



**THE DURHAM DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**  
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# NEWS

## Durham District School Board's Pine Ridge Secondary School Presented Premier's Safe School Award

Media release  
June 19, 2012



Pine Ridge Secondary School in Pickering has been honoured by the Province with the Premier's Safe School Award.

The award, granted to only 10 schools across Ontario, recognizes work done by Safe Schools Teams to create a safe and caring school climate. It celebrates teams that have demonstrated initiative, creativity and leadership in promoting a safe and inclusive school climate.

Pine Ridge was recognized for the I Am Who I Am campaign, a student-led endeavour inspired by Mitchell Wilson, an 11-year-old boy who took his own life in September 2011.

Mitchell had Muscular Dystrophy, a disease that would likely have eventually have caused him to require a wheelchair.

To remember Mitchell, students from the Durham District School Board's Pickering Family of Schools sold wristbands and t-shirts featuring the I Am Who I Am theme. The campaign also included a number of other activities and initiatives focussed on character education and safe schools. Beyond raising money, the campaign was aimed at helping increase acceptance and diversity, and to prevent bullying.

The almost \$20,000 raised went to help area families who have children with Muscular Dystrophy.

The presentation was made by Ajax-Pickering MPP Joe Dickson.



**Quotes:**

“Durham District School Board is extremely honoured and proud to have Pine Ridge Secondary receive this recognition from the Premier. It is a well-deserved accolade for the hard work and determination that went into this incredible initiative.”

*Joe Allin, Durham District School Board Chair and Trustee for Uxbridge and Brock*

“This initiative was student-led, but at the same time, we would be remiss if we didn’t thank staff, who provided advice and direction to help make the I Am Who I Am campaign such a great success.”

*Chris Braney, Durham District School Board Vice-Chairman and City of Pickering Trustee*

“The I Am Who I Am campaign went a long way toward putting the character traits of respect, kindness and empathy into action. Durham District School Board schools reinforce these traits every day, but initiatives like this truly bring them to life.”

*Paul Crawford, City of Pickering Trustee*

“I Am Who I Am goes a thousand miles, means a thousand words. It’s a simple message that goes a long way.”

*Krish Dineshkumar, Pine Ridge Secondary School student, who wrote the support letter to nominate his school for the Premier’s Safe Schools Award*



The Durham District School Board is responsible for public education in the rural settings of Uxbridge, Brock and Scugog Townships and the urban settings of Ajax, Whitby, Pickering and Oshawa. The Board employs more than 7,000 teaching and educational services staff. With 134 elementary and secondary schools and learning centres, the Board accommodates more than 70,000 regular day students and thousands more who take advantage of a wide variety of continuing education and adult credit courses. To find more news about the Durham District School Board and its schools, visit [www.durham.edu.on.ca](http://www.durham.edu.on.ca) under the DDSB News section. Follow us on Twitter: **@DurhamDSB** and **@DirectorDDSB**

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