areas of strength and need, make informed choices, and monitor change over time.

All school boards in Ontario must conduct voluntary and anonymous school climate surveys of students, staff, and parents and caregivers at least once every two years (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2018).

The student version of the School Climate Survey used in TVDSB is:

- for students in grades 5-12
- anonymous and voluntary
- available in 16 languages
- completed online and compatible with Google Read and Write

In Thames Valley, we use an adapted version of the U.S. Department of Education School Climate Surveys (EDSCLS). This suite of surveys is made up of valid and reliable instruments that are rooted in research (National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments, n.d.).

The student survey (see Appendix A) is also construct-based, which means responses to multiple survey items are combined to measure the same topic area. The student survey administered in 2022-2023 includes 10 subtopics that exist under three domains – Engagement, Safety, and Environment. The domains and subtopics are displayed below.

Domains	Subtopics
Engagement	Cultural and Linguistic Competence Relationships School Participation
Safety	Emotional Safety Physical Safety Bullying/Cyberbullying Substance Use
Environment	Instructional Environment Mental Health Discipline

The titles of the domains and subtopics were established by the survey developers. Descriptions of each subtopic are included in the results section to help establish a common understanding of what these terms mean in relation to what was asked on the survey.

What is School Climate?

“School climate is the learning environment and relationships in a school and school community.

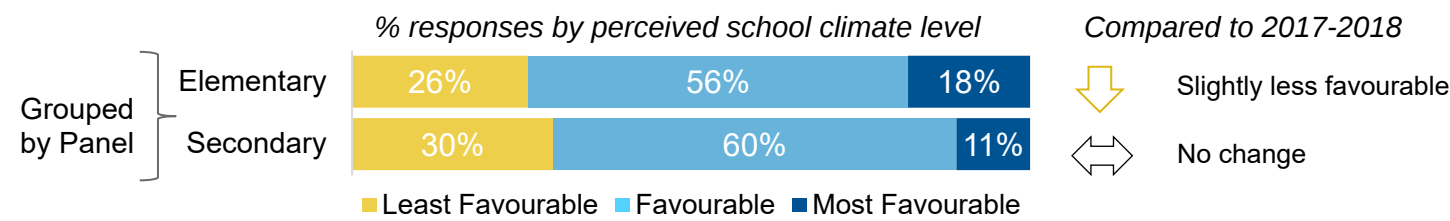
A positive school climate exists when:

- everyone in the school community feels safe, included and accepted
- everyone actively promotes positive behaviours and interactions
- equity and inclusive education are embedded in the learning environment
- there is a culture of mutual respect.”

(Ontario Ministry of Education, n.d.)

Presentation of Results

This report presents 2022-2023 student survey responses in stacked bar charts. These charts display the percentage of responses that fall within each school climate level: **least favourable**, **favourable**, **most favourable**.



Results are grouped by panel. The top bar displays responses from elementary students and the bottom bar displays responses from secondary students. Grouping the data in this way helps to identify where similarities or differences between panels may exist.

This report also includes information about whether student responses differ over time. Specifically, whether responses from 2022-2023 are the same or different (more or less favourable) compared with responses from 2017-2018. Responses are deemed more or less favourable in cases where differences are both statistically significant and meaningful as measured by effect size.

Description of School Climate Levels

- Least Favourable:** Indicates that respondents have the least favourable perception of a school climate subtopic area. The most likely answer to each positively worded question in the subtopic is ‘Disagree’ or ‘Strongly Disagree’. Likewise, the most likely answer to each negatively worded question in the subtopic is ‘Agree’ or ‘Strongly Agree’.
- Favourable:** Indicates that respondents have a favourable perception of a school climate subtopic area. The most likely answer to each positively worded question in the subtopic is ‘Agree’. Likewise, the most likely answer to each negatively worded question in the subtopic is ‘Disagree’.
- Most Favourable:** Indicates that respondents have the most favourable perception of a school climate subtopic area. The most likely answer to each positively worded question in the subtopic is ‘Strongly Agree’. Likewise, the most likely answer to each negatively worded question in the subtopic is ‘Strongly Disagree’.

Data Analyses

School climate perception levels are determined through a standard scoring process established by the American Institutes for Research (AIR). First, scale scores are calculated by combining data from multiple survey items that measure the same concept into a single subtopic score. This creates a more robust measure than looking at the data for individual items separately. Scores fall on a scale of 100 to 500. These scores can be thought of in the same way as scores on standardized achievement tests or report card grades in that higher numbers represent more positive results.

In addition to creating scale scores, researchers established benchmarks for each subtopic to provide a point of reference. This helps make it easier for schools and districts to identify areas of strength and concern, and to compare school results over time (where available) and across subtopics within the same domain. Using the benchmarks, scale scores are categorized into three perceived school climate levels which are described above (i.e., least favourable, favourable, most favourable). This is similar to how percentage marks on report cards can be grouped into levels (e.g., 80 to 100 = Level 4, 70 to 79 = Level 3, etc.).

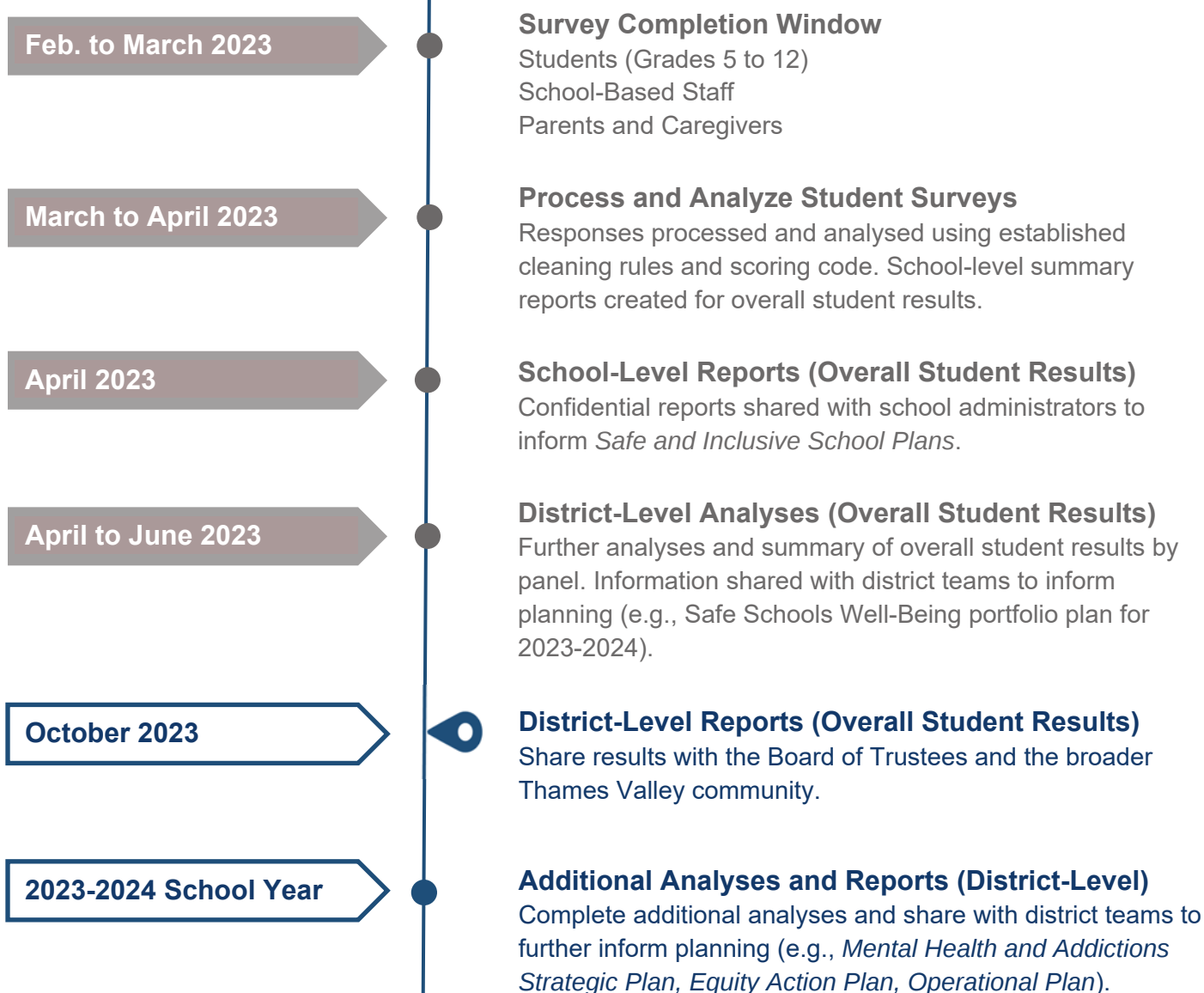
Collection and Reporting Timelines

In 2023, all Thames Valley students in grades 5-12, parents and caregivers with children attending Thames Valley schools, and school-based staff were able to complete the voluntary and anonymous survey. The survey was available for students to complete during the weeks of February 13 through to March 10, 2023. Time was provided in class for students to participate if they chose. Parents and caregivers received information about the survey, including their right to request that their child (under 18 years of age) not complete the survey, as well as details about where they could find out more information and review the survey questions (*see Appendix B*).

This report includes an overview of overall district results from the student survey only. Additional analyses are being completed at the district level to help inform Board plans. This includes grouping student results based on responses to identity questions on the survey, as well as summaries of responses from parents and caregivers, and from school-based staff.

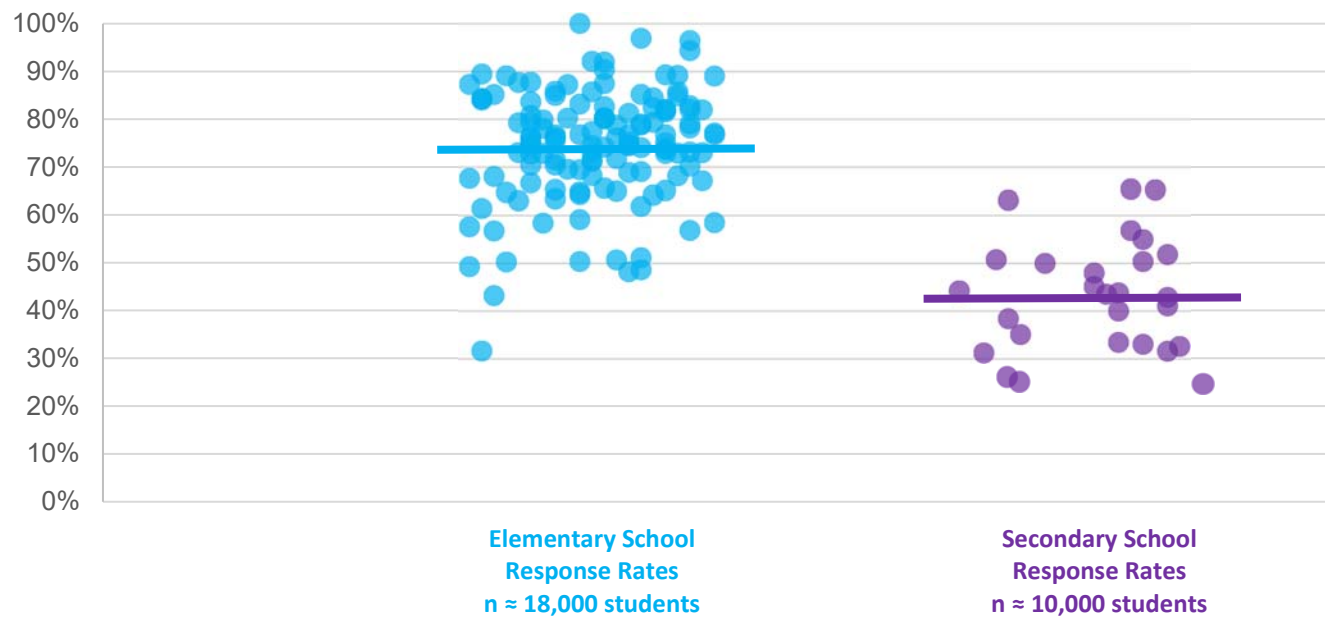
Timeline

Activities



Survey Responses: Students in Grades 5 to 12

The experiences and views of just over 28,000 students are reflected in the overall district-level results. This represents approximately 57% of students in grades 5 to 12 at the time of data collection. Overall, we heard from a higher percentage of elementary students (overall rate = 74%) than secondary students (overall rate = 41%). At the school-level, response rates ranged from 32% to 100% for elementary schools, and 25% to 65% for secondary schools.



Responses Over Time

In 2022-2023, the overall response rates^ are slightly lower compared with rates in 2017-2018. Almost all elementary schools and one third of secondary schools had a response rate of 50% or higher. Most schools, elementary and secondary, received enough responses to meet the threshold of an ideal sample size*.

Elementary Schools

	Total Number of Responses^	Overall Rate	Range		Percentage of Schools	
			Lowest	Highest	Response Rate ≥ 50%	# of Responses ≥ Ideal Sample*
2017-2018	≈ 17,500	81%	10%	100%	98%	94%
2022-2023	≈ 18,000	74%	32%	100%	97%	83%

Secondary Schools

	Total Number of Responses^	Overall Rate	Range		Percentage of Schools	
			Lowest	Highest	Response Rate ≥ 50%	# of Responses ≥ Ideal Sample*
2017-2018	≈ 10,000	44%	1%	81%	56%	78%
2022-2023	≈ 10,000	41%	25%	65%	33%	81%

^Response rates are calculated based on the number of responses included in the report (i.e., based on established data cleaning rules) divided by student enrolment (i.e., March 2018 for 2017-2018 and January 2023 for 2022-2023).

*Ideal sample size is calculated via the online survey application platform used to conduct the survey (i.e., Qualtrics). The calculator uses the population size (i.e., enrolment), confidence level (i.e., 90%), and margin of error (i.e., 5%) to determine an ideal sample size.

Student Survey Highlights: Overall Observations

- Overall, responses from elementary students tend to be more favourable than responses from secondary students.
- The general pattern of responses by subtopic, however, are similar across both panels.
- Survey results from secondary students are similar across years (i.e., 2017-2018 and 2022-2023).
- There are two instances where results from the 2022-2023 elementary survey are slightly less favourable than results from 2017-2018; specifically, 'bullying and cyberbullying' and 'substance use'.

Areas of Greatest Strength

Areas of greatest strength, where there is a higher percentage of responses falling within the favourable and most favourable ranges, and lower percentage of responses falling within the least favourable range include the following:

- Perceptions that relationships between staff and students are healthy and supportive.
- Most students said that their teachers have high expectations and provide individual support when needed.
- Opportunities for students to actively participate in classroom and school activities.

Areas of Greatest Need

Areas of greatest need, where there is a higher percentage of responses within the least favourable range and lower percentage of responses falling within the favourable and most favourable ranges include the following:

- Perceptions of students' ability to manage and cope with stress and identify and manage emotions.
- Healthy relationship skills among peers, as evidenced by responses related to perceptions of conflict between students, incidents of bullying and cyberbullying, as well as threatening and harmful behaviours.
- Attitudes towards vaping and drug and alcohol use, especially among secondary students. While this is less of a concern in elementary schools, responses in 2022-2023 suggest this is something that warrants greater attention.

Priorities for 2023-2024

Data Analyses and Reporting

Further analyses of survey results will be completed throughout the 2023-2024 school year and summarized at the district level for internal planning purposes. Planned analyses include the following:

- Disaggregating results from the student school climate items based on responses to identity questions.
- Summarizing responses from parents and caregivers by panel.
- Summarizing responses from school-based staff by panel.
- Identifying similarities and differences between respondent groups (i.e., students, parents and caregivers, and school-based staff).

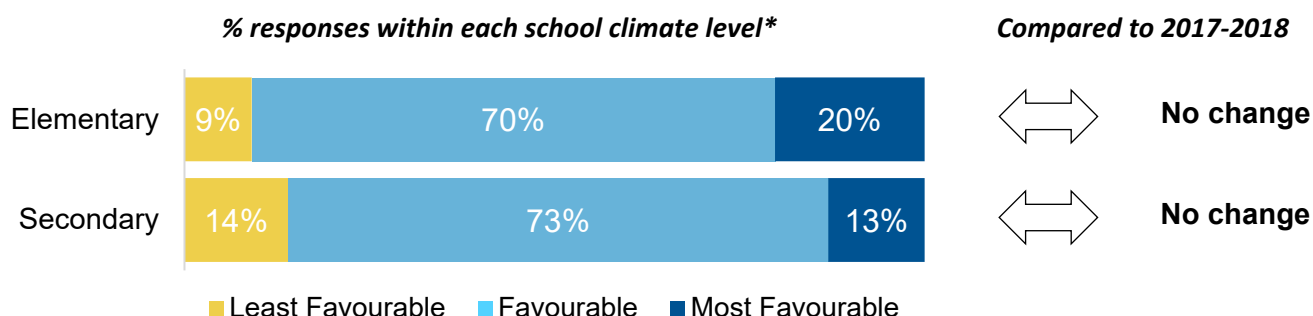
This information will further support district-level planning related to safe schools, equity, and mental health.

Programming and Support

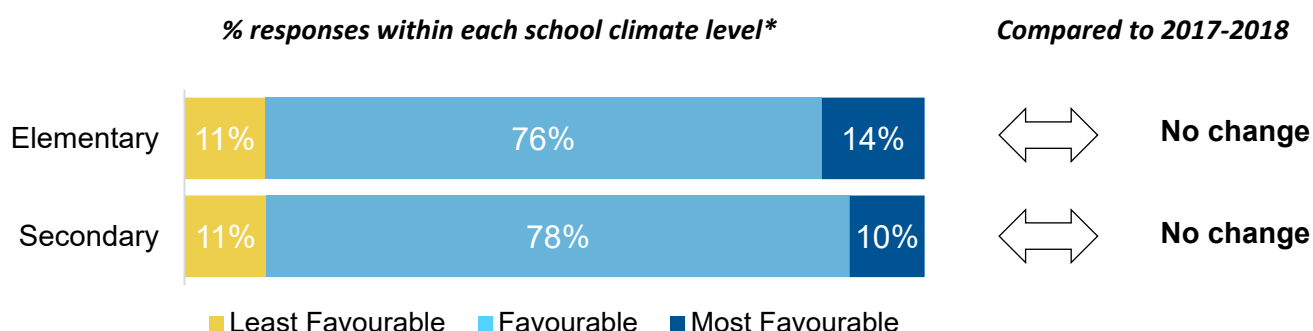
Throughout the 2023-2024 school year, a wide range of actions will be implemented to help create and sustain healthy school climates. Examples of district-level actions are highlighted in the presentation of overall student responses. It is important to note that this is not an exhaustive list of the work being done within schools and across the district to help create a sense of safety and well-being. A more comprehensive summary of key actions that will be implemented in 2023-2024 are summarized in report titled: *School Climate in Thames Valley District School Board: Summary of Programs and Support for Students*.

Engagement Domain: Overall Results by Subtopic

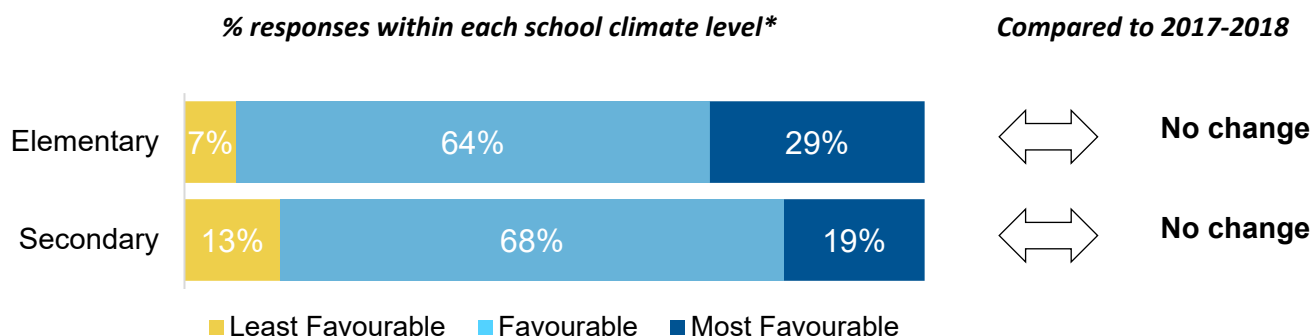
Cultural and Linguistic Competence: Questions in this subtopic ask students about their perceptions of how students with different identities and living experiences are treated (e.g., are all students treated the same). This subtopic also asks whether instructional materials reflect the diverse backgrounds and identities of students.



Relationships: Questions in this subtopic ask students about the nature and quality of their relationships with teachers (e.g., do students feel like they can talk with their teachers, and do they feel that their teachers care about and understand them). This subtopic also includes questions related to the nature and quality of peer relationships.



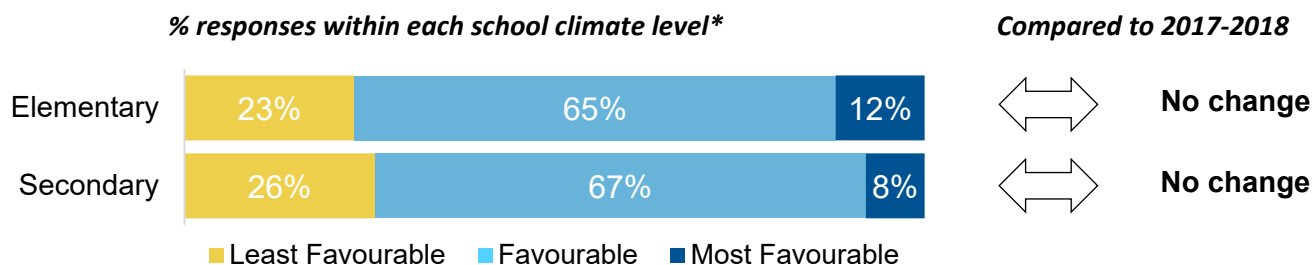
School Participation: Questions in this subtopic ask students about opportunities available to actively participate in classroom, school, and extracurricular activities (e.g., are rules and activities co-created). This subtopic also asks students whether they participate in the opportunities that are currently available.



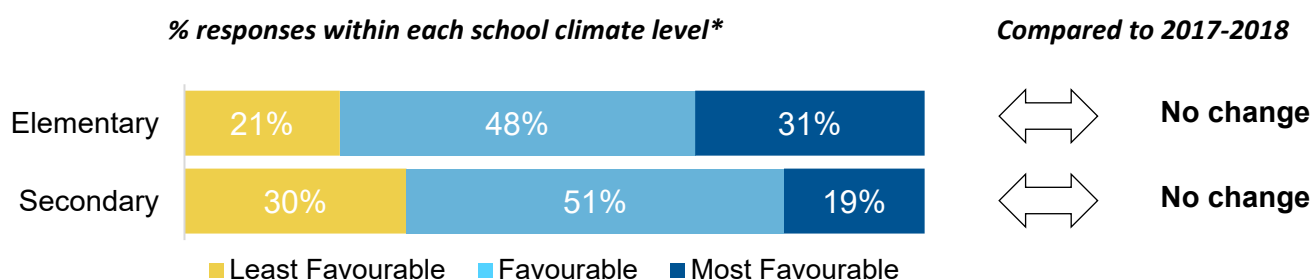
* Percentages may not total to 100 due to rounding

Safety Domain: Overall Results by Subtopic

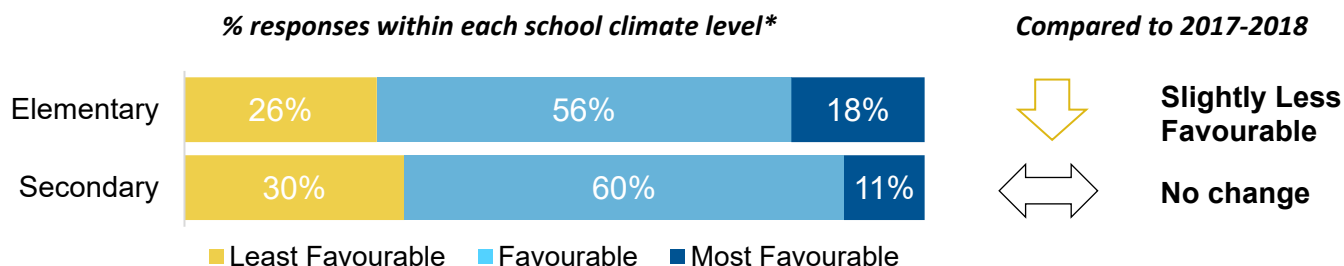
Emotional Safety: This subtopic includes questions about healthy relationship skills and behaviours among peers. Students are also asked if they feel happy, socially accepted, and like they are part of their school.



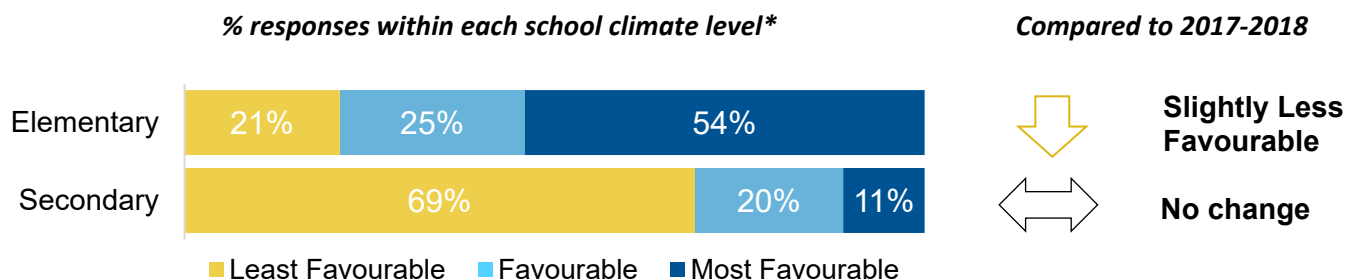
Physical Safety: Questions in this subtopic ask students how physically safe they feel at school, including questions about threatening and harmful student behaviours.



Bullying and Cyberbullying: Questions in this subtopic ask students about perceptions of bullying and cyberbullying, harassment, and other forms of discrimination based on student identities and living experiences.



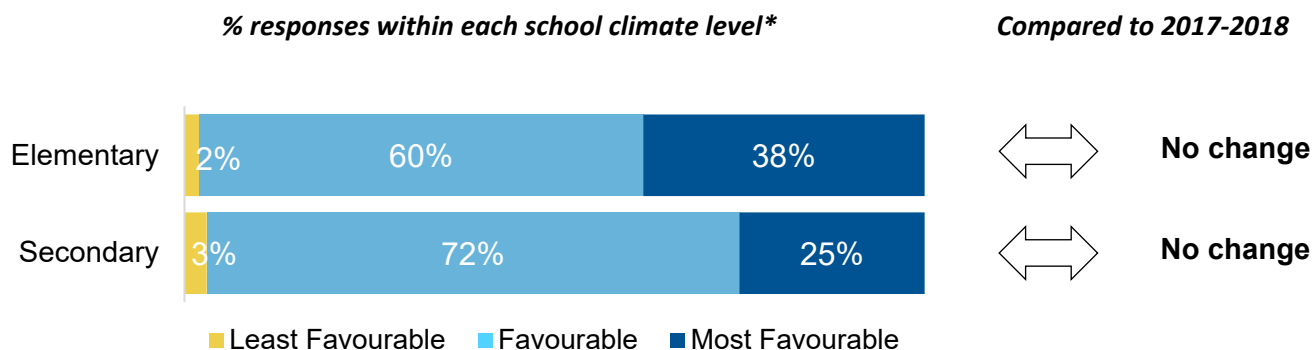
Substance Use: Questions in this subtopic ask about perceived attitudes of students related to vaping and the use of alcohol and drugs, as well as students' perceptions of the use of substances at school and school-sanctioned events.



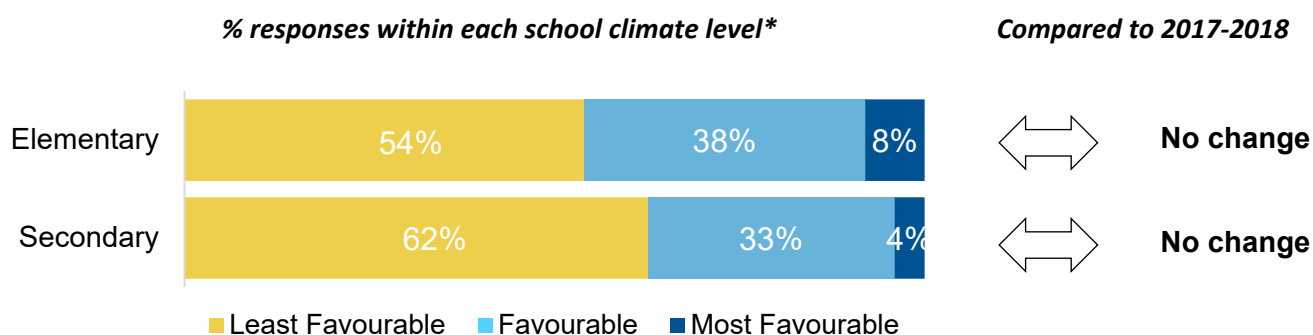
* Percentages may not total to 100 due to rounding

Environment Domain: Overall Results by Subtopic

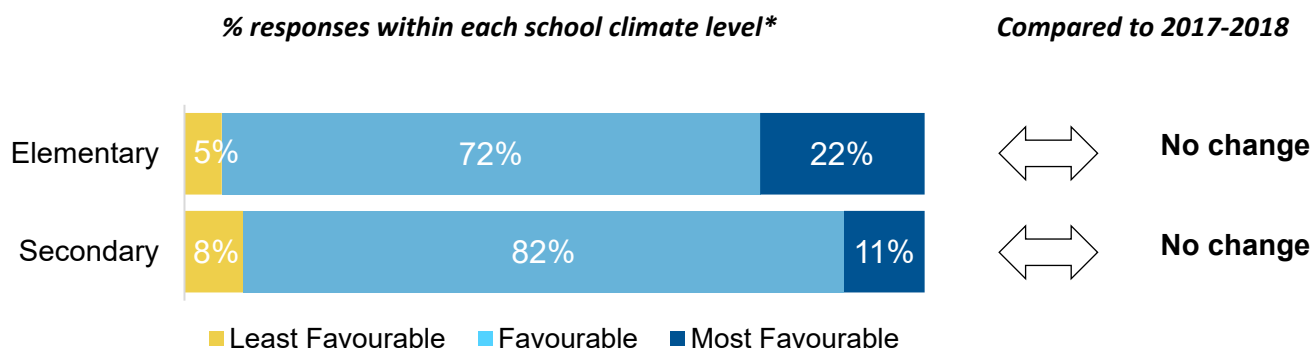
Instructional Environment: Questions in this subtopic ask students about the instructional environment including views on positive feedback, personalization of learning, and high expectations of staff.



Mental Health: Questions in this subtopic ask students about healthy relationships skills, including stress management and conflict resolution.



Discipline: Questions in this subtopic ask students about expected behaviour, including the communication of these expectations, as well as support with developing healthy relationship skills. This subtopic also asks students their views on discipline practices (e.g., fair, applied equally).



* Percentages may not total to 100 due to rounding

Using School Climate Survey Results

In Thames Valley District School Board, we are committed to the ongoing collection and use of evidence to assess need, inform actions, and measure impact. School climate survey results are one source of data used by schools and the district to understand the views and experiences of students, parents and caregivers, and staff related to school climate.

Members of Safe and Inclusive School Teams met in the spring of 2023 to review school-level results from the student school climate survey. This information, together with other sources of data, was used to *develop Safe and Inclusive School Plans*. These plans are posted on every school's website and include the school goal(s), actions planned to help achieve these goals, as well as ideas on how families can learn more and contribute to creating and sustaining healthy school climates.

School teams will continue to gather and review evidence throughout the school year to reflect on the progress being made towards their school-developed plans.

At the district-level, teams began reviewing preliminary analyses to inform and prioritize actions for the 2023-2024 school year. Plans and actions continue to evolve in response to what we are learning about the perceptions and experiences of members of the Thames Valley District School Board communities, as well as emerging research related to engagement, safety, and the school environment.

Additional information will be shared throughout this year regarding the actions being taken to create a greater sense of safety and well-being within school communities. Following the next administration of the school climate surveys, which is planned for 2024-2025, we will continue engaging in the ongoing cycle of gathering information to identify strengths and needs and to determine the extent to which members of school communities are experiencing a greater sense of safety and well-being.



Appendix A

2022-2023 Thames Valley District School Board Student School Climate Survey (Grades 5 to 12)

You are being invited to complete this survey because this is your school and your voice matters. We want to learn about your experiences at school so we can understand what is working well and what needs to be improved.

Do I have to share my feedback?

No. If you want to share your feedback, you will be asked to select your school and grade. All other questions are optional.

Will my answers be private?

Yes. You are not asked to include your name or student number. Your answers cannot be connected back to you in any way.

How long will it take?

About 30 minutes if you are learning in-person and 10 minutes if you are learning online. Ask your teacher for extra time if you need it.

Is the survey available in multiple languages?

Yes. Use the dropdown menu in the top right corner of the survey to select a language. Speak with your teacher if you need to complete the survey in a language not listed.

Will my answers affect my marks?

No. This is not a test. There are no wrong or right answers. Please respond as best you can.

What will happen after I share my feedback?

Your answers will be combined with feedback from other students. This summary report will be shared with your school and with district staff. Summary information may also be shared with Trustees, the Ministry of Education, and other community groups and partners.

How will this information be used?

To help make your school safer and more welcoming.

What if I feel uncomfortable or upset during or after the survey?

Please reach out for help.

- Talk with your teacher or another adult you trust at school or home
- Report a concern through [TVDSB Cares](#)
- Phone Reach Out at 1-866-933-2023
- Text "CONNECT" to 686868
- Phone Kids Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868
- Visit kidshelpphone.ca

If you have any questions or concerns, please speak with your teacher or another adult at school. You can also visit www.tvdsb.ca/YourSchoolYourVoice.

Thank you for your consideration in completing this survey.

1. Would you like to complete this survey?

☐ Yes [Continue to Q2]

☐ No [Exit survey]

Questions about your grade and school are required. This is to make sure that school reports can be created. All other questions are optional.

2. What grade are you in?

☐

Grade 5 or Grade 6

☐

Grade 7 or Grade 8

☐

Grade 9 or Grade 10

☐

Grade 11 or Grade 12

3. Are you currently taking all your classes online (i.e., virtual learning program, full remote learning)?

☐

Yes [Skip to Q7]

☐

No [Continue to Q4]

4. Please select your school from the drop-down list. School names are in alphabetical order.

If you are in an Alternative Education program not listed below, including U-Turn, please select your home school.

Starting now, all questions are optional. If you leave some questions blank, we may not be able to include your answers to other questions in the summary.

Note: All questions below were displayed where Q3 = "No". If Q3 = "Yes", respondents were only asked questions marked with an "".*

Cultural and Linguistic Competence

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?

5. All students are treated the same, regardless of whether their parents are rich or poor.

☐

Strongly Agree

☐

Agree

☐

Disagree

☐

Strongly Disagree

6. All students are treated the same, regardless of their gender.

☐

Strongly Agree

☐

Agree

☐

Disagree

☐

Strongly Disagree

In the questions below, "this school" means activities happening in school buildings, on school grounds, and on school buses. It also means in online classrooms and with teachers and students you are learning with either in-person or online. Try to answer the questions based on your school experience this year.

7. This school provides instructional materials (e.g., textbooks, handouts) that reflect my cultural background, ethnicity, and identities.*

☐

Strongly Agree

☐

Agree

☐

Disagree

☐

Strongly Disagree

8. Adults working at this school treat all students respectfully.

☐

Strongly Agree

☐

Agree

☐

Disagree

☐

Strongly Disagree

9. People of different cultural backgrounds, races or ethnicities get along well at this school.

☐

Strongly Agree

☐

Agree

☐

Disagree

☐

Strongly Disagree

Relationships

10. Teachers understand my problems.

☐

Strongly Agree

☐

Agree

☐

Disagree

☐

Strongly Disagree

11. Teachers are available when I need to talk with them.

☐

Strongly Agree

☐

Agree

☐

Disagree

☐

Strongly Disagree

12. It is easy to talk with teachers at this school.

☐

Strongly Agree

☐

Agree

☐

Disagree

☐

Strongly Disagree

13. My teachers care about me.

☐

Strongly Agree

☐

Agree

☐

Disagree

☐

Strongly Disagree

14. At this school, there is a teacher or some other adult who students can go to if they need help because of sexual assault or dating violence. [Grades 9 to 12 ONLY]

☐

Strongly Agree

☐

Agree

☐

Disagree

☐

Strongly Disagree

15. My teachers make me feel good about myself.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

16. Students respect one another.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

17. Students like one another.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

18. If I am absent, there is a teacher or some other adult at school that will notice my absence.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

School Participation

19. I regularly attend school-sponsored events such as school dances, sporting events, student performances, or other school activities.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

20. I regularly participate in extra-curricular activities offered through this school such as, school clubs or organizations, musical groups, sports teams, student government, or any other extra-curricular activities.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

21. At this school, students have lots of chances to help decide things like class activities and rules.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

22. There are lots of chances for students at this school to get involved in sports, clubs, and other school activities outside of class.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

23. I have lots of chances to be part of class discussions or activities.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

Emotional Safety

24. I feel like I belong.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

25. Students at this school get along well with each other.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

26. At this school, students talk about the importance of understanding their own feelings and the feelings of others.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

27. At this school, students work on listening to others to understand what they are trying to say.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

28. I am happy to be at this school.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

29. I feel like I am part of this school.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

30. I feel socially accepted.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

Physical Safety

31. I feel safe at this school.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

32. I feel safe going to and from this school.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

33. I sometimes stay home because I don't feel safe at this school.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

34. Students at this school carry guns or knives to school.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

35. Students at this school threaten to hurt other students.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

36. Students at this school steal money, electronics, or other valuable things while at school.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

37. Students at this school damage or destroy other students' property.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

38. Students at this school fight a lot.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

Bullying and Cyberbullying

39. Students at this school are teased or picked on about their race or ethnicity.*

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

40. Students at this school are teased or picked on about their cultural background or religion.*

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

41. Students at this school are teased or picked on about their physical or mental disability.*

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

42. Students at this school are teased or picked on about their real or perceived sexual orientation.*

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

These questions are about bullying. Bullying happens when one or more student's tease, threaten, spread rumors about, hit, shove or hurt another student. It is not bullying when students of about the same strength or power argue or fight or tease each other in a friendly way. Bullies are usually stronger, or have more friends or money, or some other power over the student being bullied. Usually bullying happens over and over, or the student being bullied thinks it might happen over and over.

43. Students at this school are often bullied.*

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

44. Students at this school try to stop bullying.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

This question is about cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology. Examples of cyberbullying include mean text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

45. Students often spread mean rumors or lies about others at this school on the internet (i.e., Snapchat™, Instagram™, Facebook™, email, and text message).*

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

Substance Use

"Alcohol" means a full or part of a drink of alcohol. Examples include beer, wine, mixed drink, shot of liquor, or any combination of these alcoholic drinks. This does not include alcohol that you may drink for religious purposes. Drugs means any substance, including those used to get "high" or increase performance in school or sports, other than alcohol or tobacco. Examples include marijuana, illegal drugs, inhalants, synthetic drugs used to get high or over-the-counter medicine. This does not include medications prescribed by a doctor or nurse for the person but includes prescription drugs that are NOT prescribed to the person by their doctor.

46. Students use/try alcohol or drugs while at school or school-sponsored events.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

47. It is easy for students to use/try alcohol or drugs at school or school-sponsored events without getting caught.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

48. Students at this school think it is ok to smoke or vape every day.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

49. Students at this school think it is ok to get drunk.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

50. Students at this school think it is ok to try drugs.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

Instructional Environment

51. My teachers praise me when I work hard in school.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

52. My teachers give me individual attention when I need it.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

53. My teachers often connect what I am learning to life outside the classroom.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

54. The things I'm learning in school are important to me.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

55. My teachers expect me to do my best all the time.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

Mental Health

56. My teachers really care about me.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

57. I can talk to my teachers about problems I am having in class.*

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

58. I can talk to a teacher or other adult at this school about something that is bothering me.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

59. Students at this school stop and think before doing anything when they get angry.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

60. Students at this school try to work out their disagreements with other students by talking to them.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

Discipline

61. My teachers make it clear to me when I have misbehaved in class.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

62. Adults working at this school reward students for positive behaviour.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

63. Adults working at this school help students develop strategies to understand and control their feelings and actions.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

64. School rules are applied equally to all students.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

65. Discipline is fair.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

Student Identities

The last group of questions asks about how you see yourself. We are asking these questions to help us understand how student identities are related to experiences at school. This information will help schools and Thames Valley District School Board take steps to make school a better place for all students. We recognize that identity is complex, and the options below may not reflect how you describe yourself. All questions are optional.

66. Do you identify as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit?

☐

Yes

☐

No

67. Do you identify as Black?

☐

Yes

☐

No

68. Do you identify as a racialized person or as a member of a racialized community?

☐

Yes

☐

No

69. Have you experienced racism at school this year?

☐

Yes

☐

No

70. What is your religion/creed?

☐

Sikh

☐

Muslim

☐

Low German Mennonite

☐

Jewish

☐

Hindu

☐

Christian

☐

No religion/creed

☐

Option not listed above

71. When you were born, what sex did the doctors say you were?

☐

Female

☐

Male

☐

Intersex

72. Do you identify as:

☐

One or more of the following: Two-Spirit, agender, gender fluid, gender queer, gender non-conforming, non-binary, pangender, questioning.

☐

Girl/Woman

☐

Boy/Man

☐

Option not listed above

73. Do you identify as: [Grades 7 to 12 ONLY]

- ☐ One or more of the following: Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, questioning, asexual, pansexual, polysexual.
- ☐ Straight/Heterosexual
- ☐ Option not listed above

74. Did you move to Canada within the last 5 years?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not sure

75. Are you an International Student? [Grades 9 to 12 ONLY]

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not sure

76. Are you taking ESL or ELD courses? [Grades 9 to 12 ONLY]

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not sure

77. Do you work with an ESL (English Second Language or Multilingual) teacher at school? [Grades 5 to 8 ONLY]

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not sure

78. Do you consider yourself to be a person with a disability(ies)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure

79. Do you have an Individual Education Plan (IEP)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure

Appendix B

Information Letter for Parents and Caregivers



February 7, 2023

Dear Parents/Caregivers,

We are writing to let you know that you and your child, in Grades 5 to 12, will be invited to complete a school climate survey. Completing the survey is one way that you can share your thoughts and ideas about topics related to school life.

Over the next couple of weeks, your child will learn more about school climate in school. If your child is in Grade 5 –12, they will also be invited to complete an online survey during class. The survey asks questions about their experiences and feelings related to school life, such as safety, connection and belonging, and the learning environment.

You will be invited to answer similar questions. **Next week you will receive an invitation with a link to the survey. Information related to the survey will be shared through SchoolMessenger, by email, and/or social media.**

Participation is voluntary and the survey is anonymous. You and your child will not be asked to include your name or their student number. Answers cannot be connected back to you or your child in any way.

If your child is under 18, and you do not want them to complete the survey, please speak with the principal of your child's school as soon as possible.

Hearing from you and your child is important for developing plans to help make school communities safer and more welcoming. For information, please review the **Frequently Asked Questions on the back of this letter**, visit www.tvdsb.ca/YourSchoolYourVoice, or speak with the principal of your child's school.

Sincerely,

Dennis Wright
Superintendent of Student Achievement
Safe and Accepting Schools, Well-Being

Frequently Asked Questions for Parents and Caregivers



Who is invited to participate?

All Grade 5-12 students will have time in class to complete the survey if they choose. Families with children attending school in TVDSB and school staff are also invited to participate.

Does my child have to participate?

No, participation is optional. If you do not want your child to participate, please speak with your child and contact their principal.

Is this survey anonymous?

Yes. You and your child will not be asked to include your names or their student number. Answers will be combined and cannot be connected back to individuals.

How long will it take to answer all the questions?

About 30 minutes for students and 15 minutes for parents/caregivers.

Do students and parents/caregivers have to answer all the questions?

No. The first three questions are required. These questions ask if you want to complete the survey, grade of student, and school. All other questions are optional.

Can students get help with answering the questions?

Yes. This is not a test. Students can ask for help if they need it. Teachers may read the questions to students, help define words, and/or provide extra time.

Is the survey available in different languages?

Yes. The survey is available in multiple languages. Please visit www.tvdsb.ca/YourSchoolYourVoice for more information. If you need assistance completing the survey in a language not listed on the website, please speak with the principal of your child's school, or email schoolclimatesurvey@tvdsb.ca.

What support is available for students who may feel upset?

Some questions may make students feel uncomfortable. If students feel upset, they are encouraged to speak with an adult they trust at school or at home. Information about supports is also included in the survey. You can visit www.tvdsb.ca/YourSchoolYourVoice to look at the questions that are being asked.

Who will have access to the information?

Only members of TVDSB's Research and Assessment Services will have access to individual responses. Answers will be combined to create school and district reports.

How will the information be used?

School reports will be shared with principals and district staff to help create plans (e.g., Safe and Inclusive School Plans). Principals are asked to share key findings with their school communities. District reports will be shared with TVDSB staff and Trustees to help make decisions about policy, resources, and learning opportunities. Key findings may also be shared with the TVDSB community, Ministry of Education, and the public.

Where can I get more information?

Visit www.tvdsb.ca/YourSchoolYourVoice or speak with the school principal.

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School Climate in Thames Valley District School Board: Summary of Programs and Support for Students

Program and School Services Advisory Committee
October 3, 2023

Introduction

Throughout the 2023-2024 school year, a wide range of actions will be implemented to help create and sustain healthy and equitable school climates. Examples of district-wide priority actions underway or planned for the current school year are highlighted in this report. This is not an exhaustive list of the work being done within schools and across the district to help create a sense of safety and well-being.

At the school-level, teams have developed *Safe and Inclusive School Plans* based on local data, including results from the school climate survey. These plans are posted on each school's website and serve as an important resource for parents and caregivers to learn more about how schools are promoting safety, connection, and well-being.

District-Wide Initiatives: Priority Actions

Essential Conditions for Learning in Thames Valley District School Board

School teams will continue to be supported with implementing the *Essential Conditions for Learning*. Continuing from last year, all schools will be able to access Implementation Coaches for support with identifying and using evidence-informed strategies related to relationship building, safety, connection, and regulation. To further enhance classroom-based support, Thames Valley is introducing a new model of service delivery that redistributes access to school counselling supports. This includes increased support in rural elementary schools and several secondary schools.

Identity-Affirming Social-Emotional Learning that is Culturally Responsive

Social-emotional learning, sometimes called SEL, that is culturally responsive helps students to develop the relationship skills they need to flourish throughout their life. Beginning in 2022-2023 and continuing into this school year, professional learning opportunities are available to help educators develop an increased understanding of how the principles of culturally responsive social-emotional learning can be integrated into instructional and assessment practices.

Culturally Relevant and Responsive Assessment and Instruction

Instruction and assessment that is culturally relevant and responsive affirms the uniqueness of who students are, as well as their backgrounds and living experiences. Ongoing professional learning opportunities exist for educators to learn more about the importance of culturally relevant and responsive assessment and instruction, and how to embed evidence-informed strategies into their practices.

Healthy Relationship Skills

There are a range of ongoing programs and support focused on helping students develop healthy relationship skills. Some of the priority initiatives being implemented this year include the following:

- ***Fourth R Health***
 - The Fourth R is an evidence-based program that promotes healthy relationships and targets violence, high-risk sexual behaviour, and substance use among adolescents. The Fourth R was developed in the TVDSB in partnership with researchers from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health and Western University. The program is available for grades 7, 8, and 9, and each version meets the Ontario Health curriculum requirements. The program is delivered by classroom teachers, who have received a 2 ½ hour training workshop to familiarize them with the materials and methods needed to implement the intervention. The topics are taught with the underlying theme of healthy, non-violent relationship skills. There is a strong emphasis on skill development and students have ample opportunities to practice new skills in role plays.
- ***Healthy Relationships Plus***
 - Healthy Relationships Plus applies the same core principles as the Fourth R classroom-based programs. The program targets the prevention of violence through the promotion of positive, healthy relationships. TVDSB is continuing to partner with Public Health Units to deliver this program in some grade 7 & 8 classrooms. This program is also delivered by Professional Student Services Staff in some secondary schools.
- ***Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocol and Resources***
 - In January 2022, the TVDSB Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocol was released for review and use by staff. Ongoing support is being provided to train staff to recognize the signs of sex trafficking so they will be better equipped to identify the cues and safely intervene if they suspect a student is being trafficked or involved in trafficking. Education also serves as a key factor in helping survivors of trafficking heal and rebuild their lives, helping to prevent re-victimization and resetting students on a healing trajectory towards positive outcomes. Resources, including lesson plans aligned with curriculum expectations, continue to be developed and implemented across the district.
- ***Project Consent***
 - Project Consent is a public legal education program that delivers objective legal information to high school students about consent. This virtual classroom presentation is facilitated live by volunteer Law students from Western University, who have worked closely with Law professors in the development and implementation of the program. The program is intended for delivery to Health & Physical Education classes, in grades 10 to 12.

Mental Health Literacy

Learning about mental health and developing skills to support positive mental health has been identified as a key priority by the Ministry of Education and within Thames Valley. The key district-level initiative being implemented this year to support mental health literacy include the following:

- **Elementary Students (Grades 7 & 8)**
 - All intermediate students will learn about mental health literacy beginning in the new year with the introduction of a new curriculum by the Ministry of Education. School staff are being supported with learning about and implementing lesson plans developed by School Mental Health Ontario, including the opportunity to join virtual field trips that will be facilitated by central staff.
- **Secondary Students**
 - School Mental Health Ontario has developed a mental health knowledge and help-seeking module designed specifically for secondary students. In 2022-2023, classes were invited to participate in virtual field trips where the initial lessons were facilitated by mental health professionals and educators. The remaining lessons were then delivered by classroom teachers. In 2023-2024, additional promotion and support will be provided for educators to deliver these modules within the classroom.
- **Families**
 - To better support caregivers and families, the Thames Valley District School Board and London District Catholic School Board, along with several different service providers from across London, Middlesex, Oxford, and Elgin, have come together to provide information sessions addressing various well-being topics of interest throughout the year. Examples of past sessions include the following: *Supporting Children When a Loved One has Addiction/Mental Health Challenges*, *Children's Mental Health & Screen Time*, *Supporting Our Children in Understanding Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging*, *Protecting Our Children: Internet Safety for Caregivers*, *Supporting Our Youth with Healthy Intimate Relationships and Consent*. Recordings of past sessions are available online and schools will be supported to share this information with families (e.g., host viewings at school).

Restorative Practices and Conferencing

Restorative Practices is an emerging social science that studies how to strengthen relationships between individuals, as well as social connections within school communities. Thames Valley staff have embraced the restorative mindset by participating in ongoing professional development, provided through the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP), and requesting support with implementation. Thames Valley partners with St. Leonard's Community Services to provide schools with the following type of support: individual conflict resolution, student agreements, strategies to handle conflict, suspension prevention and/or re-entry support, and mediations or conferences. Continuing from last year, staff will have the opportunity to learn how to facilitate restorative conferences as another means of responding to safe schools incidents with a focus on repairing harm and restoring relationships.

Bullying/Cyberbullying Awareness and Prevention

Thames Valley is committed to raising awareness, preventing, and responding to bullying/cyberbullying. Every school has developed a *Safe and Inclusive School Plan* that outlines specific actions to help create and sustain a sense of safety, connection, and well-being. Also, program and support focused on developing healthy relationship skills, identity-affirming social emotional learning, and mental health literacy are important preventative measures for mitigating against violence and bullying. The following anti-bullying and anti-cyberbullying initiatives are also being implemented.

- **Anti-Bullying: Bullying Awareness and Prevention Campaign**
 - A comprehensive Bullying Awareness and Prevention campaign will take place during November to build understanding amongst students, educators, parents, and community members. The importance of the week will be highlighted through a social media campaign, curriculum resources and information guides for educators, parents and caregivers, and community members. Anti-Bullying initiatives will be sustained through the establishment of the *Essential Conditions for Learning*, Restorative Approaches and *Safe and Inclusive Schools Plans*. Evidence-based resources from Promoting Relationships & Eliminating Violence Network (PREVnet), The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, and School Mental Health Ontario will be referenced.
- **Anti-Cyberbullying**
 - MediaSmarts is a Canadian not-for-profit organization for digital and media literacy. Its vision is to help children, youth, and trusted adults develop the critical-thinking skills necessary to engage with media as active and informed digital citizens. Educators can access a series of lessons, in English and French, developed by MediaSmarts to help students better understand the ethical and legal implications of cyberbullying and to promote positive Internet use. These lessons are intended to support and enhance school-based anti-bullying and empathy-building programs. Lessons are available to facilitate with students in Grades 5 to 12.

Vaping Taskforce

In response to concerns related to attitudes towards and prevalence of vaping in schools, representatives from 5 school boards, local health units, and Western University, have come together to create a vaping taskforce. This multi-disciplinary team is in the process of identifying and actioning consistent best practices to support education for students and caregivers. The taskforce will provide education and awareness raising amongst students to address substance use prevention, including addictions, cannabis use, and vaping. It will also increase awareness and understanding amongst principals, teachers, and other school staff to continue to address substance use prevention/addictions, recreational cannabis and vaping issues facing students in both elementary and secondary schools.

Student Leadership Conferences and Student Associations

There are a wide range of activities and extracurricular opportunities available for students within schools and across the district, including student leadership conferences and associations. Thames Valley hosts student leadership conferences as an opportunity for students to share their thoughts about topics related to equity and well-being, as well as help shape support for students across the district. Schools are also encouraged and supported with information, updates, and best practices for organizing and implementing student associations within their schools.



Guidelines for Student Dress

Students come from diverse backgrounds and have diverse identities and experiences. The school environment, including structural elements such as policy and procedures, impact the extent to which students feel their identities are affirmed. Rules governing student dress, for example, can reinforce harmful stereotypes and treat certain groups of students differently than others, resulting in discrimination. In 2022-2023, Thames Valley released Guidelines for Student Dress that set expectations for student dress that are equitable and non-discriminatory; prioritize safety while affirming and respecting students' identities, choices, and freedom of expression; and help to maintain school environments that are positive, anti-oppressive, and inclusive of diverse identities. These guidelines describe dress expectations for students AND the responsibilities of staff for implementing, applying, and educating about these expectations. Staff, students, and families will continue to be supported with understanding and implementing these important guidelines throughout the current school year.

Additional Information

Additional questions about programming and support can be directed to:

Dennis Wright, Superintendent of Student Achievement

Warren Zavarella, System Principal

Lucas Andersen, Manager, Student Mental Health