



November 8, 2021

Dear parents:

We are writing in response to concerns from some parents and on social media regarding the monitoring of washrooms at ADSS. Over the past two months, school administration has received numerous complaints from students and parents about vandalism in washrooms and about individuals and/or groups of students regularly using washroom stalls to smoke/vape, thus making facilities unavailable to students legitimately requiring washroom access.

School administrators are making random, cursory visits to washrooms to ensure washroom facilities are accessible to students and to address concerns about vandalism and vaping in washrooms. Further, the increasing numbers of students struggling with mental health and self-harm issues who are coping by hiding in washrooms also demands their attention. **The notion that school administrators or staff are violating student privacy by purposefully looking under bathroom stalls or through cracks in bathroom partitions is not accurate.** Monitoring of washroom activity is primarily conducted from the washroom vestibule and adults only enter the washroom to check for property damage or when it is clear that students are loitering in the washroom or gathering in washroom stalls to vape.

School staff are respectful of student washrooms and make every attempt to maintain the privacy of individuals using washroom facilities. At the same time, school administrators are also aware of their responsibility to ensure washrooms are safe and accessible to students and to enforce behavioural expectations relating to smoking/vaping on school property. Unfortunately, efforts to respectfully monitor school washrooms have been mischaracterized as deliberately inappropriate, excessive, and invasive, and we are writing to correct this misinformation and to clarify why and how school washrooms are being monitored.

The last thing school administrators want to be is bathroom monitors. Unfortunately, inappropriate student behaviour in washrooms continues to demand school administration attention and school administrators will continue to be respectful of student privacy while responding to issues of vandalism and other inappropriate student behaviour.

Sincerely,

Greg Smyth
Superintendent of Schools

Rob Souther
Principal

cc: Pam Craig, Board Chair