WATERLOO REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

NOTICE OF MEETING

The regular monthly Board Meeting of the Waterloo Region District School Board will be held via video conference, on Monday, January 31, 2022, 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 - Parent Involvement Committee Meeting of October 26, 2021
- Approve Minutes - Parent Involvement Committee Meeting of December 7, 2021
- Approve Minutes – Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of December 8, 2021
- Receive Minutes – Board Meeting of December 13, 2022
- Receive Minutes – Special Board Meeting of January 4, 2022
- Approve Minutes – Committee of the Whole Meeting of January 17, 2022
- Approve Minutes – Committee of the Whole Meeting of January 24, 2022

Receipt/Approval of Monthly Reports:
- 47 Staffing Information – Retirements and Resignations
- 50 Staffing Recommendations – Appointments
- 52 Student Suspension / Expulsion Report, December, 2021

Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

Announcements/Celebrating Board Activities

Communications Good News Update

Delegations

Staff Follow Up

Reports
- Director of Education - Annual Report
- Operational Plan for 2021-2022
- COVID-19 Update

Board Reports

Board Communications
- 66 Halton District School Board SEAC to Minister of Education - FASD
- 67 Halton District School Board SEAC to Minister of Education - Designated Disease

**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.
Other Business

Question Period (10 minutes)

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

Adjournment
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: Graham Shantz, Coordinating Superintendent, Human Resources & Equity Services, in consultation with Coordinating Council.
## Staffing Statistics – Retirements

### Current at January 31, 2022

#### Retirements: Elementary Teaching Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First</th>
<th>Last</th>
<th>Position/Location</th>
<th>Retirement Date</th>
<th>Years of Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brad</td>
<td>Brenneman</td>
<td>Teacher, St Andrew’s PS</td>
<td>January 31, 2022</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carolyn</td>
<td>Burjoski</td>
<td>Teacher, Forest Hill PS</td>
<td>January 31, 2022</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caroline</td>
<td>Kuhn-Scime</td>
<td>Teacher, NA MacEachern PS</td>
<td>February 28, 2022</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gillian</td>
<td>Lambert</td>
<td>Teacher, Prueter PS</td>
<td>January 7, 2022</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer</td>
<td>Okum</td>
<td>Teacher, Empire PS</td>
<td>February 28, 2022</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan</td>
<td>Randall</td>
<td>Itinerant Teacher, Special Education</td>
<td>January 14, 2022</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marilyn</td>
<td>Webb</td>
<td>Consultant, Special Education</td>
<td>January 31, 2022</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dana</td>
<td>Wunder</td>
<td>Itinerant Teacher, Special Education</td>
<td>January 31, 2022</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Retirements: Secondary Teaching Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First</th>
<th>Last</th>
<th>Position/Location</th>
<th>Retirement Date</th>
<th>Years of Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Douglas</td>
<td>Gateman</td>
<td>Teacher, Southwood SS</td>
<td>January 28, 2022</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul</td>
<td>Hildebrand</td>
<td>Teacher, Elmira District SS</td>
<td>January 31, 2022</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark</td>
<td>Kalin</td>
<td>Teacher, Southwood SS</td>
<td>January 31, 2022</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne-Viviane</td>
<td>Maus</td>
<td>French Department Head, Sir John A Macdonald SS</td>
<td>June 30, 2022</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George</td>
<td>Sedra</td>
<td>Teacher, Eastwood CI</td>
<td>January 31, 2022</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Staffing Statistics – Retirements
### Current at January 31, 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First</th>
<th>Last</th>
<th>Position/Location</th>
<th>Retirement Date</th>
<th>Years of Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maureen</td>
<td>Crawford</td>
<td>Educational Assistant, Sir John A Macdonald SS</td>
<td>May 31, 2022</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gregory</td>
<td>Crocker</td>
<td>Head Custodian, Mackenzie King PS</td>
<td>February 28, 2022</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>Head Custodian, Moffat Creek PS</td>
<td>February 28, 2022</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharon</td>
<td>Nichols</td>
<td>Library Clerk, Crestview PS</td>
<td>January 28, 2022</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine</td>
<td>Regier</td>
<td>Support Specialist, ITS</td>
<td>December 31, 2021</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ria</td>
<td>Schofield</td>
<td>Support Specialist, ITS</td>
<td>March 31, 2022</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>Schultz</td>
<td>Educational Assistant, Millen Woods PS</td>
<td>January 28, 2022</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabrielle</td>
<td>Yahn</td>
<td>Supply Educational Assistant, various locations</td>
<td>January 17, 2022</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Staffing Statistics – Resignations
### Current at December 13, 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First</th>
<th>Last</th>
<th>Position/Location</th>
<th>Effective Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shannon</td>
<td>Carbone</td>
<td>Educational Assistant, Riverside PS</td>
<td>January 2, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathy</td>
<td>Charron</td>
<td>Educational Assistant, Forest Hill PS</td>
<td>January 14, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne</td>
<td>Coupland</td>
<td>DECE Supervisor, Extended Day</td>
<td>January 7, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeffrey</td>
<td>Desruisseau</td>
<td>Elementary Teacher, William G. Davis PS</td>
<td>January 2, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy</td>
<td>Grimba</td>
<td>Educational Assistant, Smithson PS</td>
<td>January 1, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gretta</td>
<td>Hughes</td>
<td>Early Childhood Educator, Howard Robertson PS</td>
<td>January 3, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lauren</td>
<td>Lovell</td>
<td>Child Youth Worker, Special Education</td>
<td>January 24, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becky</td>
<td>Martin</td>
<td>Educational Assistant, Queen Elizabeth PS</td>
<td>January 2, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melanie</td>
<td>Michaud</td>
<td>Head Secretary, Abraham Erb PS</td>
<td>January 18, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom</td>
<td>Pettitt</td>
<td>Custodian, Centennial PS (W)</td>
<td>January 21, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leigh</td>
<td>Rees</td>
<td>Secretary, Northlake Woods PS</td>
<td>January 4, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenda</td>
<td>Ribey</td>
<td>Library Clerk, St Jacobs PS</td>
<td>January 2, 2022</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Report to Board of Trustees
January 31, 2022

Subject: Staffing Recommendations – Appointments

Recommendation

That the Waterloo Region District School Board approve the appointments to staff as outlined in the report titled “Staffing Recommendations – Appointments, dated January 31, 2022.

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: Graham Shantz, Coordinating Superintendent, Human Resources & Equity Services, in consultation with Coordinating Council.
# Staffing Information – New Appointments

## Current at January 31, 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First</th>
<th>Last</th>
<th>Position / Location</th>
<th>Effective Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mohamad</td>
<td>Alkhen</td>
<td>Senior Regional Internal Auditor, Audit Department</td>
<td>January 10, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fran</td>
<td>Barker</td>
<td>Library Clerk, St. Jacobs PS</td>
<td>January 31, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venus</td>
<td>Cahill</td>
<td>HR Assistant, Human Resources</td>
<td>December 20, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurie</td>
<td>Charlton</td>
<td>Support Staff-Deployment, Extended Day</td>
<td>December 17, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cathy</td>
<td>De Luca</td>
<td>Senior Regional Internal Auditor, Audit Department</td>
<td>January 25, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon</td>
<td>Hirmiz</td>
<td>Support Specialist, ITS</td>
<td>January 3, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dondon</td>
<td>Luce</td>
<td>Senior Regional Internal Auditor, Audit Department</td>
<td>January 25, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morgan</td>
<td>Price-Armstrong</td>
<td>Custodian, Bridgeport PS</td>
<td>January 3, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marina</td>
<td>Rae</td>
<td>Custodian, Forest Heights CI</td>
<td>January 10, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine</td>
<td>Rose</td>
<td>HR Assistant, Human Resources</td>
<td>January 24, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allison</td>
<td>Souliere</td>
<td>Secretary, Northlake Woods PS</td>
<td>January 26, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beth</td>
<td>Sousa</td>
<td>HR Officer, Human Resources</td>
<td>January 10, 2022</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

*Human Resources & Equity Services*
Subject: Student Suspension/Expulsion Report
December, 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 December 2020 and December 2021, elementary suspensions have increased by 269 and secondary suspensions have increased by 597.

Comparing year to date from December 2020 and December 2021, school expulsions have remained the same at 1 and board expulsions have increased by 5.

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

Data from 2020/2021 were collected during a school year where students were engaged in learning in three modes: in-person, adaptive hybrid and remote learning.

Suspensions

- Total elementary school suspensions in December 2020 - 40, year to date - 191
- Total elementary school suspensions in December 2021 - 109, year to date - 460
- Total secondary school suspensions in December 2020 - 9, year to date - 48
- Total secondary school suspensions in December 2021 - 156, year to date - 645

Expulsions

- Total school expulsions in December 2020- 0, Year to Date 1
- Total school expulsions in December 2021 - 0, Year to Date 1
- Total board expulsions in December 2020 - 0, Year to Date 0
- Total board expulsions in December 2021 - 3, Year to Date 5

Violent Incidents

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

- Total elementary/secondary violent incidents in December 2020 - 1, Year to Date 2
• Total elementary/secondary violent incidents in December 2021 - 10, Year to Date 25

**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
Subject: Operational Plan for 2021-2022

Recommendation
This report is for information to the Board and provides Trustees with an update on staff’s work as it relates to the Strategic Plan. Given the unprecedented nature of the past 22 months it has been necessary to ensure that the Operational Plan takes into account the current context and shifting landscape. WRDSB’s Strategic Priorities, as reflected in our strategic plan, remain the pillars of our work, and continue to drive our operational plan and priorities that have become critically important as staff respond to the realities and impact of COVID-19 along with the global call to action to respond to the ongoing impact and harm of systemic racism and oppression.

Our Operational Plan for 2021-2022 is organized by department (see Annex A) and reflect the following priorities:

- Ensuring the continuity of quality learning for all students while ensuring that identity and social location are not predictors of outcomes
- Ensuring the safety and well-being of staff and students
- Continuing our commitment to an organizational culture rooted in Indigenous sovereignty, equity and human rights
- Ensuring continuity of effective operations of the school district

Status
As the WRDSB has responded to the many challenges encountered as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have continued to gather feedback and input from students, staff and families. It is recognized that we need to prioritize this complex body of work in responding to the realities of the pandemic while also delivering on our commitments to do more and do better to support all those who have been made more vulnerable as a result of COVID-19. Clarifying our operational priorities also serve to stabilize the system as we focus our energies on what matters most.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shone a light on the many inequities faced by students and their families, reinforcing the foundational importance of human rights, sovereignty and equity. In addition to this, the world has been mobilized by the largest ever civil rights movement that is calling for systemic change to address anti-Black Racism, anti-Indigenous racism, oppression and discrimination. Canada faces the truth of hundreds of unmarked graves of Indigenous children on Residential School sites across the country as we as educators endeavour to honour the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission with concrete action. This context matters as we reflect on these calls to action and the implications on our work and our planning for 2021-2022.
Our community has consistently shared that safety and well-being and human rights sovereignty and equity continue to be of foremost concern and must remain priorities. Ensuring the continuity of quality learning for all students while ensuring that identity and social location are not predictors of outcomes continues to be a focus for all areas of the organization.

Our ability to be responsive to these challenges is dependent on an organization that ensures the continuity of all of its operational elements including; human resources; financial resources and facilities; information technology resources and communications. All of these operational priorities work interdependently with the others. We cannot address the learning gaps students have experienced, for example, without also addressing safety, well-being and issues of human rights and equity while simultaneously providing adequate human and financial resources - they are inextricably linked to one another.

We are deeply grateful for the energy and dedication of our administrators, educators, support staff, and central staff who continue to focus on the needs of each and every one of our students, despite the many challenges. Public education has never been more important, and our ability to be responsive to the changing needs of our students and their families during such a difficult time is critical to the future learning and well-being of our students and our community.

We are so proud of our students, their ability to adapt, their many accomplishments and their continued commitment to learning and lending voice and insight to our work. We are profoundly grateful for the patience and support of our families and community partners whose engagement and active participation is critical to ensuring the WRDSB is serving our community. And finally, we are appreciative of Trustees’ leadership, active engagement and confidence in staff as we have navigated this tumultuous time.

**Background**

The Waterloo Region District School Board engaged in a collaborative strategic planning process with the goal of creating a multi-year strategic plan that articulated the priorities, desired outcomes, and commitments of the Waterloo Region District School Board for a 3-5 year period. On June 20, 2016 the Waterloo Region District School Board approved the Strategic Priorities, Outcomes and Commitments. Each year staff provide trustees with regular updates on our progress towards meeting the outcomes related to our strategic priorities as well as the revised annual operational plan for that year. The WRDSB Strategic Plan was due to be refreshed during the 2020-2021 school year; however, the impact of the pandemic required that these plans be put on pause. Work is underway and broader consultation with all stakeholders on a renewed vision, mission, learner profile and strategic directions is set to begin in February 2022.

In March of 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic. What followed from this declaration included the closure of our schools, the
launch of a fully distance learning program from March through to June, and major efforts to ensure the continuity of all operational aspects of the school district. September 2021 saw the return to in-person learning while simultaneously offering remote learning. The WRDSB formed a Pandemic Response Team and a Return to School and Work Committee and together, with input from our students, staff and families, established principles that would guide our decision making and work as we responded to the pandemic.

Financial implications

The Board of Trustees (Board) approved the 2021-22 operating budget on June 16, 2021. Consistent with the approved budget for 2021-22, the WRDSB is expected to finish the year in a deficit position; this was confirmed through submission of our Revised Estimates to the Ministry of Education (Ministry) on December 15, 2021, which showed an in-year deficit forecast of $11.6M. The 2021-22 Q1 Interim Financial Report, comparing the budget to the forecasted year-end position was provided to the Board of Trustees at the January 24, 2022 Committee of the Whole meeting.

Communications

The Communications Department has developed a multi-dimensional approach aimed at reaching every parent/guardian/student/staff member/stakeholder with meaningful communication during the pandemic. A commitment to accessible, timely, transparent and two-way communication has been the cornerstone of our approach. Key elements of the communication plan include:

- Health and Safety Protocols and Reminders
- COVID-19 Dashboard
- School and community COVID-19 case communications support
- Regular All-Staff updates to support communication and well-being
- News and School Updates
- Guide for families and staff
- Celebrating and recognizing the contributions and achievement of staff, students and the broader WRDSB community
- Frequently Asked Questions

Staff continues to provide trustees and the public with regular updates and details related to COVID-19 and our operational priorities.

Communications will continue its commitment to ensuring that the Strategic Plan and Operational Priorities have a prominent and dynamic presence as part of Waterloo Region District School Board communication efforts.

The Director’s Annual Report utilizes the Strategic Plan and Operational Priorities as a framework for reporting back to our community the work of our district, our schools, our staff, our students, our parents, guardians and caregivers, and our community partners.
In March of 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic. What followed from this declaration included the closure of our schools, the launch of a fully distance learning program from March 2020 through to the current school year and major efforts to ensure the continuity of all operational aspects of the school district. Given the unprecedented nature of this time and uncertainty it has been necessary to revise our operational plan. WRDSB’s Strategic Priorities, as reflected in our strategic plan, remain the pillars of our work, and continue to drive our operational plan and the priorities that have become critically important as staff respond to the realities and impact of COVID-19 along with the global call to action to respond to the ongoing impact and harm of systemic racism and oppression.

Our operational priorities for 2021-2022 are detailed in the dashboard below by department.

**BUSINESS SERVICES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lead</th>
<th>Priority Area Description (Strategy)</th>
<th>Intended Outcomes</th>
<th>How well did you do it? (Implementation Measures)</th>
<th>Apr 2022 Stoplight</th>
<th>Oct 2022 Stoplight</th>
<th>Is anyone better off? (Outcome Measures)</th>
<th>Oct 2022 Outcome Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facilities</td>
<td>1. Form an Exterior Design Standards Development (EDSD) committee with staff representation from across the WRDSB</td>
<td>Develop design standards for exterior school grounds</td>
<td>● EDSD committee formed  ● # of departments consulted (e.g., Indigenous Equity and Human Rights, Student Transportation Services, Multilingual Learners, Early Years, Special Education, Planning)</td>
<td>Stoplight</td>
<td>Stoplight</td>
<td>● Draft design standards for exterior spaces developed  ● Process for consultation with internal and external stakeholders developed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities</td>
<td>2. Develop and finalize a standard inclusive washroom sign and install it in all schools</td>
<td>All gender neutral washrooms have standard signage that is inclusive and understandable by all students/staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>● Standard inclusive washroom signage installed in all schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>3. Continual improvement of the Grade 1 French Immersion application process</td>
<td>Clearly communicate the process so that families can make informed decisions and all students are provided the opportunity to select their French program pathway</td>
<td>● # of virtual translation sessions offered in January  ● # of translations provided/links to translated materials or resources  ● Updated French programs brochure sent to the families of all Senior Kindergarten students  ● AP 1000 is posted on the WRDSB website</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>● # of participants at virtual translation sessions  ● # of times translated materials are accessed on the WRDSB website</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>4. Support schools to engage in travel planning by promoting active and safe routes to schools across Waterloo Region.</td>
<td>A higher proportion of students opting to use active transportation to and from schools</td>
<td>● # schools completing BikeWalkRoll and Family Surveys  ● # active School Travel Planning schools and interventions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>● % of students who are using active transportation to and from school as reported in the BikeWalkRoll and Family Surveys  ● # school zone speed limit changes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>Priority Area Description (Strategy)</td>
<td>Intended Outcomes</td>
<td>How well did you do it? (Implementation Measures)</td>
<td>Apr 2022</td>
<td>Oct 2022</td>
<td>Is anyone better off? (Outcome Measures)</td>
<td>Oct 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Communications</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Create awareness of the Kindergarten student registration process and academic programs in secondary</td>
<td>Families utilizing the central registration system to register their child for Kindergarten. Creating awareness of specialized programs in secondary schools.</td>
<td>Traffic to program webpages along with requests for information; # of downloads/views of materials; Click through rates.</td>
<td>Stoplight</td>
<td>Stoplight</td>
<td>Analysis of public engagement with website and social media content for 21-22 school year; # of requests for Kindergarten registrations for 22-23 done in person; # questions about program availability received from public.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Engage families and staff as part of the WRDSB community</td>
<td>Improved understanding of WRDSB values and work; Increased connections with community and families.</td>
<td>If partnerships with community organization to help engage families and share information; # of communications shared with PIC/WRAPSC; # of engaged community members in strategic planning process.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sentiment analysis of feedback received (i.e., % negative, positive, and neutral feedback); # of requests to share more information; Analysis of the types of questions received from the community (e.g., questions about programming from why the change to how can I learn more)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Human Rights Branch</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Build understanding of the code-based complaints resolution process and stakeholder roles in complaints resolution (i.e., Human Rights Literacy)</td>
<td>Launch the code-based complaints administrative procedures; System leaders will have greater knowledge and awareness about the procedure, feel confident in addressing complaints, and will be able to follow the procedure/engage in the process when required.</td>
<td>Administrative procedures are approved; # of sessions offered; # of participants in each session.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Feedback gathered from administrators, managers and supervisors about their confidence in and capacity to address incidents that impact the Human Rights Policy after the training; # of human rights complaints raised and % resolved</td>
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<td>4. Increase educators’ understanding of what discrimination is and build their capacity to respond to discrimination</td>
<td>Educators actively respond to discrimination impacting students using the DIRECT tool.</td>
<td># of staff who attend the training sessions; # of staff who request coaching.</td>
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<td>Feedback gathered from educators at the end of the training about their understanding of discrimination and their capacity to address it</td>
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<td><strong>Human Rights Branch</strong></td>
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<td>5. Support and build the capacity of service leaders to dismantle oppression and address discrimination</td>
<td>All staff see anti-oppression and anti-racism as central to their work.</td>
<td># of sessions offered; # of service leaders trained in the Policy Review Guide.</td>
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<td>Feedback gathered from service leaders key contacts at the end of training sessions about their role in anti-oppression work; Feedback gathered from staff about their willingness and comfort using the Policy Review Guide</td>
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<td><strong>Research</strong></td>
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<td>6. Analysis, reporting and action planning of the student census</td>
<td>Student census results are shared in a public report for the broader community in a way that minimizes the potential for further harm to students who have been marginalized by the education system. Build system leaders’ awareness of appropriate and responsible use of student census data.</td>
<td># of consultations conducted; Draft report written; # of attendees at capacity building sessions.</td>
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<td>Report shared with public; Feedback from participants on change in awareness and understanding of how they might use the student census data</td>
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<td>7. Develop and implement a strategic planning process</td>
<td>Mission, vision, learner profiles and new strategic priorities have been developed and shared publicly.</td>
<td># of participants in the process; # of methods used to seek feedback; # of participants who engaged in interpreting findings of the Strategic Plan consultation process.</td>
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<td>Mission, vision, learner profiles and new strategic priorities are developed and posted on the website</td>
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## HUMAN RESOURCE AND EQUITY SERVICES

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<tr>
<th>Lead</th>
<th>Priority Area Description (Strategy)</th>
<th>Intended Outcomes</th>
<th>How well did you do it? (Implementation Measures)</th>
<th>Apr 2022 Stoplight</th>
<th>Oct 2022 Stoplight</th>
<th>Is anyone better off? (Outcome Measures)</th>
<th>Oct 2022 Outcome Data</th>
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</table>
| Labour Relations      | 1. Develop and implement processes for monitoring, and ensuring compliance with vaccination attestation and rapid testing | Compliance with directives from the Ministry of Education/Chief Medical Officer of Health                                                                                               | ● Develop, communicate, and utilize a formal documented process for staff attestation of COVID-19 vaccination status  
● Ensure staff are compliant with the Ministry of Education/Chief Medical Officer of Health directive                                                                 |                                                                                                                             |                    | ● COVID-19 vaccine attestation summary for school board employees is provided to the Ministry of Education  
● COVID-19 vaccine attestation summary for school board employees and Trustees is posted to the board website and updated monthly and/or as required |                                                                                                                             |                      |
| Labour Relations      | 2. Develop a multi-year work plan for Human Resource & Equity Services and Indigenous Equity and Human Rights Department to review fair, equitable and transparent hiring processes | Equitable hiring practices and enhancing the diversity of our workforce so that students see themselves reflected in those they are learning from Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM)165 implemented | ● # of contacts established with Faculties of Education  
● % of staff trained who attend recruitment events to ensure they are using appropriate and welcoming language that will engage and attract BIPOC candidates  
● PPM 165 compliance - embed lived experiences into hiring practices, AP 5000  
● Review of existing hiring questions initiative, to ensure lived experiences are reflected and equity outcomes are incorporated |                                                                                                                             |                    | ● Increased diversity within the WRDSB employee groups  
● Updated list of hiring questions finalized and implemented                                                                 |                                                                                                                             |                      |
| Health, Safety & Security | 3. Update the "WRDSB Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) Multi-site Terms of Reference" agreement to ensure it meets current Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development requirements | Renewal of "WRDSB Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) Multi-site Terms of Reference" for 5 more years                                                                 | ● Draft Terms of Reference presentation to JHSC meeting  
● Participate in review process with Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development                                                                 |                                                                                                                             |                    | ● "WRDSB Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) Multi-site Terms of Reference" agreement is approved by Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development and shared with the system |                                                                                                                             |                      |
| Health, Safety & Security | 4. Develop an online training module for Workplace Inspection Training                                                                                     | An online training module is accessible to all new Workplace Inspection Team members and Administrators/Supervisors                                                                 | ● Content for online and in-person course developed  
● Course set-up is completed on online platform  
● Gather feedback on online course prior to launch  
● Draft system communication with enrollment and training dates |                                                                                                                             |                    | ● Online course launched  
● In-person components of training delivered                                                                 |                                                                                                                             |                      |
| Health, Safety & Security | 5. Ongoing review and development of COVID-19 program management for WRDSB staff based on Ministry of Education guidelines and Public Health recommendations | Up-to-date program /directives for WRDSB staff and Administrators/Supervisors                                                                 | ● # of times program has been updated  
● Process/Requirement(s) are on the website are current                                                                 |                                                                                                                             |                    | ● Gather feedback from system leaders on change in knowledge of staff well being best practices and supports for a psychologically safe workplace. |                                                                                                                             |                      |
| Employee Wellness     | 6. Mental Health support that follows the Guarding Minds at Work protocols.                                                                                      | Provide support/ directives for WRDSB system leaders to support staff well-being                                                                 | ● # of resources created or made available  
● Gather feedback from system leaders on change in knowledge of staff well being best practices and supports for a psychologically safe workplace. |                                                                                                                             |                    | ● Feedback from participants on change in knowledge of staff well being best practices and changes in employee morale. |                                                                                                                             |                      |
| Employee Wellness     | 7. Develop an online training module for Resilience for all staff.                                                                                               | Provided training to promote coping strategies so that staff are able to remain at work and thrive.                                                                 | ● Developed needs assessment and outline for training module  
● # of participants                                                                 |                                                                                                                             |                    |                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                             |                      |
| Lead                        | Priority Area Description (Strategy)                                                                 | Intended Outcomes                                                                                           | How well did you do it? (Implementation Measures)                                                                 | Apr 2022 | Oct 2022 | Is anyone better off? (Outcome Measures)                                  | Oct 2022 | Outcome Data |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Information and Technology Services | 1. Implement a safe and secure wireless network to provide ease of access to staff and students | Wireless network upgrades are completed using a phased approach to implementation with Phase 2 implementation completed by Aug 2022 | ● Modeling and testing of wireless infrastructure and confirmation of approval to proceed with deployment  
● Procurement and delivery of units  
● All identified schools have fully deployed upgrades                                                                                           | Stoplight | Stoplight | ● Improved network quality and access speeds for students and staff  
● Networks are fully integrated with security measures to ensure safe and secure access for all users |          |
| Information and Technology Services | 2. Implement a new asset management software to provide better lifecycle management and tracking of WRDSB technology assets | Asset management software/application is fully implemented | ● Business requirement document completed  
● Identification and procurement of asset management system  
● Full migration of current assets                                                                                                                     |          |           | ● Consolidated life-cycle management and reporting for staff to manage technology assets  
● Up to date tracking of assets and movement occurring in new asset management system |          |
| Information and Technology Services | 3. Enhance security infrastructure and practices for staff to protect student data                   | Enhance security infrastructure to be implemented by August 2023                                           | ● Recommendation report completed  
● Multi-factor Authentication configured and in place for all staff                                                                                   |          |           | ● Additional layer of security to protect Board data and systems in place |          |
| Information and Technology Services | 4. Implement a new Student Information System (SIS) that will be robust, technologically advanced and provide overall improvements in processing and managing student data | The new Student Information System is implemented using a phased approach with partial rollout by Aug 2022 | ● Sign off on system testing and configuration  
● # of instructional and administrative staff trained on the new SIS                                                                                   |           |          | ● Transformation of new SIS is complete  
● “Go Live” of SIS  
● Requirements of the Education Act for Ministry/Board attendance and reporting met and data submitted |          |
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| **Elementary Program and Special Education and Mental Health** | 1. K-2 Early Reading Strategy: A system-wide approach to supporting oral language in Kindergarten to Grade 2 in support of early literacy skill development | Educators in identified schools will have the instructional capacity to directly teach early literacy skills. All Kindergarten students in identified schools will know their letters and sounds by the end of Senior Kindergarten | - Communication Boards and Sound Boards have been developed  
- # of PD sessions provided in identified schools  
- % of students in identified schools with diagnostic assessment data  
- Educator survey to capture feedback about the implementation of lessons | Stoplight | Stoplight | - Change from pre- to post assessment for students in identified schools  
- % of students who received targeted early reading supports  
- Feedback from educators on change in knowledge and implementation of practices | |
| **Elementary Program** | 2. Ongoing Implementation of the 2020 mathematics curriculum: Support educators to ensure that culturally relevant, equitable mathematics instruction and assessment practices are in place and the implementation of High impact strategies | Increased educator understanding of mathematical concepts and capacity to implement differentiated instructional strategies to improve student achievement  
Increased educator confidence in implementing the 2020 mathematics curriculum  
Increased student achievement in mathematics | - # of educators accessing Mathematics Long Range Plans  
- # of educators accessing synchronous and asynchronous PD opportunities  
- Educator survey to capture feedback about which strategies are being implemented and how often | | | - Educator feedback/reflections about the impact that identified resources, and professional learning sessions have had on their teaching practice, their confidence teaching mathematics and student achievement  
- % of educators in identified schools who received professional learning related to supporting students in early math  
- % of students in Grade 3 and 6 achieving at or above level 3 in mathematics (report card), and if available, % of students achieving provincial standard (Level 3/4) on primary/junior EQAO mathematics assessments | |
| **Secondary Program** | 3. Implementation of destreamed Grade 9 mathematics course: Collaborating, developing and creating systems with greater opportunity for all students | Centering the learner in classroom planning so that students and their post-secondary program pathway are the starting point for course planning  
Students in MTH1W (Grade 9 Mathematics) express greater confidence and identity as a mathematician  
Use of classroom practices that are responsive of and accessible to all learners: Universal Design for Learning (UDL), differentiation, and Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogy (CRRP) | - # of contacts Math Itinerants make  
- # of other educators Math Itinerants are supporting, surveys, anecdotal and artifact data  
- # of participants in PD sessions | | | - Feedback from students in MTH1W (Grade 9 mathematics) on changes in attitude and confidence  
- Feedback from staff teaching MTH1W (Grade 9 mathematics) on inclusion of practices in classrooms  
- % of students in Grade 9 achieving at or above level 3 in mathematics (report card), pass rates, and if available, % of students achieving at or above provincial standard (Level 3/4) on Grade 9 EQAO mathematics assessments | |
| **Secondary Program** | 4. Build educator capacity to encourage a more progressive, equitable and individualized approach to assessment and evaluation that centers the needs of the learner | Looking at growth over time in skills instead of weighted assessment. Assessment that honors the multifaceted nature of intelligence and that informs students in their growth. | - Materials developed to support educators  
- # of participants who attend PD sessions | | | - Feedback from educators on change in knowledge and in assessment practices being used  
- Feedback from administrators on changes in assessment practices being used | |
| **Secondary Program** | 5. Developing essential literacy and numeracy for all Grade 9-12 students through a culturally relevant and responsive approach | Increased teacher capacity in Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogy (CRRP)  
Development of literacy supports to aid educators in more responsive program planning | - # of schools using materials  
- # of participants in PD sessions | | | - Feedback from educators on the knowledge and understanding of CRRP and implementation of responsive program planning  
- Pass rates in compulsory courses in Grades 9 and 10 | |
| **Secondary Program** | 6. Provide students in grades 7 to 12 with the information and support they need to:  
- identify their interests and strengths | Each student makes a successful transition to their initial postsecondary destination. | - # of educators using myBlueprint in Individual Pathway Plan | | | - % of students in Grades 7–12 who annually update their Individual Pathways Plan (IPP) | |
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<tr>
<th>Indigenous Sovereignty, Equity and Inclusion Branch</th>
<th>7. Designing Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy (CRRP) training for schools so every educator understands the role they play in the development of a CRRP mindset in the system</th>
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<td>A teaching staff who are comfortable, confident and competent in using Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy (CRRP) in their teaching practices.</td>
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<td>8. Finalize, approve and communicate a new Student Dress Policy</td>
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<td>A Student Dress Policy that is more inclusive and devoid of bias. Students are aware of the updated Policy. Educators, administrators and families are aware of the new Policy.</td>
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<td>9. Build staff capacity for embedding Indigenous perspectives, ways of knowing and being across the curricula in ways that avoid appropriation and racial erasure.</td>
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<td>Viewing and representing through a lens that reflects Indigenous diversity, excellence, beauty, brilliance, and ways of knowing and being.</td>
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<td>Multilingual Learners</td>
<td>10. Supporting Multilingual Learners (MLL) students and their families: Build educator capacity through the use of an English Language Learner (ELL) Module while facilitating community and family partnerships</td>
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<td>Transform model of support to ensure a team approach</td>
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<td>MLL Support Teachers and other staff are embedding translanguaging (i.e., MLL students are encouraged to use all of their linguistic abilities in their learning), co-planning and co-teaching as part of their professional practice</td>
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<td>Fully implemented inclusive and equitable communication strategy</td>
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<td>Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) with various community partners in place in support of students and families</td>
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<td>11. Develop and implement an inclusive and equitable communication strategy to allow WDSB materials to be accessible to all families, especially those families whose first language is other than English.</td>
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<td>Fully implemented inclusive and equitable communication strategy</td>
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<td>12. Build French as a Second Language (FSL) educator capacity to support French language instruction for all students.</td>
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<td>A French Immersion program that is welcoming, inclusive, accessible and supportive of all students</td>
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<td>Outdoor and Environmental Education</td>
<td><strong>13. Infusing Indigenous land-based education in the Outdoor and Environmental Education Centre (OEEC) programs and at all school exterior grounds and build staff capacity to use them effectively</strong></td>
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**Leadership Development**

| Leadership Development | **15. Embed and centre Indigenous Sovereignty, Human Rights and Equity work across all groups within the Board Leadership Development Strategy (New Teacher Induction Program, Position of Added Responsibility processes, professional development, and School Improvement Planning) to build capacity across the board** | Develop the Indigenous Sovereignty, Human Rights and Equity capacity of school level educators (teachers, administrators, etc.) to influence practices that impact student outcomes | # of learning sessions with a focus on Human Rights, Indigenous Sovereignty and Equity | Feedback from participants on their knowledge and understanding of implementing practices that impact student outcomes |
| Leadership Development | **15. Embed and centre Indigenous Sovereignty, Human Rights and Equity work across all groups within the Board Leadership Development Strategy (New Teacher Induction Program, Position of Added Responsibility processes, professional development, and School Improvement Planning) to build capacity across the board** | # of participants | # of learning sessions with a focus on Human Rights, Indigenous Sovereignty and Equity | Feedback from participants on their knowledge and understanding of implementing practices that impact student outcomes |
| Leadership Development | **16. Build system leaders' capacity focused on Indigenous Sovereignty, Human Rights, Equity and Inclusion including developing Indigenous sovereignty and equity as a leadership competencies** | Further develop the Indigenous Sovereignty, Human Rights and Equity capacity of all system leaders (school level and service level leaders) | # of SLM meetings with a focus on Human Rights, Indigenous Sovereignty and Equity | Feedback from participants on their knowledge and understanding of equity competencies |
| Leadership Development | **17. Provide dedicated time and space for Black, Indigenous, and Racialized leaders to share their learning, thinking, reflections, and experiences (e.g., affinity groups )** | Inspire the success of our marginalized students through supporting the success of Indigenous, Racialized Administrators Mentorship and Support (IRAMS) and Indigenous and Racialized Teachers (IRT) groups | # of learning sessions offered | Feedback from members of IRAMS and IRT groups on their sense of agency and efficacy in their role |
| Leadership Development | **17. Provide dedicated time and space for Black, Indigenous, and Racialized leaders to share their learning, thinking, reflections, and experiences (e.g., affinity groups )** | Members of IRAMS and IRT experience increased agency, efficacy, retention and | # of participants attending the sessions | Feedback from staff on applying to leadership roles |
| Leadership Development | 18. Develop and mobilize the school learning and improvement process to ensure all students, staff and leaders are focused on learning and improvement efforts | Quality Implementation of School Improvement Strategies, including the Conditions for Learning in all schools | # of Family of Schools (FOS) meetings with a focus on school improvement planning | Feedback from FOS participants on content/ PD shared | # of schools documenting school improvement plans | Feedback from Lateral Leaders on the content of FOS meetings | # of Lateral Learning Sessions | # of site visits with a focus on School Improvement |
| Leadership Development | 19. Through ongoing and formal mentorship and networking opportunities, newly appointed leaders will develop their capacity in understanding and implementing technical and operational expectations. | Newly appointed leaders will be equipped with the knowledge, resources and skills they need to manage the operational expectations of their roles. | # of Administrator Mentorship Program (AMP) Meetings | Feedback from participants about knowledge and confidence to manage operational expectations | # of participants at each session | # of times committee has met | % of mentees with a mentor |
| Special Education and Mental Health | 20. Develop a common system understanding of an asset/strength based approach to student support and universal accommodations | Staff have the capacity to support student learning through identified student strengths. A learning environment prioritizing accessibility by implementing identified universal accommodations. | # of PD sessions offered | Feedback from participants about knowledge and confidence to support student learning and universal accommodations | IEP Committee has been developed and includes representative from the IEHR Division | Feedback from staff on their knowledge and confidence to support student learning and universal accommodations | Criteria for universal accommodations developed and communicated to the system |
| Special Education and Mental Health | 21. Develop a system approach to supporting student well-being and mental health by utilizing collective expertise | Socio-emotional Learning (SEL) practices implemented in all secondary schools. Utilizing WRDSB Teachers, Psychological Consultants, Social Workers and Child and Youth Workers to support proactive mental health supports. Increase and ease of access to community supports and information. Increased family engagement. | # of PD sessions provided to wellness teams in secondary schools | Feedback from students determine impact of school wellness teams | Mentally Healthy Classroom Resource (Brightspace Course/School Mental Health Ontario Resources) has been developed for staff. | Feedback from attendees at learning sessions to inform future workshops | IEP resources developed |
| Safe and Healthy Schools | 22. Develop a process that supports schools and departments as they respond to positive COVID-19 cases and outbreaks | Schools and workplaces are safe and healthy places to learn and work. Clear and timely communication about cases or outbreaks. | # materials produced | Reporting dashboard available on external website | # of staff members trained | # of suspensions and expulsions | Process in place that allows for timely communication of reporting cases publicly |
| Safe and Healthy Schools | 23. Develop resources and build capacity for schools to use alternative approaches to student discipline through a restorative model | A reduction in the number of suspensions and expulsions. | # materials produced | Feedback from students and members of the school community on school climate and sense of belonging | # of staff at participating schools who engage in professional learning specific to equity and human rights to support restorative practices | Feedback from students and members of the school community on school climate and sense of belonging | Description of supports being provided | # of suspensions and expulsions |
December 13, 2021

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

Dear Minister Lecce:

The Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) for the Halton District School Board recently received letters from the Avon Maitland District School board, the Rainy River District School Board, and the Rainbow District School Board SEAC, regarding their support of Bill 172, the Education Statute Law Amendment Act for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). This proposed legislation will require all Boards of Education throughout Ontario to develop policies and guidelines with respect to FASD and require the Ontario College of Teachers ECE programs to provide training with respect to FASD.

A FASD diagnosis impacts children’s ability to thrive in school due to the combination of deficits associated with the diagnosis and their limited capacity to understand expectations and demands. For this reason, staff need to be taught about the early signs and symptoms of FASD and how to provide appropriate accommodation in the classroom and school boards need to develop policies and guidelines with respect to FASD for the academic environment.

At our committee meeting on December 7th, 2021, the Halton District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee approved the following motion:

_That the Special Education Advisory Committee recommends sending a letter to the Minister of Education endorsing Bill 172, the Education Statute Law Amendment Act (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder)._  
_Carried unanimously._

In approving this motion, the members of the Halton District School Board’s Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) ask that you acknowledge our support for Bill 172 as it will help our students and educators experience success in their classrooms and improve their overall wellbeing.

We appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Alison Brindle, Chair of the Halton District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee

Cc: Margo Shuttleworth, Chair of Halton District School Board
December 13th, 2021

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

The Honourable Christine Elliot  
Ministry of Health, 8th Floor  
438 University Ave. Toronto, ON M5G 2K8

Dear Minister Lecce and Minister Elliot:

At its most recent committee meeting on December 7th, 2021, the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) of the Halton District School Board (HDSB) carried the following motion:

“That the HDSB SEAC write a letter asking the Minister of Education and the Minister of Health to consider amending the Immunization of School Pupils Act to include Covid-19 as a “designated disease”, due to the high impact of COVID on the disruption to learning for students with special education needs”

Students with special education needs have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, academically, emotionally, and through loss of support services typically provided in a school setting. To ensure equitable access to education for all, it is essential that schools remain open so that students with special needs can be accommodated appropriately. This will only be possible if we are able to ensure safety in our schools throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Currently, there is no mandate for eligible students to be vaccinated against COVID-19. Eligible students now include all students from the age of 5 and over. The addition of COVID-19 as a “designated disease” within the Immunization of School Pupils Act is a crucial step in our fight against this disease. It will hopefully inspire an increased uptake of the vaccine amongst our children and youth, which will provide increased protection for those who are too young or medically unable to be vaccinated in school communities. This will result in a safer environment for all students, staff, and their families. It will also help ensure consistent and equitable access to appropriate learning environments for students with special education needs.
In approving this motion, the HDSB Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) is adding its voice to the many boards and SEACs who have made the same request. I would like to thank you in advance for your consideration of this request to further improve the safety of the learning environments in Halton and across Ontario.

Sincerely,

Alison Brindle, Chair of the Halton District School Board Special Education Advisory Committee

Cc: Margo Shuttleworth, Chair of Halton District School Board
January 7, 2022

Karen Redman, Regional Chair, Region of Waterloo
Regional Council, Region of Waterloo
Region of Waterloo
150 Frederick Street
Kitchener, ON, N2G 4J3

Dear Chair Redman and Regional Council,

On behalf of the Board of Trustees for the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB), I am writing regarding the Region of Waterloo conversion of the former Kinsmen Daycare Centre into a temporary isolation center for individuals experiencing homelessness who test positive for COVID-19 or who are awaiting testing results. Trustees have requested that the Region provide a detailed safety plan and timelines for parents of the four surrounding schools and community members.

The WRDSB looks forward to working together with the Region of Waterloo and Cambridge Shelter Corporation to ensure appropriate measures are taken to mitigate any potential concerns and ensure the wellbeing of our students and staff, as well as those isolating at the Centre. As we move forward, we would like to extend an offer to collaborate at the start of projects in a way that may proactively address concerns and better support the communities we serve.

Sincerely,

Scott Piatkowski
Chairperson of the Board of Trustees
Waterloo Region District School Board
January 7, 2022

The Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education  
Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health  
Dr. Hsiu-Li Wang, Commissioner & Medical Officer of Health

Dear Minister Lecce, Dr. Moore and Dr. Wang,

The public continues to be advised, by medical professionals and government officials, that vaccinations are our greatest defence against COVID-19 and being fully vaccinated significantly reduces the risk of serious illness.

At its January 4, 2022, Special Board Meeting of the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB), the Board of Trustees approved the following motion:

That the WRDSB write a letter to the CMOH (Chief Medical Officer of Health), including the local MOH (Medical Officer of Health) and the MOE (Minister of Education) requesting that

i) priority status be provided to all school staff to receive COVID vaccine and subsequent boosters; and

ii) priority status be given to all students aged 5+ for the first, second and third dose of COVID vaccine as medically appropriate;

Thank you for prioritizing vaccination and boosters for education, childcare workers and students. This will help make schools safer.

We ask for your serious consideration of the request to prioritize vaccinations for all eligible students and staff to protect the health and safety of all our students, staff and families and reduce the risk of outbreaks from the COVID-19 virus in schools in the WRDSB and throughout Ontario. We must do everything we can to ensure that when schools are opened they are as safe as possible.

Sincerely,

Scott Piatkowski  
Chairperson of the Board of Trustees  
Waterloo Region District School Board

CC: Ontario Public School Boards’ Association, Ontario Public School Boards
January 7, 2022

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

Dear Minister Lecce,

At its January 4, 2022, Special Board Meeting of the Waterloo Region District School Board’s (WRDSB), Board of Trustees agreed to write to you to strongly urge the Ministry of Education (Ministry) to request that the same level of N95 respirators that are provided to staff, be provided for students.

Given the pervasiveness of the highly transmissible COVID-19 Omicron variant and research proving the COVID-19 virus is aerosolized, this is an urgent concern.

N95 respirators can provide greater protection against exposure to respiratory viruses compared to ASTM rated medical face masks and cloth face masks. The use of N95 respirators by students and staff will provide greater protection and a safer learning environment for all.

Minister Lecce, we ask for your serious consideration of this request, as it will provide an additional level of safety, protect the health and safety of students, staff and their families in the WRDSB and throughout Ontario. This additional layer will support the province’s goal of ensuring students continue to have the opportunity to learn in-person.

Sincerely,

Scott Piatkowski
Chairperson of the Board of Trustees
Waterloo Region District School Board

CC: Ontario Public School Boards’ Association, Ontario Public School Boards
January 11, 2022

Scott Piatkowski
Chairperson, Board of Trustees
Waterloo Region District School Board
51 Ardelt Avenue
Kitchener, ON N2C 2R5

Dear Chairperson Piatkowski,

Thank you for your correspondence on behalf of the Board of Trustees for the Waterloo Region District School Board regarding the temporary isolation centre. I have forwarded your request to our housing team and will ensure that they follow-up with the senior administration at WRDSB. We are grateful for the work that school administration, staff and board staff have done with staff from the Region and the Cambridge Shelter Corporation to disseminate information to the neighbouring community. We recognize that this is on top of an already busy 2022 with the resumption of distanced learning.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the Board of Trustees and WRDSB staff for the continued collaboration in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic. The school-based clinics, information sessions, and adherence to IPAC measures have been essential for the health of students and residents. Thank you for your partnership.

Sincerely,

Karen Redman
Chair, Regional Municipality of Waterloo
Dear Mr. Piatkowski,

Thank you for your letter requesting priority status for Waterloo Region District School Board educators and staff for a third dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, and two doses for students 5 years of age and older. The Region of Waterloo is committed to making it easier for everyone to have access to first, second and third doses of the COVID-19 vaccine.

Throughout the vaccine rollout, the Region of Waterloo has been collaborating with community partners, including school boards to prioritize vaccination against COVID-19. Yesterday, Region of Waterloo Public Health informed all local school boards, private schools and child care agencies about opportunities to get a third dose of the vaccine at Bingemans Conference Centre during convenient evening clinics that commence on Wednesday, January 12. These employers will provide their staff with a direct link to book an appointment for a third dose. Daytime appointments will also be available at Bingemans, Cambridge Pinebush and 150 Frederick Street vaccination clinics and can be booked on the Region of Waterloo website: regionofwaterloo.ca/getavaccine

We appreciate our partnership with WRDSB and the opportunity to provide on-site clinics for first doses for 5-11 year olds at many schools across Waterloo Region in December. Planning is underway to run second-dose clinics in the same schools in the latter part of January and into February.

Our top priority is to improve access to vaccines and increase vaccination rates. We are expanding capacity at existing vaccination clinics to get more third doses in arms while prioritizing administering first and second doses to 5-11 year olds. There are a number of other opportunities for residents of Waterloo Region to get first, second or third doses of the vaccine including at doctors’ office (for their patients), and at many local pharmacies: covid-19.ontario.ca/vaccine-locations

On behalf of the Region of Waterloo, I would like to thank you for your ongoing support and commitment to the health and safety of educators, child care staff and students/children from COVID-19.

Sincerely,
Kathy Proksch
Sr. Administrative Assistant
to the Commissioner/Medical Officer of Health
Region of Waterloo Public Health and Emergency Services
Work: 519-575-4400 ext. 5220
Cell: 519-502-2614
TTY: 519-575-4608
KProksch@regionofwaterloo.ca
www.regionofwaterloo.ca

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Hon. Stephen Lecce, MPP  
Minister of Education  
5th Floor, 438 University Ave.  
Toronto, ON M5G 2K8

RE: Classroom ventilation concerns

Thursday, January 27, 2022

Dear Minister Lecce,

I am writing to amplify concerns I am hearing from teachers and to ensure you are aware of the current situation in specific classrooms in Ontario.

A teacher at a local high school reached out to my office to share concerns about the safety conditions in several classrooms at her school. Her classroom must accommodate 32 learners plus a teacher, with no possibility of physical distancing given the size of the space. This particular classroom was built in 1955 and has the original windows, most of which have been sealed shut over the past 67 years, with only two small windows that open. Two pictures of this classroom are included for your reference.

As you can see from the picture of the window, the room is heated with radiators, which means there is no clean air being pumped into the space. This room has not been provided with a mechanical HEPA filter device with the justification that ventilation is already provided. The existing ventilation consists of two 67 year old return vents that are encrusted with dust and not connected to a fan with the only available air flow coming from opening the small windows to let in the cold winter air. While deploying an additional 3000 stand-alone HEPA filter units to school boards is a good start, it is clear that more action is necessary given that the classroom described above is not being provided a mechanical HEPA filter device despite a lack of adequate ventilation.

My constituents are looking for leadership and action to ensure that classrooms are physically safe spaces to learn and work. On behalf of these constituents, I’m writing to ask for details on your plan to address the need for improved ventilation and physical distancing, particularly in older schools.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Catherine Fife, MPP  
Waterloo

C:  MPP Marit Stiles, Official Opposition Critic, Education  
Scott Piatkowski, Chairperson, Waterloo Region District School Board

Constituency Office  
100 Regina St. S., Suite 220  
Waterloo, ON N2J 4A8  
Ph: 519-725-3477 | Fax: 519-725-3667  
Email: cfife-co@ndp.on.ca
2022 January 13

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

Re: Recommendation To Allow Student Trustees To Present Motions

Dear Minister Lecce:

This is a letter is to inform you of a motion approved by Trustees of the Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) at its December 14th, 2021, meeting of the board. The motion relates to the recommendation to amend the Education Act to allow Student Trustees the ability to introduce items by way of a motion for discussion. The move, which was brought forward by TVDSB student trustees Harini Satheeskumar, Hanzala Subhani and Niigonii White-Eye is part of an Ontario Student Trustees Association (OSTA) initiative.

Giving students the ability to influence learning is integral to everyone's success. We want our schools to be places where students take ownership of their learning and their school environment.

As you are aware, student trustees across Ontario are not allowed to move or second motions.

Currently, Section 55(4) of the Ontario Education Act states:

A student trustee is not entitled to move a motion, but is entitled to suggest a motion on any matter at a meeting of the board or of one of its committees on which the student trustee sits, and if no member of the board or committee, as the case may be, moves the suggested motion, the record shall show the suggested motion.

By allowing our student trustees the ability to move motions for discussion, they will be better able to complete their job fully, respond and meet the requests of the students they represent. Thames Valley District School Board values student voice and believes that if student trustees are able to move motions, this voice becomes stronger in school boards.

The full motion is detailed here:

To request that the Chair send a letter to the Ministry of Education asking for the amendment of the Education Act to give Student Trustees the right to move and second motions.

WHEREAS per section 55(5) of the Ontario Education Act student trustees have the right to partake in certain in-camera sessions closed to the public, demonstrating the high standing and trustworthiness of student trustees, and;

WHEREAS the student voice is most effectively communicated by granting student trustees equal opportunities to participate in Board functions as other Board trustees, and;
WHEREAS per section 55(7) of the Ontario Education Act student trustees receive equal opportunities to Board trustees, including access to professional development, resources and training, and;

WHEREAS student trustees are elected representatives, and are to be held accountable to the student body, and;

WHEREAS the student voice must be articulated fairly and expressively for the benefit of the school board, and;

WHEREAS the student voice must be represented fairly and articulated expressively for the benefit of the school board and to accurately reflect the students’ in decision-making, and;

WHEREAS student trustees further desire the right to move and second motions, to incite discussion:

WHEREAS doing so furthers the dynamic and effectiveness of student representation across Ontario, as students can begin the discussions surrounding items that they feel are most pertaining to their constituency without the need to request for support.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the Chair of the Board send a letter to the Ministry of Education on behalf of the Thames Valley District School Board with copies to local MPPs and other school boards, requesting the Ministry of Education to push for the recommendation in allowing student trustees the right to independently move and second motions during board meetings.

The Trustees of the Thames Valley District School Board appreciate your attention to review the Education Act as it pertains to the participation of student trustees and motions. We value the importance of student voice at the Board table and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Lori-Ann Pizzolato, Chair
Thames Valley District School Board

cc: Trustees
M. Fisher, Director of Education
E. Hardeman, MPP Oxford
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
January 21, 2022

Honourable Stephen Lecce
5th Floor, 438 University Ave.
Toronto, ON M5G 2K8
Email: stephen.lecce@pc.ola.org

Dear Minister Lecce:

The return of students to in-person learning has been a relief to many, and certainly a necessity for some. We enthusiastically welcomed the resumption of face-to-face interactions at schools among students and staff, especially now that higher grades of PPE have been provided.

We believe this is the best model of learning for the mental health, well-being and academic success of all students. To protect and preserve the school year from further interruptions, sir, the GECDSB Board of Trustees has some suggestions we implore you to consider, on behalf of our staff, students, and our communities.

We would like to see the resumption of a supported plan for the tracking and public reporting of confirmed COVID-19 cases in schools. To allow students and staff to return to school following COVID-19 illness or exposure, we also recommend a test-to-return strategy, permitting them to return to work and/or school if symptom free with a negative PCR or Rapid Antigen Test result. To this end, Minister, we strongly advise you to ensure ongoing, regular, equitable access to RAT kits for both students and staff throughout the course of the continuing pandemic.

Previously, GECDSB Trustees also advocated for the government to add the COVID-19 vaccination to the list of required vaccinations for students under the Immunization for School Pupils Act, and we would appreciate an update on this request.

The past two years have created many hardships for all Ontarians and we do not wish to see those difficulties compounded by an inadequate supply of school board resources. We urge for the inclusion of funding, within the Grants for Student Needs, to upgrade and improve technological tools and support networks used in remote learning. There have been many unfunded costs incurred by our school board during the pandemic that have impacted our overall operations, and we encourage the government to make a full reimbursement. There is also a tremendous need for the hiring of additional staff to support virtual learning. Our Board has been fiscally prudent, and we know that the needs of our students and staff will not end with COVID-19 costs. Investing in Ontario’s exceptional public education system includes setting our Boards up for future success, as well as maintaining health and safety toward the success and achievement of our students today.
Finally, Minister, we believe that you and your government must commit to and engage regularly in open dialogue, allowing for feedback, with Directors of Education, school boards, and education partners prior to the broadcast of plans to the media. Most certainly, confidences can be kept, and implementation will be faster and smoother if transparent, timely communication with the Ministry of Education precedes a public announcement. Leaders in Ontario’s school boards like GECDSB have perspectives and expertise that is born of experience, interaction, collaboration, and professionalism. The Ministry only serves to benefit from this shared knowledge. Ontario’s families look to their schools and those they interact with daily to bring context, calm, and confidence to the decisions we are making with their best interest at heart. We are trusted community leaders with shared goals and responsibilities. We seek to further enhance our valued partnership for the families and communities of the GECDSB, and those of Ontario.

Sincerely,

Alicia Higgison
Chairperson of the Board

Cc: Honourable Lisa Gretzky, MPP, Windsor West: lgretzky-qp@ndp.on.ca
    Honourable Percy Hatfield, MPP, Windsor – Tecumseh: phatfield-qp@ndp.on.ca
    Honourable Taras Natyshak, MPP Essex: tnatyshak@ndp.on.ca
    Honourable Marit Stiles, MPP, Education Critic (Email: MStiles-QP@ndp.on.ca)
    School Board Chairs: TGoertz@opsba.org
    Dr. Shanker Nesathurai, Acting Medical Officer of Health, WECHU
January 17, 2022

Via email: stephen.lecce@pc.ola.org; minister.edu@ontario.ca

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

Honourable Stephen Lecce,

We are aware that there is a shortage of personal support workers (PSWs) in the Province of Ontario. During the COVID-19 pandemic, employees, who would normally fill the position of Student Support Professionals (SSPs), also known as Educational Assistants (EAs), in Boards, were eligible for higher pay elsewhere. Pandemic pay recognized PSWs as front line workers and made working for other organizations, that were already able to offer more pay, even more attractive. This leaves Boards of Education with daily and long-term shortages.

SSPs and EAs are doing the same work in schools as PSWs are doing in the community; toileting, hygiene, mobility support and feeding to name a few. They are often working with students who are unmasked. The glaring difference is that they are not receiving the same rate of pay, which makes staying in the field of education difficult.

Daily and long term SSP and EA shortages, unfortunately, mean that students with special education needs are unable to be supported to attend school, and their families must find solutions to last minute cancellations. Boards are forced to be as creative as possible to keep this from happening, but it is often impossible to avoid.

We understand that compensation for education workers is a central bargaining item and is out of the control of the local Boards. Without the support of the government to raise the rate of pay, Boards are left with few or no options to encourage staff to continue to work, nor to attract new employees.

We ask that the government consider this to be a pressing issue moving into this next round of discussions centrally. We need to provide high quality care and support for students with special education needs in our schools.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Posthumus
Chair, Special Education Advisory Committee
Lakehead District School Board

cc: Chairs of all Ontario Special Education Advisory Committees

Your Children  Our Students  The Future

www.lakeheadschools.ca
Lakehead District School Board
Office of the Chair of the Board

14 January 2022

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

Dear Minister Lecce:

At our Committee of the Whole meeting on 11 January 2022, trustees of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board asked me to share a number of specific requests relating to the reopening of our schools to in-person learning next week. While we appreciate the updated guidance and information in your memorandum of 12 January 2022, our greatest concerns remain unaddressed.

First among these is the need for continued tracking and public reporting of confirmed and suspected COVID-19 cases in schools by local Public Health Units. Reporting rates of absenteeism is an imprecise and inadequate proxy for understanding the prevalence of Covid-19 cases in schools. An article in today’s Toronto Star, by Isabel Teotonio, entitled “Thousands of students are ‘no shows’ after forced switch to remote learning,” illustrated the wide range of reasons currently being offered for student absences, the vast majority of which do not reference illness. Families should not have to rely on uninformative absence reports or on community rumour to determine whether or not a child may have been exposed to COVID-19 infection at school, or whether the risk of exposure to COVID-19 at a school exceeds their family risk tolerance in light of other family members who have unique vulnerabilities to the virus.

Tracking and reporting the incidence of COVID-19 cases associated with schools requires the availability of tests. Students and staff must have access to PCR testing in instances of high-risk exposure and suspected COVID-19. In addition, our schools need continued funding for and supplies of rapid antigen tests for all students and staff, in support of implementing a “Test to Return” strategy following COVID-19 illness or exposure. The PCR tests should be available to asymptomatic individuals with high-risk exposure as well as to symptomatic individuals with suspected COVID-19 infections.

We appreciate your decision to provide non-fit-tested N95 masks as an optional alternative to medical masks for school staff, but we believe that medical masks and non-fit-tested N95 masks should also be provided and funded as an option for students. In addition, it is imperative that any provided masks come in a full range of sizes to ensure optimum effectiveness for both children and adults.

As we and other school boards have requested previously, we would like to see a long-term commitment to adequate funding for upgrades to school ventilation systems, beyond providing additional portable HEPA filter units, in the interests of the long-term protection of the health of students and staff. We welcome any increases to funding for vital school facility improvements, but at this time, replacing outdated HVAC systems and retrofitting schools built before mechanical ventilation systems were commonplace must be highlighted as significant needs.
Finally, we would appreciate **confirmation that additional funding will be provided to cover any COVID-related expenses that cannot be funded through current planned budgets.** While the Grants for Student Needs for 2021-2022 included some additional funding, the Omicron variant has created new budget pressures.

Sincerely,

Lynn Scott  
Chair, Ottawa-Carleton District School Board

cc: Dr. Vera Etches, Medical Officer of Health, Ottawa Public Health  
Cathy Abraham, President, OPSBA  
W.R. (Rusty) Hick, Executive Director, OPSBA  
T.J. Goertz, Senior Communication and Policy Officer  
OPSBA and All English Public Chairs  
Trustees, Ottawa-Carleton District School Board  
Senior Staff, Ottawa-Carleton District School Board  
Corporate Records
January 10, 2022

Honourable Stephen Lecce  
5th Floor, 438 University Ave.  
Toronto, ON M5G 2K8  
Email: stephen.lecce@pc.ola.org

Dear Minister Lecce:  

Subject: 2021-22 Revised Budget Estimates

The Greater Essex County District School Board (the “Board”) recently submitted their 2021-22 Revised Budget Estimates to your Ministry offices. The Board is appreciative of the additional funding measures provided by the Province to support the safe re-opening of our schools and to protect the health and wellbeing of students and staff in our facilities.

We respectfully submit the following concerns for your consideration:

COVID-19 Funding Gaps: The Board would like to highlight some specific funding gaps related to COVID-19:

- Additional Staffing funding is insufficient to address the increased costs of additional teachers, school administrators, educational support staff and professionals that are required to support a remote learning environment. Many families in our region have chosen to participate in our virtual elementary and secondary schools, which have required an investment in staffing to support remote learning for our students. Further, the funding is inadequate in addressing the requirements for additional custodians for the enhanced disinfecting and cleaning of our facilities.

- Additional School Operations funding is insufficient to support increased utilities costs for adjusting the operating systems of existing HVAC systems to run longer hours and to support increased outdoor air ventilation, and increased frequency in filter changes. Further complicating matters are supply chain issues associated with the procurement of MERV-13 filters for use in our facilities.

- The changes in the 2021/22 GSN stabilization funding model has required the Board to use 2% of its operating allocation to manage the costs associated with COVID-19. In
the prior year, the Board received specific GSN stabilization funding of $5,629,422 which was not tied to its accumulated surplus. With the current GSN stabilization funding model, the resulting reduction in funding has resulted in the Board having to make very challenging budget decisions to alleviate cost pressures associated with COVID-19 while ensuring the safe operation of our schools.

- Current COVID-19 funding supports do not adequately contemplate increased occasional teacher costs and staff absenteeism, which are increasing at a substantial rate due to the rapid spread of COVID-19, the changes in eligibility for PCR testing, the unavailability of rapid antigen test kits and the new requirements for self-isolating, recently announced by the Province. Implications associated with rates of staff illness from COVID-19 and/or the requirements to self-isolate will have substantial impacts on expenses which may exceed existing funding supports and the 2% operating allocation.

- COVID-19 funding supports do not consider the negative impact of international student enrolment, which has significantly declined over the past two years. The Board has relied on the tuition received by international students to assist with the expenditures of the Board.

**Accumulated Surplus:**
The Board would like to thank the Ministry for recognizing the ongoing impact the pandemic is having on the safe operation of our schools by releasing the second half of COVID-19 funding supports and permitting Boards to utilize up to 2% of its operation allocation.

The Board consistently adopts a conservative, intentional and fiscally prudent approach to its budget preparation. The Board’s objective is to be fiscally responsible in our decision-making process. The Board recognizes the importance of maintaining adequate reserve levels to provide protection from unanticipated events and has ensured that its accumulated surplus represents approximately 4% of the total 2021-22 budget, which we consider representative of a good benchmark. The Board has deemed it necessary to utilize 2% of its operating allocation ($8.5 million) to address COVID-19 funding pressures. Providing adequate funding and investments to address the needs of COVID-19 realities is a concern shared by all communities in Ontario, and represents a commitment to the importance of public education. The Board would like to express its concern that utilizing accumulated surplus to fund COVID-19 expenses impacts the Board’s efforts in maintaining reserves to support unplanned expenditures and puts further pressures on the Board to rebuild reserve balances from current and future budgets.

**Ventilation Measures:**
The CVRIS – Resiliency Infrastructure funding stream has been instrumental in introducing mechanical ventilation to schools which currently rely on passive ventilation systems. As noted above, additional funding supports for running these systems longer is required, particularly as more mechanical ventilation systems are introduced into our schools. The Board would like to advocate for additional investments for improving the ventilation systems in our schools, together with a permanent increase in the operating allocation in the GSN to support the increased operating expenses for utilities and filter expenses that will be incurred for the operations of these enhanced systems.
Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to working with the Ministry to address the above concerns.

Sincerely,

Alicia Higgison
Chairperson of the Board

Cc: Honourable Lisa Gretzky, MPP, Windsor West: lgretzky-qp@ndp.on.ca
    Honourable Percy Hatfield, MPP, Windsor – Tecumseh: phatfield-qp@ndp.on.ca
    Honourable Taras Natyshak, MPP Essex: tnatyshak@ndp.on.ca
    Honourable Marit Stiles, MPP, Education Critic (Email: MStiles-QP@ndp.on.ca)
    School Board Chairs: TGoertz@opsba.org
January 6, 2022

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

Dear Minister Lecce,

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ontario Government stated that “schools should be the last thing to close and the first thing to open,” yet this week, Ontario closed schools for in-person learning across the province for the fourth time.

On behalf of Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board, Trustees understand that the emergence of the Omicron variant has presented the most recent COVID-19 pandemic challenge for public education. We believe that for the public education system, student success must be prioritized and the well-being of students, education workers and families must be paramount.

Therefore, in order to ensure an outcome for public education that is different than previous extended closures, we are formally requesting the immediate implementation of the following specific measures to help ensure that schools can reopen for safe in-person leaning as soon as possible:

1. **Priority access to vaccinations for frontline education workers and students.**

Our Board cannot function without the hard work and dedication of educators. In order to re-open schools and minimize COVID-related workforce disruption, it is critical that all frontline educators be provided with priority access to COVID-19 vaccinations as quickly as possible. Further, to ensure student safety in a congregate setting once schools are re-opened, priority access to COVID-19 vaccination booster shots should also be provided to students aged 12 to 17 as soon as possible.

We welcome the opportunity to help support in-school student and employer-based vaccination clinics, noting the urgency of this request.

2. **Continued tracking and public reporting of confirmed and suspected COVID-19 cases in schools.**

It is our ethical responsibility as a board of education to ensure that parents, frontline educators, and their families and loved ones know if they have been in close contact with a potential COVID-19 infection.

We recognize that Hamilton Public Health Services staff do not have the capacity to complete contact tracing, as we have in the past. However, tracking and public reporting can be achieved through adequate supply of take-home PCR test kits or Rapid Antigen Test kits, voluntary self-reporting of probable or test-confirmed cases, and absence tracking.
It is important that staff, students, and families are informed when there is a probable or confirmed case in their classroom, and we request the Ministry support a modified tracking and reporting mechanism for COVID-19 in schools, as well as an ongoing supply of PCR or Rapid Antigen Tests for school boards.

3. Ministry funded or provisioned high-quality masks for students.

Masking is another critical strategy that has helped reduce the risk of transmission during the pandemic. We thank the Ministry for providing 3-ply masks for students; however, we note the inventory provided is quite limited. To ensure students have equitable access to higher-quality masks, we request the Ministry provide or fund an ongoing inventory of masks for students in our system. In addition, we are seeking further direction on refined mask exemption requirements for students.

4. Additional technology funding to ensure that every student receives a device for learning.

As of January 5, preliminary numbers from our Remote Learning Device Request survey to families indicate that we have more than 8,000 students in need of a device, which is approximately 2,000 devices short from what we are able to offer. Trustees request additional funding for technology as the need for individual devices has grown beyond our current inventory. During this critical stage of the pandemic, equity of access is vital to supporting the education needs of our students.

5. Transparent and timely communication to families and staff regarding changes to in-person learning.

Throughout the pandemic we have advocated for timely planning and communication from the Ministry of Education and provincial government. Changes in learning modes are challenging for many families and they need adequate notice to plan for their child’s childcare and learning needs.

We respectfully request that any potential changes to the target date for the return to in-person learning be communicated as early as possible and in a transparent manner.

We know the decision to temporarily move students to remote learning was a difficult one as we have heard clear evidence from our pediatricians and mental health experts about the significant, lasting negative impacts this can have on our students. We appreciate hearing this is a targeted and time-limited strategy. We continue to advocate for a return to in-person learning as soon as possible and feel strongly that the additional steps listed above are essential.

Thank you for your consideration. I would be happy to discuss our requests further.

Sincerely,

Dawn Danko
Chair, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board