

JANUARY 25, 2021

**WATERLOO REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**

**NOTICE OF MEETING**

The regular monthly **Board Meeting** of the Waterloo Region District School Board will be held via video conference, on **Monday, January 25, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.**

**AGENDA**

**Call to Order**

**Territorial Acknowledgement and O Canada**

**Approval of Agenda**

**Consent Agenda\*\***

**Receipt/Approval of Minutes:**

Receive Minutes – Board Meeting of December 14, 2020

Approve Minutes – Committee of the Whole Meeting of January 11, 2021

Approve Minutes – Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of January 13, 2021

Approve Minutes – Committee of the Whole Meeting of January 18, 2021

**Receipt/Approval of Monthly Reports:**

24 Staffing Information – Retirements and Resignations

M. Weinert

27 Staffing Recommendations – Appointments

M. Weinert

**Declarations of Pecuniary Interest**

**Announcements/Celebrating Board Activities**

**Delegations**

**Reports**

Director's Annual Report

J. Bryant

Learning & Operational Continuity During COVID-19 Pandemic

J. Bryant / L. Read

29 Suspension/ Expulsion Report as of November 30, 2020

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Policy Review Tool Presentation

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**Board Reports**

**Board Communications**

33 Halton District School Board to Minister of Education - Rural High Speed Internet

35 Halton District School Board to Minister of Education - Command Table

**Other Business**

**Question Period (10 minutes)**

\*\*All matters listed under the Consent Agenda are considered not to require debate by the Board of Trustees and should be approved in one motion in accordance with the recommendation contained in each report.

**Future Agenda Items** (Notices of motion to be referred to Agenda Development Committee)

**Adjournment**

# Report to Board of Trustees

January 25, 2021

**Subject: Staffing Information –  
Retirements and Resignations**

## **Recommendation**

*This report is provided for information of the Board.*

## **Status**

The employees listed in Appendix A of this report have received acknowledgement of their retirement or resignation.

## **Background**

The board's practice is to receive information regarding staff retirements and resignations at regular monthly board meetings.

## **Financial implications**

Expenses are within the existing approved budget.

## **Communications**

Employees listed in this report have communicated through Human Resource Services.

Prepared by: Michael Weinert, Coordinating Superintendent, Human Resource Services, in consultation with Coordinating Council.

## Appendix A

**Staffing Statistics – Retirements**  
**Current at January 25, 2021**

<b>Retirements: Elementary Teaching Staff</b>				
<b>First</b>	<b>Last</b>	<b>Position/Location</b>	<b>Retirement Date</b>	<b>Years of Service</b>
Katharine	Banks	Teacher, Abraham Erb PS	February 28, 2021	31
Melissa	Brandsma	Teacher, Hespeler PS	April 1, 2021	30
Sharon	Lawton	Consultant, Special Education	March 30, 2021	32
Dale	McDougall	Teacher, Centennial PS (C)	January 14, 2021	23
Ann	McRae	Teacher, Sandhills PS	February 1, 2021	19

<b>Retirements: Secondary Teaching Staff</b>				
<b>First</b>	<b>Last</b>	<b>Position/Location</b>	<b>Retirement Date</b>	<b>Years of Service</b>
Timothy	Brown	Department Head, Waterloo Oxford DSS	December 31, 2020	30
Matthew	Clifford	Teacher, Jacob Hespeler SS	January 31, 2021	31
Michael	Galasso	Teacher, Grand River CI	December 31, 2020	31
Rod	Hacking	Teacher, Glenview Park SS	January 31, 2021	32
Mary Jane	Ramsey-Boettcher	Teacher, Waterloo Oxford DSS	February 28, 2021	30

<b>Retirements: Administrative &amp; Support Staff</b>				
<b>First</b>	<b>Last</b>	<b>Position/Location</b>	<b>Retirement Date</b>	<b>Years of Service</b>
Josephine	Jensen	Office Supervisor, Jacob Hespeler SS	January 31, 2021	23
Kelly	Monforte	Supervision Monitor, Kitchener CI	March 31, 2021	22
Judy	Shantz	Secretary, Wellesley PS	March 31, 2021	8
Hugh	Thomson	Head Custodian, Manchester PS	February 26, 2021	26

**Staffing Statistics – Resignations**  
**Current at January 25, 2021**

<b>Permanent Staff Resignations</b>			
<b>First</b>	<b>Last</b>	<b>Position/Location</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
Maria	Bonventre	Human Resources Assistant, Human Resources	December 23, 2020
Emily	Bree	Educational Assistant, Queen Elizabeth PS	December 19, 2020
Claire	Chambers	Early Childhood Educator, Hespeler PS	January 28, 2021
Patricia	Hawthorne	Educational Assistant, Forest Hill PS	January 6, 2021
Anne	Henderson	Elementary Teacher, Highland PS	February 28, 2021
Linda	Janeway	Elementary LTO, Riverside PS	February 12, 2021



# Report to Board of Trustees

January 25, 2021

## **Subject: Staffing Recommendations – Appointments**

### **Recommendation**

*That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the appointments to staff as outlined in the report titled “Staffing Recommendations – Appointments, dated January 25, 2021.*

### **Status**

The staff appointments as noted on Appendix A of this report are effective the dates indicated.

### **Background**

The board’s practice has been to have appointments presented for information at regular monthly board meetings.

### **Financial implications**

Expenses are within the existing approved budget.

### **Communications**

Employees listed in this report have, or will be advised of the appointments.

Prepared by: Michael Weinert, Coordinating Superintendent, Human Resource Services, in consultation with Coordinating Council.

## Appendix A

**Staffing Information – New Appointments**  
**Current at January 25, 2021**

<b>New Appointments: Elementary Teaching Staff</b>			
<b>First</b>	<b>Last</b>	<b>School ID / Education Centre</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
Kelsey	Beam	Williamsburg Public School	January 4, 2021
Jeanine	Habibullah	St. Jacobs Public School	January 4, 2021
Amy	Martin	Glencairn Public School	February 1, 2021
Marra	Peterson	Vista Hills Public School	January 18, 2021
Hillary	Walter	Centennial Public School (C)	January 25, 2021
Shauna	Wilson	Margaret Avenue Public School	January 25, 2021

<b>New Appointments: Administrative and Support Staff</b>			
<b>First</b>	<b>Last</b>	<b>Position / Location</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
Benjamin	Bell	Carpenter Tradesperson, Maintenance	January 11, 2021
Sasa	Bijelic	Custodian, Linwood/John Mahood PS	December 21, 2020
Miryam	Caquimbo Aguado	Custodian, Queensmount PS	November 25, 2020
Angela	Coffin	Secretary, Sandhills PS	January 25, 2021
Ginger	Colson	Library Clerk, MacGregor PS	January 4, 2021
Veronica	Gallant	Secretary, Eastwood CI	January 11, 2021
Gregory	Koshil	Certified Tradesperson, Maintenance	December 14, 2020
Hilary	Lehman	Secretary, Suddaby PS	January 4, 2021
Claudia	Meleca	Custodian, Jean Steckle PS	January 14, 2021

*New Hires - due to retirements, resignations or leaves and are to replace full or part time vacancies.*

*Human Resource Services*



# Report to Board of Trustees

January 25, 2021

## **Subject: Student Suspension/Expulsion Report November, 2020**

### **Recommendation**

*This report is provided for the Waterloo Region District School Board with information regarding monthly and year-to-date suspension/expulsion data.*

### **Status**

Comparing year to date from November 2019 and November 2020, elementary suspensions have decreased by 386 and secondary suspensions have decreased by 743.

Comparing year to date from November 2019 and November 2020, school expulsions have increased by one and board expulsions have decreased by 10.

The most recent month's suspension and expulsion data is included below. The data is accurate up to, and including, the date of collection.

#### Suspensions

- Total elementary school suspensions in November 2019 - 186, year to date - 537
- Total elementary school suspensions in November 2020 - 77, year to date - 151
- Total secondary school suspensions in November 2019 - 321, year to date - 783
- Total secondary school suspensions in November 2020 - 22, year to date - 40

#### Expulsions

- Total school expulsions in November 2019 - 0, Year to Date 0
- Total school expulsions in November 2020 - 0, Year to Date 1\*
- Total board expulsions in November 2019 - 0, Year to Date 10
- Total board expulsions in November 2020 - 0, Year to Date 0

*\*Year to Date total includes one (1) school expulsion not recorded in the October 2020 Report.*

#### Violent Incidents

The term violent incident is defined as the occurrence of any of the following or the occurrence of a combination of any of the following; possessing a weapon, including possessing a firearm, physical assault causing bodily harm requiring medical attention, sexual assault, robbery, using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person, extortion, hate and/or bias-motivated occurrences.

- Total elementary/secondary violent incidents in November 2019 - 5, year to date 14
- Total elementary/secondary violent incidents in November 2020 - 0, year to date 1



**Background**

As requested by the Board, suspension/expulsion data will be presented at the Board meeting each month.

**Financial implications**

There are no financial implications.

**Communications**

Upon request, suspension/expulsion data is communicated to the Ministry of Education for statistical purposes.

Prepared by: Bill Lemon, Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being, Joe Bell, System Administrator, Learning Support Services, and in consultation with Coordinating Council



# Report to Board of Trustees

January 25, 2021

## **Subject: Student Suspension/Expulsion Report December, 2020**

### **Recommendation**

*This report is provided for the Waterloo Region District School Board with information regarding monthly and year-to-date suspension/expulsion data.*

### **Status**

Comparing year to date from December 2019 and December 2020, elementary suspensions have decreased by 470 and secondary suspensions have decreased by 942.

Comparing year to date from December 2019 and December 2020, school expulsions have remained the same at 1 and board expulsions have decreased by 11.

The most recent month's suspension and expulsion data is included below. The data is accurate up to, and including, the date of collection.

#### Suspensions

- Total elementary school suspensions in December 2019 - 124, year to date - 661
- Total elementary school suspensions in December 2020 - 40, year to date - 191
- Total secondary school suspensions in December 2019 - 208, year to date - 991
- Total secondary school suspensions in December 2020 - 9, year to date - 49

#### Expulsions

- Total school expulsions in December 2019- 1, Year to Date 1
- Total school expulsions in December 2020 - 0, Year to Date 1
- Total board expulsions in December 2019 - 1, Year to Date 11
- Total board expulsions in December 2020 - 0, Year to Date 0

#### Violent Incidents

The term violent incident is defined as the occurrence of any of the following or the occurrence of a combination of any of the following; possessing a weapon, including possessing a firearm, physical assault causing bodily harm requiring medical attention, sexual assault, robbery, using a weapon to cause or to threaten bodily harm to another person, extortion, hate and/or bias-motivated occurrences.

- Total elementary/secondary violent incidents in December 2019 - 4, year to date 18
- Total elementary/secondary violent incidents in December 2020 - 1, year to date 2

**Background**

As requested by the Board, suspension/expulsion data will be presented at the Board meeting each month.

**Financial implications**

There are no financial implications.

**Communications**

Upon request, suspension/expulsion data is communicated to the Ministry of Education for statistical purposes.

Prepared by: Bill Lemon, Superintendent, Student Achievement & Well-Being, Joe Bell, System Administrator, Learning Support Services, and in consultation with Coordinating Council



January 11, 2021

The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario  
The Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education

To the Honourable Doug Ford and the Honourable Stephen Lecce,

On Wednesday, January 6, 2021, the Halton District School Board unanimously approved the following resolution:

**Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees direct the Chair to write a letter asking the Minister of Education and Premier of Ontario to expedite facilitating high speed internet connectivity to increase equitable access in rural and remote areas.**

The Regional Municipality of Halton is close to 1000 km<sup>2</sup> in area and large swaths of the region are rural. Many families in these areas (North Burlington and rural Milton and Halton Hills) have little access to reliable high-speed internet service, or when it is available, it is cost prohibitive to acquire and maintain. This has produced a growing and concerning inequity in access to education across the Halton District School Board. Many students have been unable to access synchronous virtual learning as mandated by the Ministry of Education.

Band-aid solutions of cellular access hubs are expensive for the board to acquire and distribute, and require 5-7 days in lead-time to process and distribute to our families. Cellular signals are not always available or strong enough in areas of Halton for a hub to be a viable solution for all families in need. Due to the delayed closure announcement of in-person learning until after the holidays had begun, the hub acquisition process could not begin until January 4. With the January 2, 2021 letter from the Minister confirming a January 11, 2021 return to class date as well as the noted processing delay, it was logical for the board not to pursue this avenue when hubs would not arrive until after elementary students had returned to in-person learning. Note that in an extremely tight budget year, expenditures on potentially unutilized technology in the short term is not felt to be prudent.

For some rural elementary school families, it has not been possible to participate in synchronous virtual learning during the first week of January. The last minute announcement of the extension to elementary virtual learning has exacerbated the internet access disparity for rural families.

The government has stated that boosting high-speed internet access and connectivity in rural and remote areas of the province is a priority. The Trustees of the Halton District School Board are aware of the issues [of local rural families](#) and note the growing sentiment of frustration because students can not access the mandated synchronous virtual learning through high-speed internet. We understand this concern is being raised [across the province](#) and from other school boards.

Access to high-speed internet is an equity issue that must be immediately addressed by the government. During the press conference on January 8th, it was suggested that the province could be in a crisis situation until at least April 2021. We cannot leave families with limited or no access to synchronous learning as we “pivot” in and out of in-person and virtual learning during that time. We ask the government to urgently raise the priority of providing reliable and affordable high-speed internet access to rural and remote regions of Ontario.

Sincerely,



Andréa Grebenc

Chair of the Board of Trustees, Halton District School Board

Cc: MPP Ted Arnott,  
MPP Stephen Crawford,  
MPP Parm Gill,  
MPP Jane McKenna,  
MPP Effie Triantafilopoulos,  
Ontario School Board Chairs (English Public, English Catholic, French Public,  
French Catholic)  
President Cathy Abraham, Ontario Public School Board Association



January 7, 2021

The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario  
The Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education

To the Honourable Doug Ford and the Honourable Stephen Lecce,

On Wednesday, January 6, 2021, the Halton District School Board unanimously approved the following resolution:

**Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees direct the Chair to write a letter asking the Minister of Education and Premier of Ontario to consider adding educators to the Provincial COVID-19 Command Table, and to provide school boards and the general public significant notice of extension of virtual learning or change of regional or provincial learning modes.**

As the Province of Ontario continues to battle COVID-19, it has become clear that key decision making bodies, such as the Command Table, could benefit from direct and timely input from representatives of the education sector. Though the weekly 30-minute conference calls with the 72 School Board Chairs and Minister have been a useful method by which the Minister provides information to Board Chairs and Directors, this information is often shared after these major decisions have already been made and communicated to the public through other forums.

On December 21, 2020, the Province announced the shift to virtual learning starting the week of January 4, 2021. If an “in-the-field education expert” had been included in the Command Table discussions, there may have been a better understanding of the ramifications of making the announcement after the school holiday break had begun.

Exhausted educators were called upon again to put in many hours over the break to plan for, communicate and implement a system for a full, virtual start on January 4. While school systems have been prepared to quickly change models, greater precision, efficiency and community collaboration could have taken place at the local level with additional notice when school was still in session. Students would have had access to devices and internet connectivity could have

been set up for rural families to start virtual learning in the new year. The delay has resulted in inequitable access to virtual education for many rural students, a situation which unfortunately they have experienced previously at the beginning of the pandemic.

There is a concern in the community and among staff that there will be weekly last-minute announcements from the Province through the winter, leaving students, families and staff in a constant, inequitable and unhealthy state of flux. Planning child-minding, managing the availability and overseeing of multiple home electronic devices, and co-ordinating parental work-situations take significant time and effort for families and staff who need as much consistency as possible in the learning environment to provide engaging and effective lessons.

Trustees of the Halton District School Board recognize that this is an evolving situation, and that difficult decisions need to be made in an ongoing and timely way. We also recognize that there are expectations and a need for students to be provided with stable and meaningful education opportunities. We have two requests that we believe will support collaborative decision making and will benefit all students, staff and families in the province, namely:

- Add a representative(s) of the education sector to the COVID-19 Command Table and enhance processes for meaningful consultation prior to making major decisions.
- Move to a system which builds in time for Boards to pivot, during regular work hours, so that we can ensure equitable opportunities for all students (including connectivity and device distribution), respectfully manage staff resources in this marathon scenario, and give staff and families a chance to make plans to support both learning and health.

Sincerely,



Andréa Grebenc

Chair of the Board of Trustees, Halton District School Board

Cc: MPP Ted Arnott,  
MPP Stephen Crawford,  
MPP Parm Gill,  
MPP Jane McKenna,  
MPP Effie Triantafilopoulos,  
Ontario School Board Chairs (English Public, English Catholic, French Public,  
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