

What is the Anti-Racism and Equity Committee?

The A.R.E. is a collective of Wilkinson parents committed to social justice. They are working to foster a more equitable and inclusive community at Wilkinson.

It's important to talk about the fact that racism and bigotry exist, even if they don't appear to directly affect your family. If you are looking for resources about how to have these conversations with your child, the A.R.E. has been collecting a variety of books, podcasts, and videos that we would be happy to share with you.

Wilkinson Anti-Racism and Equity Committee (A.R.E.)

If you have ideas as to how to make Wilkinson more inclusive, or are interested in joining our committee, please contact us through Wilkinson Community Council at council@wilkinsonps.org. We look forward to hearing from you!

We are circulating this pamphlet in response to the recent incidents of racism, discrimination, and bias that have occurred at Wilkinson.

For more information, please refer to the Update of the Principal, pages 3-4 of the June 13, 2022 Community Council Minutes.

What to do if your child is impacted by racism, bias, or hate at Wilkinson

A summary of how to the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) handles these incidents, as well as tips to support your child during and after.

Reporting the incident

If a TDSB employee (e.g., a teacher, recess- or lunchroom monitor, etc.) is made aware of a racist or hate/bias incident, **it is mandatory for them to immediately report it to the school principal, whether they directly witnessed the incident or not.**

As part of TDSB procedure, the school principal must contact the child's parent or legal guardian of the student within 24 hours of the incident.

If the TDSB employee in question does not report the incident within 24 hours to the school principal, caregivers should contact the school directly.

School Contact Information

Principal: Elizabeth Albrecht-Bisset

Email: Wilkinson@tdsb.on.ca

Phone: 416-393-9575

Official response

Principal Elizabeth Albrecht-Bisset will address the immediate (and potentially ongoing) safety needs of all impacted parties, gather information and witnesses to determine what occurred, and document and preserve all relevant evidence. She will also convene with school superintendent Nadira Persaud to ascertain whether the incident entails police involvement, the issuance of medical reports, etc. They will work with you and your child to find a resolution.

Facts you should know:

- TDSB acknowledges that it has a “serious racism problem” in its schools. Race-related complaints made up 69% of all reported hate incidents in the 2019-2020 school year, with anti-Black racism making up the biggest share.
- TDSB also reports frequent incidents of discrimination related to gender, orientation, creed or religion, and ableism at their schools.
- 91% of reported incidents in the TDSB were committed by students.
- These incidents often occur out of sight of TDSB employees, and often in ways that make it difficult for the student impacted to positively identify the perpetrator(s) to concerned adults.

How to support your child

- **Instruct your child ahead of time to say something right away.** If your child is impacted by an act of discrimination, they should tell a TDSB employee *as soon as possible*. School administration can respond more effectively if details about the incident are fresh in everyone's minds.
- **Validate their sense of injustice.** Remind your child that they have a right to learn without discrimination. Affirm their different identities and abilities.
- **Create a safe space to share.** Let your child know that their feelings are important and valid. It helps to share your own feelings in a healthy way. Say something like, “I feel sad right now and that's OK. I won't always feel this way.” This helps kids put things into perspective.
- **Learn more about TDSB policies and procedures** (e.g., Parent Concern Protocol, Caring and Safe Schools policy, and the Workplace Harassment Prevention and Human Rights procedure, etc.). Have more information about how to raise an issue or concern, and what the TDSB must do to address it.