

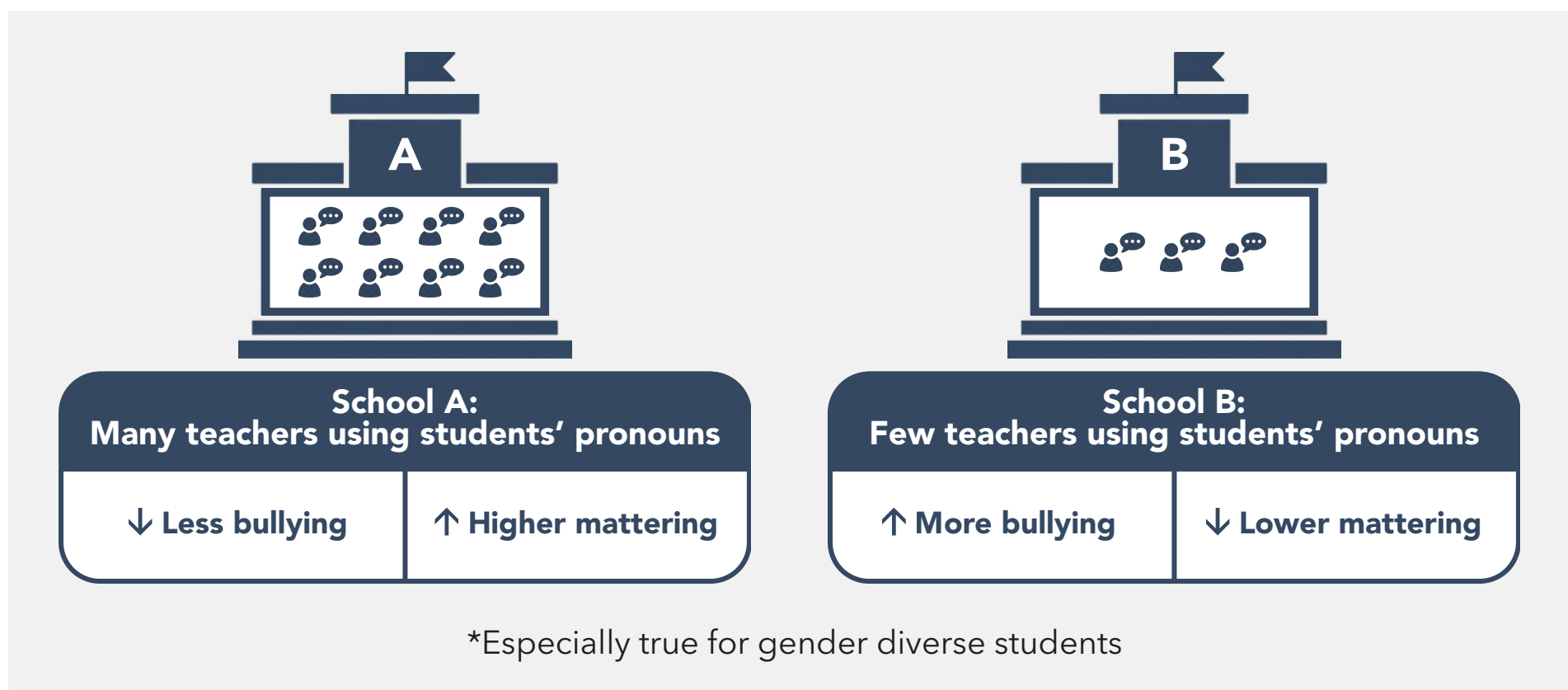


SUPPORT & AFFIRMATION

When heated debates spill over into schools, it makes sense for parents to wonder if their child's school is going too far to accommodate one group or another. But there's one thing we can all agree on: Every student deserves to feel valued and safe in their classroom. In the Ontario Health and Peer Relations Study, we asked students in Grade 7 and above about what makes them feel like they matter at school.

Across the board, students reported higher feelings of mattering and lower instances of bullying when their teachers made an effort to use their pronouns—even if that student was not gender-diverse or had never been bullied. In other words, respecting students' pronouns creates an environment that benefits and protects EVERY student, not just one small group.

Figure 1: The impact of teachers using students' pronouns in schools



“Respecting a student's pronouns doesn't take away from others. It sets a standard of fairness that makes every single student in the classroom feel like they truly matter.”

Dr. Kamilla Bonnesen

Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Brain and Behaviour Lab, University of Ottawa

Key Takeaway

Studies like this one show us a simple way we can lower bullying rates and help every student feel they matter!

