

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, May 31, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.**

AGENDA

Call to Order

Territorial Acknowledgement and O Canada

Approval of Agenda

Consent Agenda**

Receipt/Approval of Minutes:

- Approve Minutes – Audit Committee Meeting of February 2, 2021
- Approve Minutes – Parent Involvement Committee Meeting of March 2, 2021
- Approve Minutes – Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of April 14, 2021
- Receive Minutes – Board Meeting of April 26, 2021
- Approve Minutes – Education Development Charges Meeting #3 of May 10, 2021
- Approve Minutes – Committee of the Whole Meeting of May 10, 2021
- Approve Minutes – Committee of the Whole Meeting of May 17, 2021

Receipt/Approval of Monthly Reports:

- | | | |
|----|---|------------|
| 32 | Staffing Information – Retirements and Resignations | M. Weinert |
| 36 | Staffing Recommendations – Appointments | M. Weinert |

Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

Announcements/Celebrating Board Activities

Communications Good News Update

Delegations

Staff Follow Up

Reports

- | | | |
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| 38 | Student Suspension/Expulsion Report, March 2021 | B. Lemon |
| 40 | Student Suspension/Expulsion Report, April 2021 | B. Lemon |
| 42 | Student Aggression Report | M. Weinert |
| | COVID-19 Pandemic Verbal Update - Summer Learning Program
& Summer Supports | J. Bryant / L. Read |

Board Reports

- | | | |
|----|--|---------------------|
| 48 | Ad Hoc School Naming Review Committee Update | Trustee K. Woodcock |
| 55 | OPSBA AGM Direction for Voting Delegate | Trustee L. Tremble |

****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.**

- OPSBA Update
65 Thinking Out Loud Survey
Student Senate Update*

Trustee L. Tremble
Student Trustees
Student Trustees

Board Communications

- 69 Durham District School Board to Minister of Education
71 Rainbow District School Board to Minister of Education and Premier of Ontario
73 District School Board of Ontario North East to Minister of Education
75 York Region District School Board to Minister of Education
77 Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board to Minister of Education
79 Hamilton-Wentworth DSB to Minister of Education - Permanent Online Learning Proposal
81 Thames Valley District School Board to Minister of Education
84 Waterloo Region District School Board to Minister of Education
86 Hamilton-Wentworth DSBto Minister of Education - Special Education Supports
87 Halton District School Board to Minister of Education

Other Business

Question Period (10 minutes)

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

Adjournment

*Standing Item



Report to Board of Trustees

May 31, 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 May 31, 2021

Retirements: Elementary Teaching Staff				
First	Last	Position/Location	Retirement Date	Years of Service
Joanne	Aitken	Teacher, Wellesley PS	June 30, 2021	21
David	Atkins	Teacher, Westheights PS	June 30, 2021	29
Lori	Frew-Landry	Teacher, Wellesley PS	August 31, 2021	31
Margot	Gascon	Teacher, Empire PS	June 30, 2021	34
Tina	Giannopoulos	Teacher, MacGregor PS	June 30, 2021	30
Robert	Holtby	Teacher, Laurentian PS	June 30, 2021	31
Leslie	Kunert	Teacher, Lester B Pearson PS	June 30, 2021	36
Michelle	Lang	Consultant, Learning Services	July 31, 2021	31
Elaine	Mason	Teacher, Groh PS	June 30, 2021	31
Susan	McQuay	Teacher, Country Hills PS	June 30, 2021	22
Scott	Miller	Teacher, Sunnyside PS	June 30, 2021	31
Shelley	Miller	Teacher, Northlake Woods PS	June 30, 2021	31
Donna	Murray	Teacher, Westheights PS	June 30, 2021	29
Anna	Trinca	Teacher, Elizabeth Ziegler PS	June 30, 2021	22

Retirements: Secondary Teaching Staff				
First	Last	Position/Location	Retirement Date	Years of Service
Catherine	Klie	Guidance Teacher, Galt CI	June 30, 2021	34
Youri	Lepp	Teacher, Elmira District SS	July 29, 2021	20
Nicola	Martin	Department Head, French, Cameron Heights CI	June 30, 2021	31
Michelle	Miller	Teacher, U-Turn Waterloo	June 30, 2021	29
Maria	Schindler	Teacher, Waterloo Oxford District SS	April 30, 2021	28
Susan	Werner	Teacher, Bluevale CI	June 30, 2021	17
Kenneth	Whytock	Consultant, Learning Services	July 31, 2021	30

Staffing Statistics – Retirements

Current at May 31, 2021

Retirements: Administrative & Support Staff				
First	Last	Position/Location	Retirement Date	Years of Service
Brenda	Alexander	Educational Assistant, Special Education	June 30, 2021	23
Cindy	Benedetti	System Administrator, Special Education	June 30, 2021	28
Elizabeth	Brechun	Library Clerk, Blair Road PS	August 16, 2021	17
Helen	Derby	Educational Assistant (Autism), Pruefer PS	June 29, 2021	29
Brenda	George	Head Secretary, Lester B Pearson PS	June 30, 2021	31
Christine	Gerrie	Child Youth Worker, Waterloo CI	August 31, 2021	23
Gail	Hardman	Educational Assistant, Alpine PS	July 2, 2021	27
Luis	Hernandez	Custodian, Sir John A Macdonald SS	August 31, 2021	18
Kimberly	Koenig	Educational Assistant, Rockway PS	June 30, 2021	31
Lauren	McDonald	Educational Assistant, Rosemount	May 21, 2021	22
Angela	Mercier	Superintendent, Student Achievement & Wellbeing	June 30, 2021	19
Rob	Rebellato	Principal, Country Hills PS	May 31, 2021	18
Doug	Schmidt	Educational Assistant, Rosemount	September 3, 2021	12
Christie	Wynn	Vice Principal, Glenview Park SS	June 30, 2021	31

Staffing Statistics – Resignations
Current at May 31, 2021

Permanent Staff Resignations			
First	Last	Position/Location	Effective Date
Jessica	Haskins	Educational Assistant, Moffat Creek PS	June 30, 2021
Christie	Kent	Senior Planner, Planning	June 2, 2021
Gabby	Rodriguez	HR Assistant, Wellness	May 21, 2021
Dyoni	Smith-Page	Elementary Teacher, Groh PS	May 17, 2021
Alisa	Thibeau	Elementary Teacher, Janet Metcalfe PS	May 21, 2021
Timothy	Wunder	Custodial Maintenance Helper, Forest Heights CI	May 13, 2021



Report to Board of Trustees

May 31, 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 May 31, 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 May 31, 2021**

New Appointments: Elementary Teaching Staff			
First	Last	School ID / Education Centre	Effective Date
Nora	Smith	Itinerant Hearing Teacher, Special Education	May 31, 2021

New Appointments: Administrative and Support Staff			
First	Last	Position / Location	Effective Date
Emma	Aparicio	Custodian, WT Townshend PS	April 19, 2021
Reta	Bernard	Custodian, Huron Heights SS	April 13, 2021
Julia	Brown	Custodian, Grand River CI	April 14, 2021
Soibifa	Gaibo	Application Programmer/Analyst, ITS	May 17, 2021
Clayton	Johnston	Custodian, Grand River CI	May 13, 2021
Esperanza	Ossa Arstizabal	Custodian, Elizabeth Ziegler PS	March 29, 2021
Ryan	MacDonald	Custodian, Silverheights PS	April 12, 2021
Lorena	Molina	Custodian, Grand River CI	May 14, 2021
Taylor	Prendergast	Custodian, Elgin Street PS	May 17, 2021
Andrew	Richards	Custodian, Huron Heights SS	April 12, 2021
Peter	Sousa	Certified Tradesperson, Maintenance Department	April 28, 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

May 31, 2021

Subject: Student Suspension/Expulsion Report March, 2021

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 March 2020 and March 2021, elementary suspensions have decreased by 712 and secondary suspensions have decreased by 1395.

Comparing year to date from March 2020 and March 2021 school expulsions have decreased by 1 and board expulsions have decreased by 14.

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

These data were collected during a school year where students were engaged in learning in three modes: in-person, adaptive hybrid and distance learning.

Suspensions

- Total elementary school suspensions in March 2020 - 112, year to date - 1031
- Total elementary school suspensions in March 2021 - 104, year to date - 319
- Total secondary school suspensions in March 2020 - 116, year to date - 1472
- Total secondary school suspensions in March 2021 - 22, year to date - 77

Expulsions

- Total school expulsions in March 2020 - 0, Year to Date 2
- Total school expulsions in March 2021 - 0, Year to Date 1
- Total board expulsions in March 2020 - 2, Year to Date 14
- Total board expulsions in March 2021 - 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 March 2020 - 5, year to date 28
- Total elementary/secondary violent incidents in March 2021 - 0, 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



Report to Board of Trustees

May 31, 2021

Subject: Student Suspension/Expulsion Report April, 2021

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 April 2020 and April 2021, elementary suspensions have decreased by 706 and secondary suspensions have decreased by 1394.

Comparing year to date from April 2020 and April 2021 school expulsions have decreased by 1 and board expulsions have decreased by 14.

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

These data were collected during a school year where students were engaged in learning in three modes: in-person, adaptive hybrid and distance learning.

Suspensions

- Total elementary school suspensions in April 2020 - 0, year to date - 1031
- Total elementary school suspensions in April 2021 - 6, year to date - 325
- Total secondary school suspensions in April 2020 - 0, year to date - 1472
- Total secondary school suspensions in April 2021 - 1, year to date - 78

Expulsions

- Total school expulsions in April 2020 - 0, Year to Date 2
- Total school expulsions in April 2021- 0, Year to Date 1
- Total board expulsions in April 2020 - 0, Year to Date 14
- Total board expulsions in April 2021 - 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 April 2020 - 0, year to date 28
- Total elementary/secondary violent incidents in April 2021 - 0, 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



Report to Board of Trustees

May 31, 2021

Subject: Reported Student Aggression Quarterly Data Q3 –2020-2021

Recommendation:

*This report is provided for the Waterloo Region District School Board with information regarding reported incidences of student aggression for the quarter (**February 1, 2021 - April 15, 2021**).*

Status:

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, unplanned disruption continues (pivoting from In-Person to Remote and vice versa) impacting the continuity in delivery for students within our system. These impacts have resulted in a significant reduction to the student aggression numbers. Due to the highly ambiguous nature of this pandemic, it is difficult to forecast future student aggression levels.

Having said that, we continue to be proactive in utilizing our BMS team to support staff and administration in the following ways:

- Responding to student specific referrals addressing supports for safety plans, review of critical incidents, and classroom observations and audits;
- Providing BMS support to specific site requests (i.e. practice a containment, student specific interventions etc.);
- Supporting the growing system needs in BMS by training new trainers (23 new trainers trained during this quarter);
- Assisting in facilitating the transition of students returning to In-Person learning;
- Directly supporting transition planning to ensure staff feel supported and that we are setting both students and staff up for success;
- Organizing caseloads, discussions and preparation for supporting students returning to In Person learning in September of 2021;
- Proactively identifying schools and students that may require direct support from BMS in September of 2021;
- Providing on-going training for multiple employee groups within the Board; and
- Successfully completed the training required to meet the entire BMS 2020-2021 System training plan through multiple modes. The BMS team and BMS trainers worked diligently to navigate through the Covid-19 precautions and restrictions.

Student Aggression incidents are recorded under four (4) categories in order of severity from least severe to most severe:

Hazard: The worker is reporting a hazard, the worker sustained no injury during

the incident or it was a near miss. The Board and Unions actively encourage employees to report workplace hazards in order to act proactively to prevent more serious incidents.

First aid: Applying minor first aid measures like cleaning minor cuts, scrapes or scratches; applying a band aid, cold compress or ice pack. First Aid is provided at the workplace.

Health care (or medical aid): Worker sustained an injury requiring medical aid from an external health care practitioner (i.e. a doctor, nurse, chiropractor or physiotherapist); services provided at a hospital and/or health facility and/or require prescription drugs. This is required to be reported to the Workers Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB).

Lost Time: The worker sustains injury that requires time away from work after the day of incident and was unable to work. This is required to be reported to the Workers Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB).

Previous Year Quarterly Report Comparison:

Quarterly student aggression data as reported by WRDSB staff for the period February 1, 2021 - April 15, 2021 compared to the data from the same period February 1, 2020 - April 15, 2020 last school year:

- Total Elementary incidents have decreased by 56 incidents from the same period last year.
- Total Secondary incidents have decreased by 7 incidents from the same period last year.

2020-21 Reporting Information:

Reported Student Aggression Incidents for the Current School Year (*February 1, 2021 - April 15, 2021*):

- Total Elementary aggression incidents: (***February 1, 2021 - April 15, 2021***): **184 Incidents**
 - Hazard – 134 incidents
 - 72.83% of all elementary incidents
 - First Aid – 46 incidents
 - 25.00% of all elementary incidents
 - Health Care – 2 events
 - 1.09% of all elementary events
 - Lost Time – 2 events
 - 1.09% of all elementary events
- Total Secondary aggression incidents from (***February 1, 2021 - April 15, 2021***): **20 incidents**
 - Hazard –8 incidents

- 40.00% of all Secondary incidents
- First Aid – 8 incidents
 - 40.00% of all Secondary incidents
- Health Care – 2 incidents
 - 10.00% of all Secondary incidents
- Lost Time – 2 incidents
 - 10.00 % of all Secondary incidents
- Total aggression incidents for hazards, first aid, health care, and lost time per employee group from **February 1, 2021 - April 15, 2021 - 204 Incidents**
 - Educational Assistant (EA) / Child and Youth Worker (CYW) – 139
 - 68.14% of total incidents
 - Education Support Staff (ESS) – 3
 - 1.47% of total incidents
 - Early Child Educator (ECE) – 10
 - 4.90% of total incidents
 - Elementary Teacher – 38
 - 16.18% of total incidents
 - Elementary Occasional Teacher – 11
 - 5.39% of total incidents
 - Secondary Teacher/Occasional Teacher – 2
 - 0.98% of total incidents
 - Administrators – 1
 - 0.49% of total incidents

Reported Student Aggression Incidents for Prior School Year (February 1, 2020 - April 15, 2020):

- Total Elementary aggression incidents: **(February 1, 2020 - April 15, 2020): 240 Incidents**
 - Hazard – 182 incidents
 - 75.83% of all elementary incidents
 - First Aid – 53 incidents
 - 22.08% of all elementary incidents
 - Health Care – 1 event
 - 0.42% of all elementary events
 - Lost Time – 4 events -
 - 1.67% of all elementary events
- Total Secondary aggression incidents from **(February 1, 2020 - April 15, 2020): 27 incidents**
 - Hazard –12 incidents

- 44.44% of all Secondary incidents
 - First Aid – 13 incidents
 - 48.15% of all Secondary incidents
 - Health Care – 1 incident
 - 3.70% of all Secondary incidents
 - Lost Time – 1 incident
 - 3.70% of all Secondary incidents
- Total aggression incidents for hazards, first aid, health care, and lost time per employee group from **February 1, 2020 - April 15, 2020 - 267 Incidents**
 - Educational Assistant (EA) / Child and Youth Worker (CYW) – 191
 - 71.54% of total incidents
 - Early Child Educator (ECE) – 21
 - 7.87% of total incidents
 - Elementary Teacher – 33
 - 12.36% of total incidents
 - Elementary Occasional Teacher – 8
 - 3.00% of total incidents
 - Secondary Teacher – 7
 - 2.62% of total incidents
 - Administrators – 7
 - 2.62% of total incidents

Background:

As requested by the Board, student aggression data is to be provided on a quarterly basis.

Financial implications:

The financial impacts are covered within existing Board approved budget lines.

Communications:

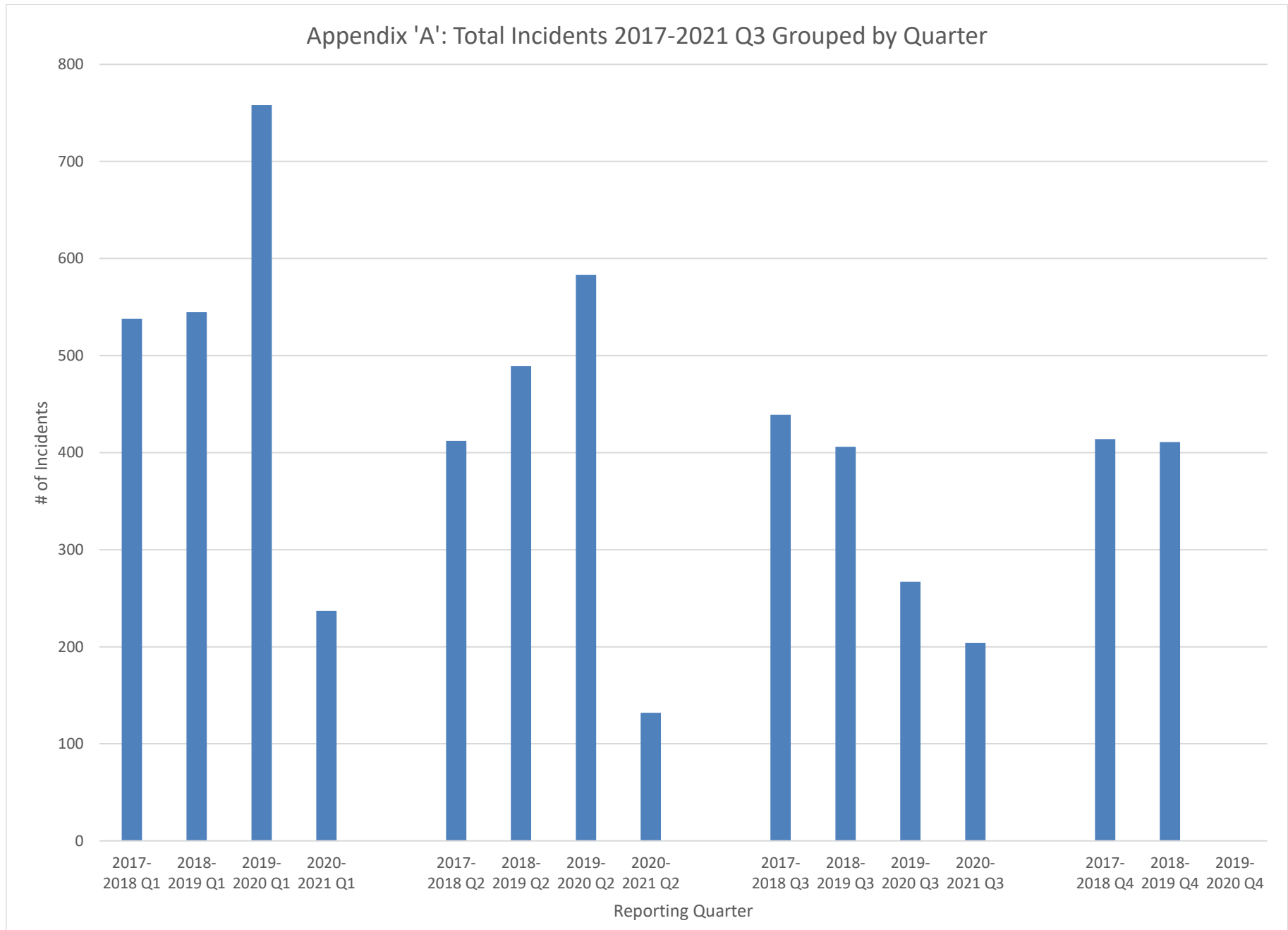
A report of all workplace incidences, including student aggression is provided every two weeks to the Board's Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC).

Appendices:

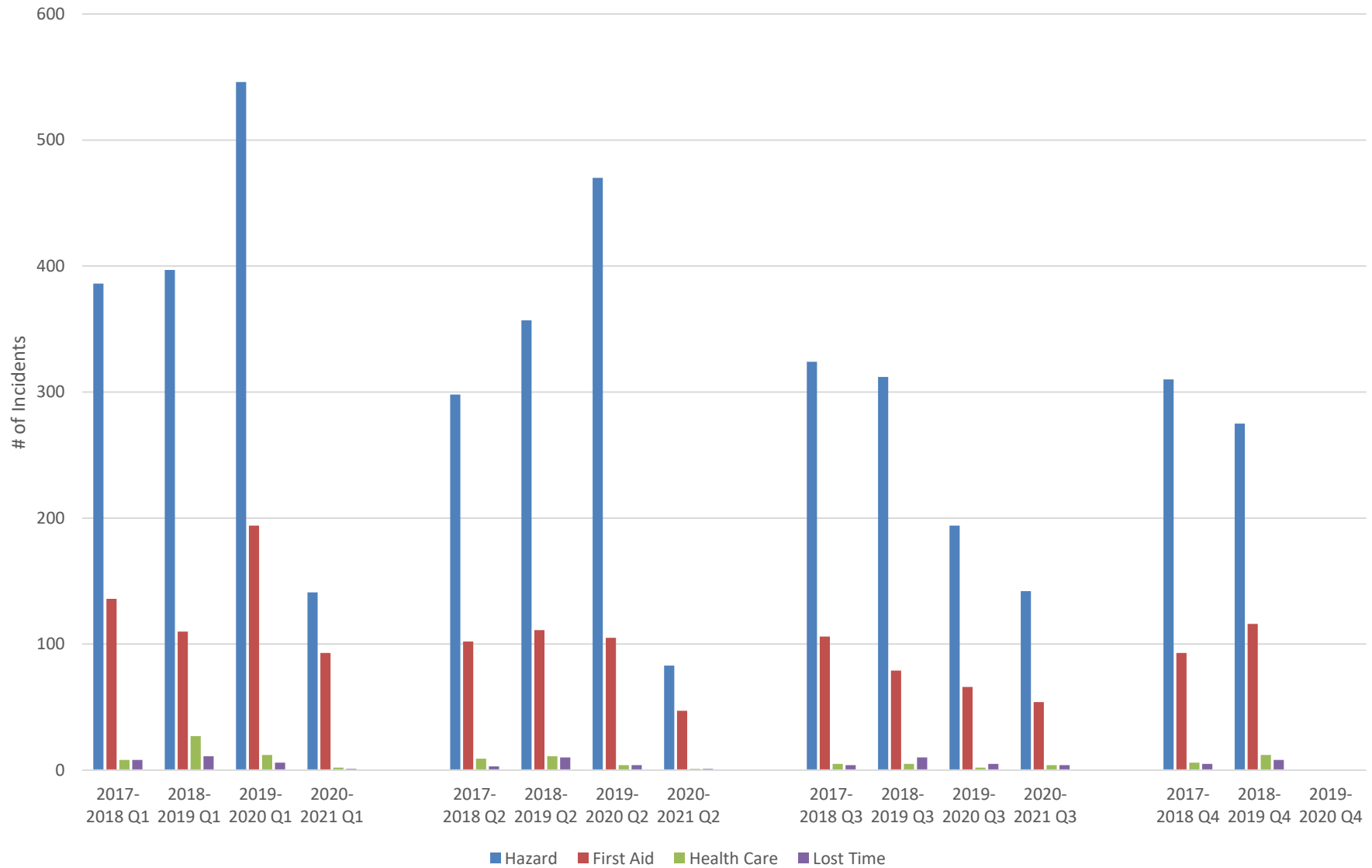
Appendix 'A' – Total Incidents: 2017-2020-21 Q3

Appendix 'B' – Types of Incidents by Quarter: 2017-2020-21 Q3

Prepared by: Michael Weinert, Coordinating Superintendent, Human Resource Services, Justin Brown, Senior Manager, Human Resources Services, Shannon-Melissa Dunlop, Manager, Health, Safety & Security, in consultation with Coordinating Council



Appendix 'B': Types of Incidents by Quarter
2017 - > 2020-2021 Q3 Grouped by Quarter





Report to the Board

May 31, 2021

Subject: Ad Hoc School Naming Review Committee Update

Recommendation

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve an extension to the timeline, allowing the committee to bring final recommendations including implementation plans to the Board of Trustees by December 2021; and

That the revised Terms of Reference be approved as presented at the May 31, 2021 Board Meeting

Status

The committee has met several times since January 2021 spending considerable time reviewing, reflecting and revising the Terms of Reference (TOR):

- using an anti-racist, decolonial and trauma-informed lens for the review (2.1)
- using a shared leadership group (2 community co-convenors, 1 student, 1 trustee) rather than co-chair structure (3.2, 6.2)
- adding one student representing Indigenous student population (4.1)
- including a standing vacancy in line with Indigenous practices to acknowledge the ones who are not here and show there is always room for one more (4.1)
- including a review of mascot names/logos (8.1)

The revised Ad Hoc School Naming Review Committee Terms of Reference are included in Appendix A.

The committee has compiled information from various sources to support the review including a glossary of equity terms, a list of all schools and school mascots/logos including new schools, a Policy Review Guide (IEHR developed), other Ontario school boards' policies and administrative procedures and media articles regarding recent school name changes in various jurisdictions.

The original time frame for completion of the work of the committee did not take into consideration:

- a) that the application of anti-racism, anti-oppression and decolonizing principles demands time for research, personal reflection and consultation, and
- b) the impact of the pandemic on our student and staff committee members.

With that in mind and to ensure thoughtful and inclusive deliverables, the committee is requesting an extension to December 2021. Per the revised TOR, regular updates will continue to be provided to the Board of Trustees regarding the status of the committee's progress.

Next steps include drafting revisions to Board Policy 4020 - Naming and Renaming of Board Facilities and Administrative Procedure 4865 – Naming and Renaming of Board Facilities.

Background

The Ad Hoc School Naming Review Committee was struck by an approved motion of the Board of Trustees at the October 19, 2020 Committee of the Whole meeting.

The Ad Hoc School Naming Review Committee consists of the following members:

Group / Position	Final Members / Organization
Equity & Inclusion Advisory Group (3)	Fauzia Baig, Coalition of Muslim Women
	*Cait Glasson, SPECTRUM
	*Marcia Smellie, The Congress of Black Women, Ontario Inc. Waterloo Region Chapter
Human Rights & Equity Advisor (HREA) (1)	Deepa Ahluwalia, Human Rights and Equity Advisor
Equity & Inclusion Officer - Indigenous Focus (1)	Nicole Robinson, Equity and Inclusion Officer - Indigenous Focus
Equity & Inclusion Officer (1)	Teneile Warren, Equity and Inclusion Officer
Director of Education or designate (1)	Peter Rubenschuh, Superintendent Achievement & Well Being
External representatives from Indigenous, Black and racialized communities or organizations (3)	Cynthia Martin, Region of Waterloo; Indigenous Education Advisory Committee
	Luane Roberts, Ahwenahaode Indigenous Justice Program; Indigenous Education Advisory Committee
	Ibtisam Saeed, African, Caribbean and Black Community
Trustees including EIAG trustee representative (3)	Jayne Herring, Trustee
	Carol Millar, Trustee
	*Kathleen Woodcock, Trustee
Student Trustees or designate (2)	Tristan John-Jandles, Student Trustee
	Rowan McDonald, Student Trustee
Indigenous, Black and racialized student population representatives (3)	*Student, Preston High School
	Student, Glenview Park Secondary School

	Student, Sir John A Macdonald Secondary School
Staff representatives (2)	Vida Collis, Principal, Secondary
	Melissa Stacey, Principal, Elementary
Parent representative (1)	Tammy Webster, Parent, Student at Breslau Public School
Standing vacancy (1)	To acknowledge the ones who are not here and show there is always room for one more

*indicates member of the shared leadership group

Financial implications

The identification of and commitment to engaging in background research to inform the review of related policies, administrative procedures, and existing school names and mascots, any additional resources and/or financial implications will be shared.

Communications

Communication to stakeholders will be developed as needed.

Prepared by: Heather McKinna, Administrative Assistant to the Chairperson and Stephanie Reidel, Manager of Corporate Services for Trustee K. Woodcock in consultation with Coordinating Council

Ad Hoc Committee Terms of Reference - School Naming Review

1. School Naming Review Ad Hoc Committee

1.1. Related Legislation

Ontario Human Rights Code

Education Act

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

1.2. Related policies/bylaws

Board Policy 4020 - Naming and Renaming of Board Facilities

Administrative Procedure 4865 – Naming and Renaming of Board Facilities

1.3. Alignment with Board Strategic Plan, 2016 – 2019

The work of this committee aligns with the following strategic priorities:

- Our students experience a sense of belonging in a caring learning environment that addresses their well-being;
- Our families and caregivers are supported in creating the best possible outcomes for our students;
- Our staff is equipped with the skills and resources to support every child in their learning journey;
- Our staff is supported in their wellness as they promote and model wellness for our students;
- Our learning environments include all students and their diverse perspectives and ideas;
- Our students, staff and community are supported by creative and collaborative problem-solving;
- Our school communities are encouraged to learn by exploring new and innovative projects, ideas and approaches.

1.4. Type of committee (statutory, board (standing/ad hoc), community (standing/ad hoc)) Community/Ad Hoc

2. Purpose/Mandate/Goals

2.1 Focus

The committee will review the names of all schools and board facilities using an anti-racist, decolonial, and trauma informed lens. The review will include specific attention and provide recommended changes to Policy 4020 - Naming and Renaming of Board Facilities, and related administrative procedures.

In conducting the review, the committee will engage Indigenous, Black, and racialized communities in the district, staff, students, parents, Board committees, alumni, community groups and members of the public in a way that sincerely solicits input.

2.2 Powers and responsibilities

The committee will develop a scope and format for the review and timelines for completion and bring a report to the Board of Trustees outlining the review plan. The committee will bring recommendations including implementation plans to the Board of Trustees by December 2021. *(Dates are subject to change as per the October 19, 2020 COW)*

3. Authority/Jurisdiction/Responsibilities

3.1 Individual members

The Ad Hoc Committee shall consist of trustees, Board employees, community representatives, parents and students as set out below.

3.2 Chair

The committee shall be led by a structure of decolonial committee leadership as follows:

Two community co-convenors lead the committee.

One student representative provides a student lens.

One trustee representative acts as the voice of the group to the board of trustees.

The community co-convenors, student representative and trustee representative will share responsibilities of leading meetings, setting agendas so time commitment can be shared.

3.3 Board personnel

The committee shall be supported by administrative support staff designated by the Director of Education.

4. Membership

4.1 Composition

The committee is comprised of the following membership:

- Members of the Equity & Inclusion Advisory Group (EIAG) (3)
- The Human Rights & Equity Advisor (1)
- The Equity & Inclusion Officer - Indigenous Focus (1)
- The Equity & Inclusion Officer (1)
- The Director of Education (1) or designate
- External representatives from Indigenous, Black, and racialized communities or organizations (3)
- Trustees, one of which is the Equity & Inclusion Advisory Group (EIAG) trustee representative (3)
- Student Trustees or designate (2)
- Representatives from Indigenous, Black and racialized student population (3)
- Staff representatives as designated by the Director of Education (2)
- Parent Representation (1)
- Standing vacancy in line with Indigenous practices to acknowledge the ones who are not here and show there is always room for one more (1)

4.2 Term

The committee will provide its first report by verbal update by April 2021 and bring the final report, including recommendations and implementation plans to the Board of Trustees by

December 2021. Following reporting, the committee may wish to hold a further meeting or meetings to discuss implementation.

- The timelines are tentative, with the understanding that the committee may have to adjust the timelines

4.3 Appointment process

The Equity & Inclusion Advisory Group (EIAG) will choose its representatives (3). External representatives from Indigenous, Black, and racialized communities or organizations will be recruited in consultation with the Equity & Inclusion Advisory Group (EIAG), Indigenous Education Advisory Committee (IEAC) and Black Brilliance Advisory Council (BBAC).

Representatives from Indigenous, Black and racialized student population will be recruited in consultation with Student Trustees and the Student Senate.

Trustees and the Student Trustees on the committee are to be designated by the Chairperson of the Board, in consultation with Trustees.

The staff representatives on the committee are to be designated by the Director of Education.

Parent Representation will be recruited through the Parent Involvement Committee (*as per Oct 19 COW*)

4.4 Vacancies

In the event of a vacancy, the same process used for initial recruitment shall be followed. Given the limited mandate and timeline for the committee, the committee shall have the discretion to leave vacant positions unfilled, providing all voices are being represented. The committee agreed to have a standing vacancy, in line with Indigenous practices, to acknowledge the ones who are not here and show there is always room for one more.

5. Role of Board Personnel/Staff

5.1 Restrictions of membership

See above.

5.2 Personnel and services

See above.

6. Meetings

6.1 Access to meetings

Meetings of the committee shall be open to members of the committee, and the work of the committee will be communicated to members of the public through regular reports to the board of trustees and other communications.

6.2 Election of shared leadership group

The committee shall be led by a revised structure of decolonial committee leadership, as selected by the committee:

Two community co-convenors lead the committee.

One student representative provides a student lens.

One trustee representative acts as the voice of the group to the board of trustees.

The community co-convenors, student representative and trustee representative will share responsibilities of leading meetings, setting agendas so time commitment can be shared.

6.3 Quorum

Quorum for committee meetings shall be 50% plus one, of the committee membership.

6.4 Voting

Each member of the committee shall have one vote. The committee will determine if proxy voting is an option, depending on circumstance.

6.5 Communications/distribution of minutes and agenda

The agenda and minutes of committee meetings shall be distributed to committee members.

6.6 In camera meetings

Committee discussions shall be held in-camera at the discretion of the committee.

7. Reporting

7.1 Committee reports to whom

The committee shall be responsible to and report to the Board of Trustees.

7.2 Format of committee report back

Reporting shall be in writing and/or verbally at the discretion of the committee.

7.3 Time frame of committee report back

The committee will develop a scope and format for the review and timelines for completion and bring a report to the Board of Trustees outlining the review plan in a verbal update in April 2021. The committee will bring recommendations including implementation plans to the Board of Trustees by December 2021, unless an extension is granted. *(Dates are subject to change as approved at the October 19, 2020 COW)*

8. Deliverables/Results

8.1 Requested/required committee output

- A scope for the review and timelines for completion
- A list of identified school and board facility names and mascot/mascot names (and symbols) deemed harmful by the committee
- Recommendations for revisions to Board Policy 4020 - Naming and Renaming of Board Facilities
- Recommendations for revisions to Administrative Procedure 4865 – Naming and Renaming of Board Facilities
- Recommendations for revisions to other related policies and administrative procedures as required
- Recommendations for next steps including implementation plans



Report to Board

May 31, 2021

Subject: Ontario Public School Boards' Association AGM Direction for Voting Delegate

Recommendations:

- (1) That the Waterloo Region District School Board support Executive Council's position on Member Board Policy Resolution (a) COVID Gap Funding;**
- (2) That the Waterloo Region District School Board support Executive Council's position on Member Board Policy Resolution (b) Anti-Racism Research Funding; and**
- (3) That the Waterloo Region District School Board support Executive Council's position on Member Board Policy Resolution (c) Mandatory Black Heritage in Social Studies and History Curriculum; and**
- (4) That the Waterloo Region District School Board support Executive Council's position on Member Board Policy Resolution (c) Funding for Indigenous Trustee Positions in School Boards.**
- (5) That the Waterloo Region District School Board empower the voting delegate to use her discretion when voting in the OPSBA Elections at the Annual General Meeting.**

Status

The purpose of this report is to provide direction for Chairperson J. Weston (or alternate) as voting delegate at the OPSBA AGM. As is the usual practice, OPSBA sent several items slated for consideration at the OPSBA 2021 AGM, in order that they may be reviewed and discussed as necessary at the board table prior to the General Meeting in June. This review will help prepare the Voting Delegate for the AGM. This year's AGM is being held virtually on June 12, 2021.

(1) Appendix A - Member Boards' AGM Policy Resolutions

The OPSBA Constitution states that "Policy Resolutions may be submitted by Member Boards for consideration by way of Notice of Motion to the Board of Directors of the Association at any time throughout the year."

(2) [OPSBA Election Nomination Forms Received as of May 13, 2021](#).

Please use the web link above to access the list of nominees and their profiles (where provided). Further information about the [OPSBA Roles and Responsibilities](#) can be found on their website.

Financial implications

The financial implications are not known at this time.

Communications

The Chairperson J. Weston, the Voting Delegate for WRDSB, will vote at the OPSBA AGM based on the decisions made during the May 31, 2021 Board Meeting.

Prepared by: Stephanie Reidel, Manager of Corporate Services, on behalf of Trustees, and in consultation with Coordinating Council.

Covid Gap Funding

Ottawa-Carleton District School Board

Rationale

Whereas, the March 2021 Ontario Budget states “Our loved ones, our economy, our **education system**, our main streets and our communities have all been impacted by the global pandemic.”

Whereas, Minister Bethlenfalvy stated in his Budget Speech to Parliament, “young people have been among those disproportionately impacted by the economic impacts of the pandemic. So, we are protecting students today..... But also investing in their future success for tomorrow”.

Whereas, the March 2021 Ontario Budget recognizes the effects of COVID will be felt and need to be supported beyond the end of the pandemic, as evidenced by the additional and ongoing supports for Long Term Care for 4 years, Tourism for 3 years and Broadband for 5 years.

Whereas, the learning for many students has been significantly impacted by the stressors of COVID including significant amounts of time learning remotely, when remote learning is not the best suited to all students, lack of engagement, missing social interactions and escalation of new or existing mental health challenges.

Whereas, students experiencing learning gaps that are not immediately identified and immediately remedied with extraordinary measures, will fall further and further behind their cohort and limit the opportunities every student deserves and must have to ensure future success.

Whereas, the current teacher to student ratio will not be adequate to provide the necessary capacity for immediate identification and remediation of COVID created or exacerbated learning gaps.

Whereas, protecting students includes mental health. According to 2020 survey results from Sick Kids Hospital, published February 2021, a larger proportion of children with previous mental health problems are struggling since the pandemic began, and 40 percent of children with no previous mental health issues have experienced deterioration of their mental health.

Whereas, professional learning for teaching staff has been less available since the pandemic and has not been focused on local needs experienced by pandemic measures.

Resolution

Be it resolved, that OPSBA advocate for the Ministry to provide school boards with dedicated funding for an array of much needed supports best configured to meet each board's needs, including but not limited to:

- A. Additional teaching staff to provide immediate evaluation of learning gaps, using tools such as PM Benchmarks;**
- B. Additional teaching staff to provide immediate remediation of identified learning gaps;**
- C. Additional mental health staff to provide immediate mental health supports; and**
- D. Additional funding for professional development for education staff to focus on gap closing and mental health supports.**

Respectfully submitted,

Date of Submission: April 9, 2021

Name of Member Board Representative: Christine Boothby

Title of Member Board Representative: Trustee

Name of Member Board: Ottawa-Carleton District School Board

Executive Council Comments

Executive Council referenced ongoing advocacy regarding funding to support Covid-19 related pressures, including the OPSBA [2021 Ontario Budget Consultation](#) and [2021-2021 Grants for Student Needs](#) submissions.

Executive Council believes the resolution reflects existing and ongoing advocacy and is therefore not required.

Anti-Racism Research Funding

Ottawa-Carleton District School Board

Rationale

Whereas, in accordance with *the Anti-Racism Act* (ARA) and Anti-Racism Data Standards (ARDS), all school boards in Ontario will be required to collect race-based data by January 1, 2023, to support and promote evidence-based anti-racism organizational change and to meet organizational commitments and accountabilities to reduce systemic racism and advance racial equity;

Whereas, prior to January 2023, there is much planning and preparation required for complying with, and implementing the ARA, the regulations and the ARDS, with input from affected communities, stakeholders, and partners.

Whereas, the veracity of the collection and analysis of such data requires building a trusting relationship within our communities by regularly engaging with Indigenous, Black, and racialized communities and other stakeholders to understand their priorities, concerns, needs, and interests in collection, use and analysis of data.

Whereas, many school boards have limited or no internal data collection and analysis capability;

Whereas, the collection and analysis of such data is complex and important work. School boards must be able to build internal capacity to provide consistent and relevant data analysis, that builds on previous years analysis;

Whereas, the hiring of consultants or a cycle of hire and furlough does not allow a consistent collection or analysis of data and the ability to spot trends and build trusted community relationships;

Whereas, school boards must know they will have sustainable funding to build internal data collection and analysis capacity;

Whereas, the ARDS states “there must be at least one manager who is accountable for oversight and ensuring compliance with the ARA, the regulations and the “Standards”;

Whereas, redirecting school board’s existing data collection and analysis team’s efforts to the ARA work, would mean vital data collection and analysis for local priorities may abandoned or not be addressed in a timely manner;

Resolution

Be it resolved, that OPSBA recommend, the Ministry of Education with the Education Equity Secretariat, as a priority, undertake a commitment to all school boards to:

- A. Fund, in addition to the 2021/22 GSNs, an additional Grant, in the amount of no less than two full-time equivalent Research Officers, for school boards to use in their data collection and analysis, as local needs dictate, such as hiring staff, funding third party expertise, funding systems/infrastructure, covering costs associated with community/stakeholder engagement.**
- B. Starting with the 2022/23 GSNs, newly and permanently fund as outlined in Part A.**

Respectfully submitted,

Date of Submission: April 9, 2021

Name of Member Board Representative: Christine Boothby

Title of Member Board Representative: Trustee

Name of Member Board: Ottawa-Carleton District School Board

Executive Council Comments

Executive Council supports this resolution.

Mandatory Black Heritage in Social Studies and History Curriculum

Waterloo Region District School Board

Rationale

Whereas, there has been [a Black presence in Canada for over 400 years](#), but the contributions, struggles and lived experiences of Black people in Ontario is not mandated in the Social Studies and History curriculum, which is largely euro-centric;

Whereas, “sample questions” and/or teacher prompts in the curriculum are optional. They do not ensure every student is learning about Black Canadian experiences and how these experiences have and continue to impact everyone’s lives, including Black people;

Whereas, the Ontario Human Rights Commission submission regarding the education system recommended (4b) [“Include curricular content on the history and intergenerational impacts of human rights violations in Canada and globally, including specifically the experiences of Indigenous peoples and racialized communities in Canada”](#);

Whereas, [data](#) shows that factors such as pride in one's heritage and knowledge of one's culture contribute to academic success and students share that they do not learn about Black History during February, despite it being Black History Month;

Whereas, some teachers (for example, in the [WRDSB](#) and [TDSB](#)) recognize the importance of providing Black-focused curriculum and have created their own resources to support other teachers, however they are not universally accessible;

Whereas, including Black curriculum aligns with [Ontario’s Anti-Black Racism Strategy](#) initiative to “strengthen inclusive and culturally responsive and relevant teaching, curriculum, assessment and resources”;

Whereas, one of the WRDSB strategic priorities is, “Our culture of innovation builds students’ confidence and success as they face the future” includes a focus on “learning environments (which) include all students and their diverse perspectives and ideas”;

Whereas, OPSBA advocates for the whole child and student well-being by supporting [“the social, emotional, mental and physical well-being of all children and youth in our increasingly complex world”](#)

Whereas, we acknowledge the work of Black educators across Ontario whose advocacy work, lived experience and curriculum development formed the background research for this resolution, we are proudly adding our voices in support to their call for change to the current curriculum;

Resolution

Be it resolved, that OPSBA advocate to the Ministry of Education to mandate learning expectations that focus on the over 400-year Black presence in Canada within the Ontario Social Studies and History curriculum; that the new learning expectations be created with Black experts and educators; and that during the time this curriculum is being updated, the Ministry of Education promote and make available to all Boards the Black History courses and resources created and currently being used by teachers in individual Boards across the province.

Respectfully submitted,

Date of Submission: April 20, 2021

Name of Member Board Representative: Laurie Tremble

Title of Member Board Representative: Trustee and OPSBA Board of Directors Member

Name of Member Board: Waterloo Region District School Board

Executive Council Comments

Executive Council supports this resolution.

Funding for Indigenous Trustee Positions in School Boards

Limestone District School Board

Rationale

Whereas, public school boards across Ontario are acting to address racism in education and improve Indigenous education, and

Whereas, the colonial Ontario Regulation 462/97 presently limits school boards to only having a designated Indigenous Trustee if they have a reciprocal education agreement with a First Nation for students attending schools in their board, and

Whereas, some school boards may not have an Indigenous community in their geographic boundary and/or fewer self-identified students, and further, that Indigenous students may include members of multiple other Indigenous communities, urban Indigenous, Metis or Inuit populations outside of a Reciprocal Education Agreement as evidenced in Student Census data, and

Whereas, several school boards have designated Indigenous Student Trustees in an effort to support Indigenous voice, but Student Trustees do not have the full responsibilities, accountabilities and authorities in governing and decision-making as elected Trustees, and

Whereas, one of the Limestone District School Board's Strategic Goals is "to improve student achievement and well-being, promote diversity and foster a sense of belonging (cultivate, nurture)" with numerous initiatives to engage, empower and welcome Indigenous students and families, and

Whereas, Canadians have a duty to implement the Calls to Action of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and further, elected Trustees have legal obligations and responsibilities to uphold Human Rights and Equity, and

Whereas, one of OPSBA's key priorities and work is "Advancing Reconciliation – First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Education.

Resolution

Be it resolved, that OPSBA lobby the Ministry of Education to revise Regulation 462/97, or provide an alternative mechanism, in order for boards to have a process to add an additional, funded designated Indigenous Trustee.

Respectfully submitted,

Date of Submission: April 14, 2021

Name of Member Board Representative: Laurie French

Title of Member Board Representative: Trustee, Past President of OPSBA

Name of Member Board: Limestone District School Board

Executive Council Comments

Executive Council supports this resolution.



REPORT FOR 2021 EXCHANGE WITH GRADE 7 TO 12 STUDENTS

BACKGROUND

In February 2021, WRDSB Student Trustees launched “Thinking Out Loud” - a campaign that asked students in Grades 7-12 what they thought the Student Trustees should focus on. The campaign was shared directly to Grade 7 to 12 students via their WRDSB student emails, and was promoted through the corporate website, school websites and social media channels. The following report details the feedback received from students.

ThoughtExchange was the tool used to gather feedback from students from February 10 to February 26, 2021. Students were asked to answer the question:

What are the most important things Student Trustees should focus on?



















Participants could enter as many thoughts (i.e., responses to the above question) as they liked, review the thoughts shared by others, and assign stars to each thought (from 1 star to 5 stars) depending on how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the thought.

To make sure that the conversation in each Exchange was about the topics that were most meaningful to participants, separate Exchanges were created for the following groups:

- Students in Grade 7 to Grade 8
- Students in Grade 9 to Grade 12

Using ThoughtExchange helped us determine the thoughts that are most important to the WRDSB student community who participated.

PARTICIPANTS

		How did they engage?		
All Participants	 3,900 Participants	 1,384 Shared Thoughts (35%)	 2,588 Rated Thoughts (66%)	 2,190 Explored Thoughts (56%)
	 2,875 Thoughts shared			
	 81,876 Ratings assigned			
Students in Grades 7 - 8	 1,821 Participants	 729 Shared Thoughts (40%)	 1,228 Rated Thoughts (67%)	 1,059 Explored Thoughts (58%)
	 1,645 Thoughts shared			
	 47,281 Ratings assigned			
Students in Grade 9 to 12	 2,079 Participants	 655 Shared Thoughts (32%)	 1,360 Rated Thoughts (65%)	 1,131 Explored Thoughts (54%)
	 1,230 Thoughts shared			
	 34,595 Ratings assigned			

Please select where your home school is located:

City/Township	Number	Percentage
Kitchener	888	44%
Waterloo	486	24%
Cambridge	442	22%
Wilmot	97	5%
Woolwich	80	4%
Wellesley	11	1%
North Dumfries	4	<1%

KEY THEMES and NEXT STEPS

The thoughts shared by participants were reviewed and the following themes emerged from those thoughts that received an average rating higher than 3.6. The table below highlights the key themes.

After the themes were shared with the Student Trustees, they engaged in a conversation with Student Senate to discuss the findings and brainstorm possible solutions. The Student Trustees then met with the Associate Director, the Human Rights and Equity Advisor and four Superintendents who oversee Special Education and Student Mental Health, Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights, Secondary Program and Safe & Healthy Schools divisions to share what was discussed at Student Senate.

The grey section of the table highlights the actions currently being taken or planned for next year that align with the main themes from the exchange.

Key Themes	Highlights of Topics	Next steps: Action Items - highlights	2020/2021	2021/2022
Student Mental Health & Well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Mental Health: General awareness and area of focus- Safe, caring and welcoming environment at school- Access to more mental health supports- Impact of workload on mental health and well-being- Bullying/Harassment- Being mindful of a student's family circumstances	Continue to work on how to best support students and provide them with access to support (e.g., social workers, psychologists CYWs, Student Success, Guidance). <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social Emotional Learning program (self-awareness, self-regulation, mindfulness, gratitude) for teachers and students completed and has reached over 14,000 elementary students	✓	✓
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introducing Social Emotional Learning program for secondary teachers and students		✓
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professional development for teachers on:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Mental health for students and staff○ Anti-racism○ Trauma informed practices	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online live streamed sessions offer to parents about student mental health	✓	✓
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore collaborations with community partners to offer different models of support	✓	✓

Human Rights & Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Representing student voice - Racism and discrimination - Ensuring equitable opportunities are provided - Dress codes - Access to period products - Comments about bathrooms 	<p>The board is planning to make menstrual products available in both elementary and secondary schools by the end of 2021/2022.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dispensers in washrooms are being changed to no fee. • Menstrual products will be free in all WRDSB washrooms. • Increase awareness of period poverty strategy through social media. 	✓	✓ ✓
		<p>Building Student Advisory Group - a structure to connect with students from diverse backgrounds in an authentic way .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing together group of students on a regular basis to act as advisory group 		✓
		<p>Policy on Student Dress Code is being revised. Will be seeking feedback on the current draft from students.</p>		✓
Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comments on instructional practices and staff - Learning relevant “life skills” - Support for post-secondary planning - Comments on assessment practices - Support for transition to secondary school - Weather Impacted Learning Days - Comments about HPE curriculum - School start times 	<p>A plan has been created to implement the Financial Literacy Curriculum, but Professional Development for teachers had to be paused due to the pandemic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development provided to teachers so that they can implement the new curriculum in classrooms. 		✓
Health & Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support for clubs, opportunities for social interactions, celebrations - Comments about COVID-19 protocols 	<p>The Safe & Healthy Schools Division continues to work with our partners at Public Health to implement health and safety protocols that balances student safety and the student experience.</p>	✓	✓
Quadmester Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased workload due to quadmester model - Support for managing online learning - Call for more breaks during the school day 	<p>Feedback from students and staff used to plan for the 2021-2022 school year.</p>	✓	✓

The Honourable Stephen Lecce
Ministry of Education
5th Floor, 438 University Ave.
Toronto, ON M5G 2K8

sent via email: Minister (EDU) minister.edu@ontario.ca

April 23, 2021

Re: Expressing Concern for the Provincial Government's Proposed Plan for Online and Remote Learning

Dear Minister Lecce,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Durham District School Board (DDSB) to urge you to halt the proposed changes to offer virtual learning as a permanent choice for families and the role of TVO/TFO as the only provider of asynchronous e-learning (as set out in the Government of Ontario's proposed plan for *Expanding Student Access to Online and Remote Learning* as reported on in the media).

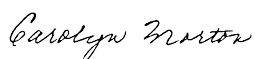
When considering major changes such as this, public consultation and key stakeholder collaboration in public education has been an integral part of past Ministry processes and ensures that we are creating the best learning environments possible for students. This is critical to building public confidence when making major changes to the educational landscape in Ontario.

The Board also requests that an independent and transparent review be conducted immediately so that the province and school boards have the benefit of greater research and consultation with all stakeholders regarding the implications of remote learning.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has further exposed the inequities in many regions across the province, including in Durham Region, with limited access to stable internet and reliable technology being one example. Many families in our district are also dealing with health issues and concerns along with the financial strain caused by the pandemic. These are just some reasons why now is not the right time to consider these proposed changes to public education in Ontario.

Once the pandemic has passed and evidence-based data has been collected and reviewed in collaboration with key stakeholders, we would be pleased to contribute to such a review in an open and transparent way. Until then, we respectfully request that the Ministry of Education halt the proposed changes to online and remote learning in Ontario.

Sincerely,



Carolyn Morton
Chairperson
Durham District School Board

Cc:

Lindsey Park, MPP Durham Region

Peter Bethlenfalvy, MPP Pickering-Uxbridge

Lorne Coe, MPP Whitby

Jennifer French, MPP Oshawa

Rod Phillips, MPP Ajax

Laurie Scott, MPP Brock

Cathy Abraham, OPSBA President

Ontario School Board Chairs

Board of Trustees, Durham District School Board

Administrative Superintendents, Durham District School Board



408 Wembley Drive, Sudbury, Ontario P3E 1P2 | Tel: 705.674.3171 | Toll Free: 1.888.421.2661 | rainbowschools.ca

April 26, 2021

Premier of Ontario Doug Ford
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A1
Sent via email to premier@ontario.ca

Honourable Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education
Mowat Block,
900 Bay Street
Toronto, ON M7A 1L2
Sent via email to Minister.edu@ontario.ca

Dear Premier Ford and Minister Lecce:

On behalf of Rainbow District School Board, I would like to thank you for including education workers in Phase Two of the Province's COVID-19 vaccine distribution plan. However, with the prevalence of variants of concern locally and provincially, vaccination is essential to limiting the spread of COVID-19, keeping everyone safe and returning to pre-pandemic life.

To date, our education staff who work with students with special needs and those who teach in high-risk congregate settings have been offered an opportunity to be vaccinated. We are grateful to Public Health Sudbury & Districts for working with us to make this happen.

These employee groups, however, represent a small fraction of our total workforce, which prompted Trustees to pass the following motion at the Board meeting held on April 20, 2021:

"That Rainbow District School Board write a letter to Premier Ford and the Minister of Education, with copies to Public Health Sudbury & Districts, Federations, OPSBA Member Boards, Minister of Health, and opposition parties, requesting all education sector workers receive a covid vaccine on a priority basis."

In a memo to school boards dated March 5, 2021, Minister Lecce indicated that Phase Two is expected to be completed by the end of July. This time-frame will not give our education workers the protection they require for the start of the 2021-2022 school year.

Therefore, we respectfully request that education workers receive their first and second doses of vaccine by mid-August 2021, even if the intervals between doses need to be shortened.

Given that school board staff work in congregate settings, they require the greatest protection possible. Vaccinations, along with the many health and safety measures that have been implemented to date, will ensure that students and staff can resume in-person learning with more confidence and fewer interruptions.

Education workers have been on the frontline of this pandemic for more than a year, keeping students safe and supported. We must make their health, safety and well-being a priority for the benefit of students and families.

We believe that the return to normalcy in this province is dependent on the return to normalcy in the education of our children.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Doreen Dewar
Chair

cc: Dr. Penny Sutcliffe, Medical Officer of Health, Public Health Sudbury & Districts
sutcliffe@phsd.ca
 Christine Elliott, Minister of Health Christine.elliott@pc.ola.org
 Nancy Naylor, Deputy Minister of Education Nancy.naylor@Ontario.ca
 Jamie West, MPP Sudbury JWest-QP@ndp.on.ca
 France G  linas, MPP Nickel Belt fgelinas-qp@ndp.on.ca
 Michael Mantha, MPP Algoma-Manitoulin mmantha-qp@ndp.on.ca
 Cathy Abraham, OPSBA president President@opsba.org
 School Board Chairs
 Rainbow DSB Trustees
 Eric Laberge, president, Rainbow OSSTF eric.laberge@d03.osstf.ca
 Liana Holm, president, Rainbow ETFO lholtm@etforainbow.on.ca



District School Board Ontario North East

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Schumacher Board Office

Street Address

153 Croatia Avenue, Schumacher, ON P0N 1G0

Mailing Address

P.O. Box 1020, Timmins, ON P4N 7H7
705-360-1151

New Liskeard Board Office

198022 River Road
New Liskeard, ON P0J 1P0
705-647-7394

Honourable Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education
Mowat Block
900 Bay Street
Toronto, ON
M7A 1L2

Sent via email to Minister.edu@ontario.ca

April 26, 2021

Dear Minister Lecce,

On behalf of District School Board Ontario North East (DSB1) Trustees, Senior Administration, staff, and students I write to you in support of the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE) letter dated April 7, 2021 and OPSBA Member Boards regarding the Province's proposed plan to modernize online learning.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has emphasized the importance and value of having our students in school for in-person learning, establishing relationships between students and teachers, supporting social-emotional learning, and solidifying the positive impact on student and family mental health and well-being. There has been an increase in Child and Family Services referrals for non-attendance and non-participation in remote learning classes and schools are indicating students participating in virtual learning are experiencing greater anxiety, depression, and stress.

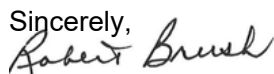
The pandemic has further exposed inequities in Northern Ontario, with limited access to internet and reliable technology.

Effects of remote learning are further intensified in students with special needs, students who struggle with mental health and students who are at risk. These vulnerable students are dependent on repetitive and extensive services that can only be provided in person and access to community and social support services.

There is also concern with the failure to address students who identify as Indigenous' treaty right to education in the Provincial proposal which in turn will further inequities. DSB1 has a significant population of students who identify as Indigenous.

The equities listed above are not acceptable in a publicly funded school system and we implore you to reevaluate the proposal.

DSB1 emphasizes the recommendations from the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE) and requests that the Ministry of Education reconsider and delay the implementation until evidence-based data is collected and reviewed in collaboration with a board Education Advisory Task Force of all stakeholders to create a vision and plan for implementation.

Sincerely,

Bob Brush
Chair of the Board



District School Board Ontario North East

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Schumacher Board Office

Street Address

153 Croatia Avenue, Schumacher, ON P0N 1G0

Mailing Address

P.O. Box 1020, Timmins, ON P4N 7H7

705-360-1151

New Liskeard Board Office

198022 River Road

New Liskeard, ON P0J 1P0

705-647-7394

cc: Directors of Education
District School Boards
Rusty Hicks, OPSBA
Nick Milanetti, OCSTA
Isabelle Girard, ACEPO
Yves Levesque, AFOCSC
Denys Giguere, Ministry of Education
Yael Ginsler, Ministry of Education
Andrew Davis, Ministry of Education
Sebastian Franks, Ministry of Education
Todd Pottle, Ontario eLearning Consortia
Annie Kidder, People for Education



THE EDUCATION CENTRE - AURORA

60 Wellington Street West, Aurora, Ontario L4G 3H2

Tel: 905.722.3201 905.895.7216 905.727.3141 416.969.8131

Fax: 905.727.1931

Website: www.yrdsb.ca

May 4, 2021

The Honorable Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education
22nd Floor, Mowat Block
900 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1L2

Dear Minister Lecce,

The York Region District School Board (YRDSB) is committed to providing online learning opportunities that are safe, caring, and inclusive. Our dedication to students includes high expectations for all students to ensure their achievement and success in school. We are proud to be a high achieving board that is dedicated to meeting the needs of all students, including those who are underserved and underperforming. As boards of education contemplate online learning, we acknowledge that there are both benefits and challenges that must be considered prior to province-wide implementation of policy changes in this area. There are many questions and concerns that are shared across the province regarding the expanded role of TVO, as well as the timing of any online policy changes while in the midst of a pandemic.

As we promote learning environments that prepare students to adapt, achieve and excel in a world that is constantly changing, online learning will certainly be a part of some students' learning choices. Although the provincial government has identified the need for students to acquire skills and technological fluency, we are concerned with the introduction of legislation, prior to gathering research and engaging in meaningful consultation with stakeholders. It is our strong belief that these important processes authentically inform the success of policy development and implementation.

We believe that consultation allows for a wide range of partners and the Ministry to be proactive in problem-solving to ensure that legislation and policy meet the needs of all students. This consultation process must take into account the specialized needs that are present for many groups of students including those who are marginalized and/or disengaged. This year we have learned from a variety of stakeholders about many promising practices, as well as a number of pitfalls related to online learning. Unfortunately, some of the pitfalls have or can negatively affect students further.

As a Board of Trustees, we are dedicated to the delivery of effective and appropriate education programs to promote the achievement of all students. Please be assured that the successful implementation of online learning is a priority for our Board. Given the

impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on system resources to support alternate learning models for September 2020, and the reasons outlined above, we respectfully request that the Ministry of Education consult with school boards prior to enacting legislation. Further, we are providing our support of the concerns highlighted in letters sent from the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) to Minister Lecce and from the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE) to Minister Lecce and Deputy Minister Naylor regarding the province's plans for online learning and the potential negative impacts this might have on students, both in the short and long-term.

As a Board, we ask that you pause the current timelines for the introduction of legislation to provide the necessary time for consultation. We would like to offer an open invitation to the Minister and Ministry staff to meet with YRDSB to discuss the current plan to enhance online learning, as well as any aspects of this letter.

Sincerely,



Cynthia Cordova
Chair of the York Region District School Board

cc. YRDSB Trustees and Student Trustees
Ontario Public School Boards' Association
All York Region Members of Provincial Parliament
Ontario Public School Board Chairs



May 4, 2021

The Honourable Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education
438 University Ave, 5th Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1N3

Dear Minister Lecce:

At the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board, we believe strongly that in-person learning, where the world-class professional skills of our teaching staff are coupled with the personal growth gained by peer interaction and outside classroom experiences, is best for our students.

Trustees:

*Diane Lloyd
(Chairperson)*

*Angela Lloyd
(Vice-chairperson)*

*Cathy Abraham
Sarah Bobka
Terry Brown
Cyndi Dickson
Kailee Dupuis
Rose Kitney
Jaime Klassen-Jeniga
Emilio Ojeda
Steve Russell*

*Roan Haggerty-Goede
Justine MacKay
(Student Trustees)*

Along with other stakeholders committed to the overall health and welfare of the children and youth of our province, we continue to watch closely the negative and harmful impacts of school closures on our children's physical health, developmental health, mental health and learning.

While we appreciate the necessity of moving to virtual learning for our students on an emergent basis as a public health response to the pandemic, the impacts of these conditions only serve to reinforce that students flourish in all ways through the in-person school experience.

For these reasons, we are writing to share our significant concern with reports outlining your government's proposed plan for expanding online or virtual learning, and the potentially damaging impact on small, rural and remote schools, among other outcomes.

Specifically, it has been reported in the CBC, Globe and Mail, and other media outlets, that you are preparing plans to expand remote or virtual learning on a permanent basis, with an expanded mandate for TVO/TFO (TVOntario/Télévision française de l'Ontario).

As reported, the plan will have significant implications for public education and local schools including:

- Threatening the viability and diversity of course offerings in all secondary schools, especially small, rural and remote schools
- Unnecessary cost and expense by duplicating work already being done by school boards in collective partnership
- Centralizing course development that will limit school boards' ability to effectively address local student needs
- Reducing in-school staff support for students who require additional instruction to be successful, and
- Limiting the ability of local school boards to help students with services and supports in their community schools.

EDUCATION CENTRE

*1994 Fisher Drive
Peterborough, Ontario
K9J 6X6*

*(705) 742-9773
1 (877) 741-4577
Fax: (705) 742-7801*

Website: www.kprschools.ca

At our school board, we have been following these reports with real concern. We are concerned about these possible future plans being considered by the province, and what they could mean in a direct way for our students. We ask if your government has considered the impacts this plan may have on small, rural secondary schools, including the potential for increased course cancellations and decreased programming choices for all students if a number of students are directed toward provincially-offered online courses.

As reported, the model would represent a loss of local decision making, where currently we can tailor our course offerings to match our students' interests and needs. We do not want our students to get lost online in centralized course offerings.

Ontario school boards have an extensive track record of working together to provide students with pedagogically sound and relevant course options. This includes the capacity to provide culturally relevant and responsive learning environments that meet the unique needs of all students. In particular, the needs of Indigenous students of our board with whom we are committed to providing a curriculum that is reflective of the unique and local experience of the territory of the Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg.

If the desired goal of the reported plan is to increase choice for students, we would be pleased to discuss how to make that possible through our existing successful model.

We are hopeful that we can have a productive dialogue to work together in the best interests of students from across the province on these issues.



Diane Lloyd
Chairperson of the Board

C: MPPs – Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board
Public School Boards – Ontario
Ontario Public School Boards' Association



May 7, 2021

Hon. Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education
315 Front Street, 14th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 0B8

Re: Permanent Online Learning Proposal

Dear Minister Lecce,

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board Trustees express concerns related to the Ontario Government's plan to incorporate permanent online learning options for students in public education.

While we understand the Ontario Public School Board Association (OPSBA) has been invited to consult on the proposed changes to public education we, as a Board, have not had an authentic opportunity to consult nor provide feedback due to the confidentiality order.

Our Board and our community would like to participate as critical stakeholders in this discussion before any changes to public education are implemented. As such, we respectfully request that you postpone the introduction of any legislation relating to permanent remote/online learning.

We have reviewed the publicly available summary of the Ministry's proposals with respect to online education and have serious concerns.

Staff and trustees need time to review, reflect and learn from the remote experiences of students and staff during COVID-19 before any permanent plan is enacted. Remote learning during the pandemic was a necessity and an emergency measure, not a plan grounded in research or ideal pedagogical principles. Before we jump to a permanent online offering, we need to step back and learn from the experiences of our students, families and staff this past year. We need to use evidence-based decision making that will benefit public education quality into the future.

We also need to consider the holistic needs of the whole student. Public education is not restricted to student achievement but is a critical system of supports and learning opportunities that help students through stages of childhood and youth development, physical and mental well-being, and positive relationship development. When students are physically present in our classrooms, educators can observe and assess the whole child in a way that is not possible online.

Another concern is the significant inequities of online learning as a "parent option." Student success in online learning is dependent on several factors that are not equitably accessible to all students. For example, having a space to work online, having adequate connectivity to participate, having supervision and academic supports at home, and having space to engage in physical activity are all critical aspects

Dawn Danko

Chair of the Board of Trustees

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board

20 Education Court, P.O. Box 2558

Hamilton, ON L8N 3L1

ddanko@hwdsb.on.ca

289.775.0269



that are not available to all students. This means a remote option for families is only available to families who can afford to provide the conditions for success online and a permanent remote school model may further create gaps in our system.

With respect to quality of online education, we agree that ongoing sustainable investment in online interactive elements and course structures is needed. We advocate for the inclusion of trained teachers in the development of curriculum resources and see an opportunity for digital tool and interactive learning artifact development centrally to support local delivery of courses for our students.

Public education in Ontario is a system of supports that are intended to meet the needs of the whole student. Local delivery in an in-person setting is the ideal and we request ongoing investment into our existing classrooms to support student success. Where online learning is needed for exceptional circumstances, or where it is helpful to provide additional learning opportunities in secondary school through individual courses, we would like to collaborate on the appropriate model and framework going forward.

In summary, the HWDSB Board of Trustees requests a transparent, comprehensive consultation on any planning changes to delivery for public education, particularly the current consideration of options for permanent full-time online learning. We firmly believe in quality public education that meets the needs of our students today and into the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D Danko".

Dawn Danko

Chair, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board

cc: Ontario Public School Boards' Association

Chairs of all Ontario School Boards

All Hamilton City Councilors

All Hamilton Members of Parliament

All Hamilton Members of Provincial Parliament

2021 May 4

The Honourable Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education
438 University Avenue, 5th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2A5

Dear Minister Lecce:

I wanted to bring to your attention a current proposal by the Ministry of Education regarding online and remote learning that also includes an expanded mandate of TVO/TFO. This proposal was shared confidentially with stakeholder members of a ministry-led committee. The consultation materials were leaked to the media, and many of the details of the proposal have since been published in a variety of publications, including but not limited to the Globe and Mail and the Toronto Star.

The Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA), of which we are a member, and other education sector stakeholders including the Ontario Student Trustees' Association, the Federations who represent Teachers and Educations Workers, and others, have issued public statements raising concerns about several elements of the proposal. The Thames Valley District School Board is extremely concerned with the contents of this proposal and potential legislation, especially since it comes at a time when our province continues to struggle with the pandemic, and plans for the return to school this September are unclear.

As you know, the past year has been unprecedented in many ways, including multiple shifts to remote learning as schools were forced to close based on province wide and local public health recommendations. Our school board met its responsibilities every day to students and their families by quickly pivoting to various online formats. These herculean efforts were aided by the collaborative relationships that exist between all stakeholders in our board, and most importantly, we were able to leverage existing infrastructures and staff expertise in our schools and e-learning consortium.

Like the other members of OPSBA, the Thames Valley District School Board supports modernization, as well as student and parental choice, when it makes sense, for student success. We have promoted and implemented learning online in various formats for many years, and understand the importance of preparing students for postsecondary settings, the workplace, and lifelong learning. With that said, while remote learning over the past year may have been a positive experience for some students, we have also seen marked increases in mental health concerns, and feelings of isolation among students. We are concerned that the current proposal may be promoting the online learning option to the detriment of student well-being and the overall integrity of our education system.

Thames Valley is a long-time member of the Ontario eLearning Consortium, a grassroots partnership of Ontario School Boards that began 2001. Thames Valley understands the value of e-learning and the opportunities it provides our students.

However, this current proposal considers allowing online and remote learning as a permanent option and gives the responsibility for online course content to TVO/TFO. I'm sure you can agree that for the vast majority of our students, remote or independent learning opportunities cannot replace the in-person school experience that has been shown to effectively support the developmental, physical and social well-being of students.

This proposal will have significant implications for public education and our local schools including:

- Threatening the viability and diversity of course offerings in small, rural and remote schools. Over time this proposal will result in closed or diminished schools that are currently at the heart of our small communities.
- Reducing support for in-school learning by reassigning Student Success Teachers, Guidance Counsellors and others whose current mandate is to support students who require additional instruction to be successful.
- Leading to unnecessary duplication and additional expenses, while still being unlikely to effectively address local needs. School boards and their consortia have developed the infrastructure and level of expertise to support remote learning that reflects the requirements of their specific learners.
- Undermining the ability of school boards to have direct and local influence over the logistics and programming linked to online learning as well as associated services and supports in their community schools.

OPSBA has always offered to work in partnership with the government to ensure that policies and legislation can be effectively implemented to maximize the success of each and every student in our care. In December 2020, the Association submitted its position on an expanded role for TVO to the government.

OPSBA and the Thames Valley District School Board are prepared to work with the government and education partners to create a workable vision that is mutually beneficial, which does not undermine school board and school board consortia leadership, and does not eliminate the positive online approaches that have long proven effective for student engagement and success.

We believe that school boards and TVO should continue to do what they each do best and work to find opportunities to work collaboratively in areas that would continue to grow and enhance the quality of online credit courses.

OPSBA and the Thames Valley District School Board are concerned with regard to the accelerated timelines and lack of reflection and understanding of the short and long-term ramifications. OPSBA continues to recommend a working table with school board consortia, school board representatives and online learning experts, along with TVO staff, to co-create a vision that is mutually beneficial and does not undermine school board and consortium leadership or eliminate the positive online learning approaches that have long been effective for student engagement and success.

We would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss this issue further, and we encourage you to raise these concerns with your caucus colleagues.

Sincerely,



Meagan Ruddock, Vice-Chair
Thames Valley District School Board

cc: Trustees
M. Fisher, Director of Education
Hon. E. Hardeman, MPP Oxford
Hon. J. Yurek, MPP Elgin-Middlesex-London
T. Armstrong, MPP London-Fanshawe
T. Kernaghan, MPP London North Centre
P. Sattler, MPP London West
M. McNaughton, MPP Lambton-Kent-Middlesex
Municipal Leaders Inclusive of Thames Valley District School Board
Ontario Public School Boards' Association
Ontario Student Trustees' Association.
TVPIC
TVCHSA
ETFO
CUPE
OSSTF

May 17, 2021

The Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education
Ministry of Education
315 Front Street West, 14th Floor
Toronto, ON, M7A 0B8

Dear Minister Lecce,

In late March, media outlets began reporting on a proposal that was shared confidentially with a Ministry-led committee. The proposal included plans to expand the mandate of TVO/TFO, including offering independent remote learning opportunities for both elementary and secondary students.

At its meeting on April 19, 2021, the Board of Trustees for the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) agreed to write to you to express our board's emphatic objection to the rushed and radical changes to remote learning that we understand the government is proposing.

We are concerned with the lack of research showing that this proposal will improve student achievement and wellbeing. While Boards shifted to a remote learning format during the pandemic, this was done on an emergency basis. Any significant and permanent changes to remote learning must be extensively researched and developed by educators to avoid the risk of causing harm to students.

Minister, we have heard your statements that in person learning is the best option for students. The WRDSB and our families agree. Our board has gathered data which shows a marked increase in mental health concerns and feelings of isolation among students learning remotely during the pandemic. We also know, through registrations, that students and parents in our community prefer in person learning. Families have told us that remote learning lacks the social emotional development and sense of community that children gain through in person learning. This reinforces our belief that public education is not limited to student achievement, but also supports the whole child through their stages of development, cognitively, socially, emotionally and physically. Educating the whole child is especially important for at-risk students who benefit from having direct access to caring adults in schools.

The [Ontario Student Trustees' Association](#) (OSTA-AECO) and the [Ontario Public School Boards' Association](#) (OPSBA) have also expressed concerns that the proposed plan would present many negative impacts for the student body and does not prioritize the success and wellbeing of students.

The WRDSB supports modernization and online learning, when it is best for students. We respectfully remind the Minister that the WRDSB already had, pre-pandemic, and continues to have, a functioning online learning program which is utilized by secondary students and

supported by the Ontario e-Learning Consortia (OeLC). Currently, local school boards work with OeLC allowing for local input into the needs of our students and community. The OeLC allows students to choose online learning courses to fit their timetable while remaining part of their local school community. We see an opportunity here to use this already established consortium and scale up in a more cost-effective way than recreating systems at TVO/TFO.

As we continue to navigate through the pandemic, with shifts back and forth from in-person to online remote learning, we must learn from this experience and use the data to make evidence based decisions.

We join [OPSBA](#), [OSTA-AECO](#) and many other Boards in calling for the Minister to halt implementation of this TVO/TFO-based, independent online learning proposal until data on the impacts of remote learning on student achievement and wellbeing can be analyzed. Like you, Minister Lecce, we also value student voice and parent engagement. As such, we ask the Minister to meaningfully consult all stakeholders, including educators, trustees, students and parents before considering this proposal further. We look forward to being a part of this consultation to enhance public education in Ontario, in a way that puts students at the forefront of any changes.

Sincerely,



Joanne Weston
Chairperson of the Board of Trustees
Waterloo Region District School Board

CC:
MPP Belinda Karahalios
MPP Laura Mae Lindo
MPP Amy Fee
MPP Michael Harris
MPP Catherine Fife
Ontario Public School Boards' Association
Ontario Public School Boards
Ontario Student Trustees' Association

Sent by email: minister.edu@ontario.ca



51 Ardelt Avenue
Kitchener, ON N2C 2R5
T: 519-570-0003
F: 519-742-1364
wrdsb.ca



Dawn Danko

Chair of the Board of Trustees

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board

20 Education Court, P.O. Box 2558

Hamilton, ON L8N 3L1

ddanko@hwdsb.on.ca

289.775.0269



May 14, 2021

Hon. Stephen Lecce
 MPP, Minister of Education
 315 Front Street, 14th Floor
 Toronto, ON M7A 0B8

Dear Minister Lecce,

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) Trustees recognize the importance of the Ministry of Education to review its online supports for students receiving special education services in an effort to modernize resources. We are writing in support of our Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) and their endorsement of Durham District School Board's SEAC Chair's letter to you dated February 9, 2021.

Many families of elementary and secondary students requiring special education services expressed limitations related to online learning resources through the provincial partnership with TVO and TFO. While these resources are helpful, we are asking the Ministry of Education update and maintain new online resources in accessible formats and leverage additional partners to provide a diverse range of supports. These supports must be in accessible formats such as Descriptive Video, providing educators with interactive whiteboards, ensuring that text documents are in accessible PDF or other compatible formats, and using Closed Captioning, for example.

The Ministry of Education has mandated a requirement for secondary students to complete two online courses. While students with special education needs could get an exemption from online courses, it is preferable to provide them with necessary supports that make online learning opportunities a viable option. Some secondary students with special education needs are accommodated through eLearning. We ask the Ministry to review its eLearning standards to ensure this mode of learning meets the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

We believe that public education is about providing equity and access for all students to succeed. In addition, we support the principles of the Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Thank you for giving our concerns your urgent attention and for the important work creating accessible online learning resources and opportunities that meet the needs of all our students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D Danko".

Dawn Danko
 Chair, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board

cc:

Chairs of all Ontario Special Education Advisory Committees

Ontario Public School Boards' Association

Chairs of all Ontario School Boards

All Hamilton City Councilors

All Hamilton Members of Parliament

All Hamilton Members of Provincial Parliament



May 21, 2021

The Honourable Stephen Lecce
Ministry of Education
5th Floor, 438 University Ave.
Toronto, ON M5G 2K8

To the Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education,

At the Wednesday, May 19, 2021 meeting of the Trustees of the Halton District School Board (HDSB), the following motion received unanimous approval:

Be it resolved that the Chair write a letter to the Minister of Education imploring that the new de-streamed math grade 9 curriculum be released immediately so that school boards have time to review the curriculum and provide appropriate staff training before the end of the 2020-2021 school year. This letter is to be copied to Halton MPPs, the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) and the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE).

The Trustees of the HDSB support the Ministry's plan to implement de-streaming in the pursuit of creating a more equitable education system. As per your own words Minister Leece, "Students, families and staff deserve an education system that is inclusive, accountable, and transparent, and one that by design, is set up to fully and equally empower all children to achieve their potential."

To ensure the successful implementation of the new de-streamed grade 9 math curriculum for September 2021, it is critical that program and teaching staff have adequate time to receive training in the delivery as well as the assessment and evaluation for this new course of study. Since the new elementary curriculum has been implemented over the past school year, a delay in the implementation of the new grade 9 math curriculum will result in an undesirable gap. This does not support student achievement. Much of the conceptual learning around the pedagogy of de-streaming has been part of professional development with teaching staff this year. An essential piece of this pedagogy is preparation which is difficult when the curriculum is yet to be available. Staff, students and the community rightly expect adequate preparation time to be afforded to all teachers so as to ensure a smooth and successful launch of this new curriculum.

Street Address: J.W. Singleton Education Centre • 2050 Guelph Line, Burlington, Ontario L7P 5A8

Mailing Address: J.W. Singleton Education Centre • P.O. Box 5005, Stn. LCD 1, Burlington, Ontario L7R 3Z2

Phone: 905-335-3663 | 1-877-618-3456 Fax: 905-335-9802

www.hdsb.ca

Minister, as you are well aware, teaching staff have been working extremely hard during the pandemic with many new demands. This has been a year unlike any other year in education. From a health and well-being perspective, it is our expectation that staff re-energize during the summer months in order to prepare for the upcoming school year. We understand from media reports that the de-streamed grade 9 math curriculum is complete and awaiting final approval prior to distribution. We urge you to release the curriculum immediately to give secondary school teaching staff time to be trained on the delivery of the new curriculum. This will support students in fully and equitably achieving their potential during the 2021-2022 school year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Andréa Grebenc', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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 Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) Member Board Chairs
Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE)