



# Ridgewood Avenue School

**Dr. Michael Donovan**  
*Principal*

September 14, 2023

Dear Parents:

As we embark on another exciting school year, I wanted to take a moment to address an important topic that is central to our school's values and commitment to providing a safe and nurturing environment for all students: Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB). At Ridgewood Avenue School, we hold the safety, well-being and personal growth of every student in the highest regard. Our school is not just a place of learning; it is a community where students are encouraged to thrive, explore and express themselves in a respectful and inclusive manner. Our recent whole school "family meeting" was an opportunity for us to establish this goal, and talk with the students about such important topics as HIB and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI). It with with pride that I share with you some of the positive aspects of our school:

**Diverse and Inclusive Community:** Our school community celebrates diversity in all its forms. We believe that embracing different backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences enriches the educational experience for all students.

**Dedicated Staff:** Our teachers and staff are not only highly qualified but also deeply committed to creating a safe and supportive environment. They serve as mentors, role models, and sources of inspiration for our students.

**Comprehensive HIB Prevention Programs:** Throughout the year we implement a range of programs and initiatives aimed at preventing HIB, including character education, conflict resolution training, classroom lessons by both our guidance counselor and SEL counselor and promoting empathy among students. Our 5th and 6th grade students will also participate in the Lifelines Suicide Prevention curriculum which has strong connections to anti-bullying and support for all students.

**Open Communication:** We encourage open and transparent communication between students, parents, and staff. Our doors are always open to address concerns, answer questions, and work together to ensure the well-being of every child.

**Supportive Resources:** Our school offers a variety of support resources, including counseling services and a caring network of staff members who are always ready to lend a helping hand and serve as trusted adults.

**Strong Sense of Community:** At Ridgewood Avenue School, we foster a sense of belonging, unity, and responsibility among students. We believe that when students feel connected and valued, incidents of HIB are less likely to occur.

**Regular Training and Awareness:** Our faculty and staff receive ongoing training in recognizing and addressing HIB. Our newly formed Behavioral Analysis Assessment Team will also be a great resource in helping staff to identify students who may be a risk to themselves or others. We also promote awareness to help students understand the importance of kindness, respect, and acceptance.

It is essential for us to work together as a community to ensure that every student feels safe, respected, and valued. If you have any concerns or are aware of any incidents related to HIB, please do not hesitate to reach out to our school administration or our Anti-Bullying Specialist, Lauren Bas. Our website is particularly robust with information about HIB, including an anonymous reporting system and much more. Your vigilance and support are invaluable in maintaining the positive atmosphere we have cultivated at Ridgewood Avenue School.

As we embark on this new school year, let us reaffirm our commitment to nurturing an environment where every student can reach their full potential. Together, we can ensure our school remains a place where excellence in education goes hand in hand with compassion, respect, and inclusion.

Thank you for entrusting us with the education and well-being of your children. We look forward to another year of growth, achievement, and positive experiences!

Sincerely,

*Dr. Michael Donovan*  
Principal