

WATERLOO REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

NOTICE OF MEETING

The regular monthly **Board Meeting** of the Waterloo Region District School Board will be held via video conference, on **Monday, May 30, 2022, at 7:00 p.m.**

AGENDA

Call to Order

Approval of Agenda

Consent Agenda**

Receipt/Approval of Minutes:

Approve Minutes - Audit Committee Meeting of February 9, 2022

Approve Minutes - Parent Involvement Committee Meeting of March 1, 2022

Approve Minutes - Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of April 13, 2022

Receive Minutes – Board Meeting of April 25, 2022

Approve Minutes – Committee of the Whole Meeting of May 9, 2022

Approve Minutes – Committee of the Whole Meeting of May 16, 2022

Receipt/Approval of Monthly Reports:

35	Staffing Information – Retirements and Resignations	G. Shantz
39	Staffing Recommendations – Appointments	G. Shantz
41	Student Suspension / Expulsion Report for March 2022	B. Lemon
43	Student Suspension / Expulsion Report for April 2022	B. Lemon
45	Reported Student Aggression Quarterly Data Q3 –2021-2022	G. Shantz

Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

Announcements/Celebrating Board Activities

Communications Good News Update

Delegations

Staff Follow Up

Reports

52	2021-2022 Past Directors' Bursary	Chairperson
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54 Bluewater District School Board to Minister of Education

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61 Waterloo Region District School Board to Indigenous Education Advisory Council (IEAC)

**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



Report to Board of Trustees

May 30, 2022

**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 May 30, 2022

Retirements: Elementary Teaching Staff				
First	Last	Position/Location	Retirement Date	Years of Service
Catherine	Deacon-Barrett	Teacher, Lackner Woods PS	June 30, 2022	31
Lisa	Desroches	Teacher, Southridge PS	June 30, 2022	22
Anthony	Egerhazi	Teacher, Queen Elizabeth PS	June 30, 2022	30
Mary	Elias	Special Education Teacher, Westheights PS	June 30, 2022	32
Cheryl	Giles	Teacher, Bridgeport PS	June 30, 2022	18
Michelle	Kreller-Janke	Consultant, Learning Services	June 30, 2022	32
Lisa	Krueger	Teacher, Manchester PS	June 28, 2022	32
Sherry	Laverdiere	Teacher, Franklin PS	August 31, 2022	23
Lisa	Marteniuk	Teacher, Elizabeth Ziegler PS	June 29, 2022	31
Beth	Mehring	Special Education Resource Teacher, Sir Adam Beck PS	June 30, 2022	34
Marianne	Miller	Teacher, Floradale PS	June 30, 2022	17
Jeanette	Voaden	Teacher, Empire PS	May 31, 2022	30
Barbara	Williams	Consultant, Special Education	May 31, 2022	37
Jennifer	Wolfe	Special Education Resource Teacher, Franklin PS	August 31, 2022	18

Retirements: Secondary Teaching Staff				
First	Last	Position/Location	Retirement Date	Years of Service
Sandra	Bethell	Teacher, Eastwood CI	June 30, 2022	34
Elizabeth	Carse	Family Studies Department Head, Cameron Heights CI	June 30, 2022	32
Demetre	Goros	Teacher, Kitchener CI	June 30, 2022	29
Gillian	Graham	Teacher, Galt CI	June 30, 2022	30
Luisa	Herkimer	Teacher, Preston High School	June 30, 2022	28
Chris	Krawchyk	Teacher, Preston High School	June 30, 2022	22
Catherine	Long	Teacher, Glenview Park SS	June 30, 2022	18
Scott	McLean	Teacher, Forest Heights CI	June 30, 2022	25

Staffing Statistics – Retirements
Current at May 30, 2022

Retirements: Secondary Teaching Staff (Cont'd)				
Melissa	Osland	Library Department Head, Galt CI	June 30, 2022	30
Vivian	Roth	Teacher, Southwood SS	June 30, 2022	23
David	Sharp	Teacher, Laurel Heights SS	June 30, 2022	19
Marie	Snyder	Teacher, Kitchener CI	June 30, 2022	31
Jolanda	Stemmler	Teacher, Grand River CI	June 30, 2022	29
Margaret	Wood	Library Department Head, Eastwood CI	June 30, 2022	28

Retirements: Administrative & Support Staff				
First	Last	Position/Location	Retirement Date	Years of Service
Janine	Bender	Educational Assistant, Waterloo CI	August 31, 2022	14
Shelley	Coffin-Forrester	Educational Assistant, Clemens Mill PS	August 30, 2022	19
Marion	Grant	Library Clerk, Park Manor PS	July 6, 2022	22
Christina	Juniper	Educational Assistant, Westheights PS	June 28, 2022	28
Frank	Leung	Vice Principal, Cameron Heights CI	June 30, 2022	31
Susan	Morrison	System Administrator, Learning Services	June 30, 2022	20
Lynda	Peters	Educational Assistant, William G Davis PS	August 31, 2022	24
Brenda	Pop	Library Clerk, Millen Woods PS	June 30, 2022	27
Gareth	Rose	Tradesperson, Maintenance	June 30, 2022	13
Michael	Ryan	Custodian, Laurel Heights SS	July 22, 2022	11
Maureen	Shortt	Educational Assistant, Blair Road PS	June 28, 2022	23
JoAnne	Snow	Support Specialist, ITS	May 31, 2022	27
Rhonda	Snyder	Head Secretary, Coronation PS	June 30, 2022	33
Kelly	Wilkinson	System Administrator, Human Resources & Equity Services	June 30, 2022	32

Staffing Statistics – Resignations
Current at May 30, 2022

Permanent Staff Resignations			
First	Last	Position/Location	Effective Date
Catriona	Atkins	Educational Assistant, AR Kaufman PS	June 17, 2022
Lynn	Berube	Custodian, Laurel Heights SS	May 2, 2022
Jillian	Burkhardt	Elementary Teacher, Lexington PS	April 24, 2022
Lori	Crewe	Secretary, Lackner Woods PS	May 6, 2022
Amanda	Davis	Early Childhood Educator, Rockway PS	April 29, 2022
Tirsa	Finlay	Elementary Teacher, AR Kaufman PS	June 15, 2022
Laurie	Fitzgerald	Child Youth Worker, Chalmers Street PS	May 13, 2022
Michelle	Gama	Early Childhood Educator, Alpine PS	May 3, 2022
Scott	Kemp	Secondary Teacher, Cameron Heights CI	May 2, 2022
Amanda	MacLean	Vice Principal, Chicopee Hills PS	August 31, 2022
Grace	Ogor	Early Childhood Educator, Winston Churchill PS	May 31, 2022
Melanie	Rudow	Elementary Teacher, Howard Robertson PS	August 31, 2022
Lynn	Scott	Child Youth Worker, Cedarbrae PS	June 30, 2022
Tracy	Starr	Elementary Teacher, Margaret Ave PS	August 31, 2022
Heidi	Van Schaik	Secretary, Vista Hills PS	May 11, 2022
Sylvia	West	Head Secretary, Trillium PS	July 5, 2022



Report to Board of Trustees

May 30, 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 May 30, 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 May 30, 2022

New Appointments: Administrative and Support Staff			
First	Last	Position / Location	Effective Date
Christine	Bending	Custodian, Margaret Avenue PS	May 4, 2022
Dragana	Cvrkalj	Custodian, Waterloo CI	May 16, 2022
Shoba	Gohil	HR Officer, Human Resources & Equity Services	May 24, 2022
Stela	Lacka	Payroll Assistant, Human Resources & Equity Services	May 2, 2022
Alicia	Laros	Accounting Clerk, Business Services	May 9, 2022
Jennifer	Lyon	HR Assistant, Human Resources & Equity Services	April 27, 2022
Biniam	Mulualem	Custodian, Laurel Heights SS	May 10, 2022
Dean	Noakes	Custodian, Eastwood CI	May 3, 2022

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

Human Resources & Equity Services



Report to Board of Trustees

May 30, 2022

Subject: Student Suspension/Expulsion Report March, 2022

Recommendation

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

Status

Comparing year to date from March 2021 and March 2022, elementary suspensions have increased by 354 and secondary suspensions have increased by 897.

Comparing year to date from March 2021 and March 2022 school expulsions are the same at 1 and board expulsions have increased by 12.

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 March 2021 - 104, year to date - 319
- Total elementary school suspensions in March 2022 - 100, year to date - 673
- Total secondary school suspensions in March 2021 - 22, year to date - 76
- Total secondary school suspensions in March 2022- 184, year to date - 973

Expulsions

- Total school expulsions in March 2021 - 0, Year to Date 1
- Total school expulsions in March 2022 - 0, Year to Date 1
- Total board expulsions in March 2021 - 0, Year to Date 0
- Total board expulsions in March 2022- 0, Year to Date 12

Violent Incidents

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

- Total elementary/secondary violent incidents in March 2021 - 0, Year to Date 2

- Total elementary/secondary violent incidents in March 2022- 5, Year to Date 34

Background

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

Financial implications

There are no financial implications.

Communications

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

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



Report to Board of Trustees

May 30, 2022

Subject: Student Suspension/Expulsion Report April, 2022

Recommendation

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

Status

Comparing year to date from April 2021 and April 2022, elementary suspensions have increased by 436 and secondary suspensions have increased by ~~1030~~974.

Comparing year to date from April 2021 and April 2022 school expulsions are the same at 1 and board expulsions have increased by 12.

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

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

Suspensions

- Total elementary school suspensions in April 2021 - 7, year to date - 326
- Total elementary school suspensions in April 2022 - 89, year to date - 762
- Total secondary school suspensions in April 2021 - 3, year to date - 79
- Total secondary school suspensions in April 2022 - 135, year to date -1109

Expulsions

- Total school expulsions in April 2021 - 0, Year to Date 1
- Total school expulsions in April 2022- 0, Year to Date 1
- Total board expulsions in April 2021 - 0, Year to Date 0
- Total board expulsions in April 2022 - 0, Year to Date 12

Violent Incidents

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

- Total elementary/secondary violent incidents in April 2021 - 0, Year to Date 2
- Total elementary/secondary violent incidents in April 2022 - 1, Year to Date 35

Background

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

Financial implications

There are no financial implications.

Communications

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

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



Report to Board of Trustees

May 30, 2022

Subject: Reported Student Aggression Quarterly Data Q3 –2021-2022

Recommendation

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

Status

The Board continues to experience significant staffing challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Board continues to endeavour to staff schools given high issues of absenteeism within the system. Unforeseen and unplanned disruption continues to impact the delivery of education for students within our system. Due to the highly ambiguous nature of this pandemic, it is difficult to forecast future student aggression levels.

We continue to be proactive in utilizing our BMS team to support staff and administration in the following ways:

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

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

Hazard: The worker is reporting a hazard, the worker sustained no injury during the incident, or it was a near miss. The Board and Unions actively encourage employees to report workplace hazards in order to act proactively to prevent more serious incidents.

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

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

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

Previous Year Quarterly Report Comparison

Please note, due to the pandemic, it is challenging to compare year-to-year data. During portions of the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years, students were not always attending school in-person. Due to the inconsistencies of students attending school in-person during the pandemic years, it would be inappropriate to make year-to-year comparisons or extrapolate trends.

Quarterly student aggression data as reported by WRDSB staff for the period February 1, 2022 - April 15, 2022 compared to the data from the same period February 1, 2021 - April 15, 2021 last school year:

- Total Elementary incidents have increased by 211 incidents from the same period last year.
- Total Secondary incidents have increased by 9 incidents from the same period last year.

2022 Reporting Information

Reported Student Aggression Incidents for the Current School Year (February 1, 2022 - April 15, 2022):

- Total Elementary aggression incidents: **(February 1, 2022 - April 15, 2022): 395 Incidents**
 - Hazard – 261 incidents
 - 66.08% of all elementary incidents
 - First Aid – 126 incidents

- 31.90% of all elementary incidents
 - Health Care – 4 events
 - 1.01% of all elementary events
 - Lost Time – 4 events -
 - 1.01% of all elementary events
- Total Secondary aggression incidents from (**February 1, 2022 - April 15, 2022**): **29 incidents**
 - Hazard –10 incidents
 - 34.48% of all Secondary incidents
 - First Aid – 19 incidents
 - 65.52% of all Secondary incidents
 - Health Care – 0 incidents
 - 0.00% of all Secondary incidents
 - Lost Time – 0 incidents
 - 0.00 % of all Secondary incidents
- Total aggression incidents for hazards, first aid, health care, and lost time per employee group from **February 1, 2022 - April 15, 2022 - 424 Incidents**
 - Educational Assistant (EA) / Child and Youth Worker (CYW) – 253
 - 59.67% of total incidents
 - Education Support Staff (ESS) – 2
 - 0.47% of total incidents
 - Early Child Educator (ECE) – 47
 - 11.08% of total incidents
 - Elementary Teacher – 86
 - 20.28% of total incidents
 - Elementary Occasional Teacher – 22
 - 5.19% of total incidents
 - Secondary Teacher/Occasional Teacher – 2
 - 0.47% of total incidents
 - Supervision Monitors – 1
 - 0.24% of total incidents
 - Administrators/MGMT – 10
 - 1.41% of total incidents
 - Other – 1
 - 0.24% of total incidents

Reported Student Aggression Incidents for Prior School Year

(February 1, 2021 - April 15, 2021):

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

- Total Secondary aggression incidents from (**February 1, 2021 - April 15, 2021**): **20 incidents**
 - Hazard –8 incidents
 - 40.00% of all Secondary incidents
 - First Aid – 8 incidents
 - 40.00% of all Secondary incidents
 - Health Care – 2 incidents
 - 10.00% of all Secondary incidents
 - Lost Time – 2 incidents
 - 10.00 % of all Secondary incidents

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

Background

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

Financial implications

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

Communications

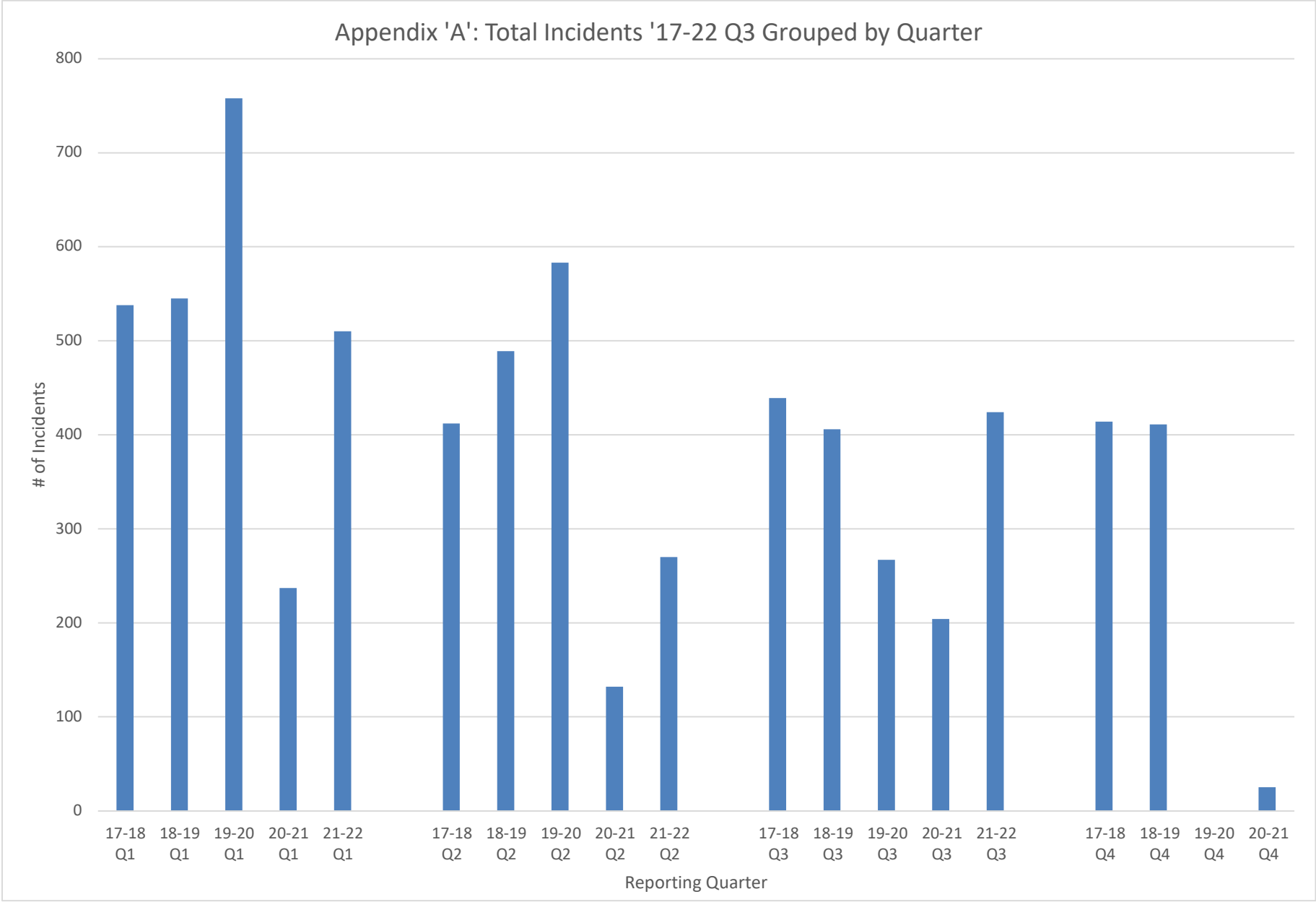
A report of all workplace incidences, including student aggression is provided every two weeks to the Board's Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC).

Appendices

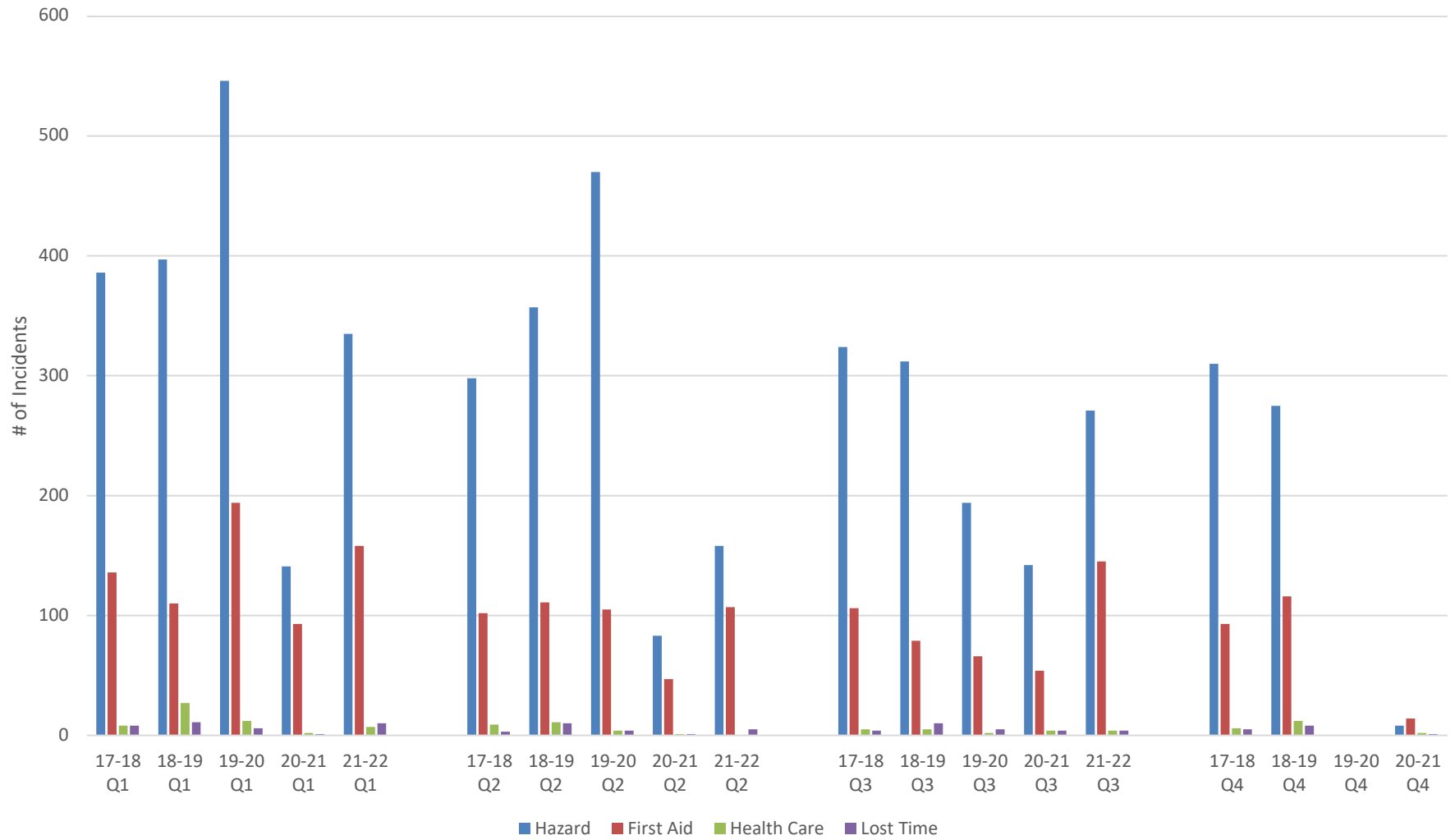
Appendix 'A' – Total Incidents: 17-22 Q3

Appendix 'B' – Types of Incidents by Quarter: 17-22 Q3

Prepared by: Graham Shantz, Coordinating Superintendent of Human Resources & Equity Services;
 Justin Brown, Senior Manager, Human Resource Services;
 Shannon-Melissa Dunlop, Manager, Health, Safety & Security;
 In consultation with Coordinating Council



Appendix 'B': Types of Incidents by Quarter
'17-22 Q3 Grouped by Quarter





Report to Board of Trustees

May 30, 2022

Subject: Recipients of the 2021-22 Past-Directors' Bursary

Recommendation

This report is for the information of the Board.

Status

The Past-Directors' Bursary, formerly known as the Linda Fabi Bursary, will provide funding for students who are pursuing a trade, through college or apprenticeship, and who have not already been selected to receive an award at their graduation ceremony.

The Adjudication Committee, comprised of Jeewan Chanicka, Director of Education, Scott Piatkowski, Chairperson, Kathleen Woodcock, Vice-Chairperson and Jayne Herring, Trustee, reviewed the applications submitted by the following students:

Adrien Ambrosini	Cameron Heights Collegiate Institute
Lauren Butcher	Kitchener-Waterloo Collegiate & Vocational School
Jack Deline	Bluevale Collegiate Institute
Simon Drygala	Forest Heights Collegiate Institute
Ethan Hopkins	Jacob Hespeler Secondary School
Spencer Knight	Grand River Collegiate Institute
Jakob Londry	Huron Heights Secondary School
Andrew Ouellette	Huron Heights Secondary School
Hunter Rickert	Southwood Secondary School
Scott Scherer	Grand River Collegiate Institute
Tyler Thompson	Forest Heights Collegiate Institute

The following criteria were taken into consideration:

1. The student's key characteristics.
2. An example of how the student has demonstrated perseverance and/or has overcome obstacles or made a remarkable comeback during his/her high school career.

3. A staff member's recommendation.

All eleven applicants were confirmed to meet the criteria and were selected to receive the 2021-22 Past-Directors' Bursary; each student will receive \$200.

Background

The Past-Directors' Bursary, formerly known as the Linda Fabi Bursary, was established by the Board of Trustees in celebration and recognition of the many contributions and achievements of Linda Fabi during her tenure as Director of Education for the Waterloo Region District School Board. After the retirement of John Bryant, the name was changed to reflect Trustees' gratitude for the contributions of multiple retired Directors.

The total annual amount of the Bursary is \$2,000, which is presented to students of the Waterloo Region District School Board. Depending on the number of applicants, this award can be divided to recognize a number of eligible applicants. This is the eighth year that the bursary will be awarded.

Financial implications

The bursaries, amounting to \$2,200, will be charged to the Board of Trustees' budget.

Communications

The announcement of the Past-Directors' Bursary recipients will be shared with all schools, staff, students, and the public via the Board website. The communications surrounding the bursary's history will include its original name.

Prepared by: Scott Piatkowski, Chairperson of the Board,
jeewan chanicka, Director of Education
in consultation with Coordinating Council



Bluewater District School Board

351 1st Avenue North – PO Box 190
 Chesley ON N0G 1L0
 Telephone: (519) 363-2014 Fax: (519) 370-2909
 www.bwdsb.on.ca

Sent by email: stephen.lecce@pc.ola.org

April 27, 2022

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

Dear Minister Lecce:

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, we are reaching out to echo the concerns in the letter you received dated April 14, 2022 from Avon Maitland District School Board regarding a recent trend of increased absenteeism and lack of staff to cover these absences. Similar concerns outlining the gravity of the situation in Bluewater District School Board were also expressed by our director of education in an email to the deputy minister.

We are struggling on a regular basis to keep our schools open with the increased number of staff who are absent due to illness, isolation, and other reasons. While our staff have been extremely supportive and creative in finding ways to mitigate the various impacts of this surge in absenteeism, our current situation is simply not sustainable.

Many of our teachers have sacrificed their preparation periods, schools have had to cancel resource and other support time, and staff are taking on additional teaching duties. This has extended to administrators, including principals, vice-principals, and central system level staff, who are covering classes daily after all efforts have been exhausted to fill positions with qualified staff and emergency workers.

With administrators working increased hours to manage this shortage, and teachers often losing their preparation and break times, we are deeply concerned about the inevitability of staff burn-out, and other negative impacts to student and staff safety and well-being. Staffing shortages are compounding stress-related absences and are also preventing us from providing professional development this year.

This high level of absenteeism is evident in other staff groups who are just as important to the safe operation of our schools, such as educational assistants, office professionals, and custodians. Continuing along this trajectory will lead to difficult decisions, including requiring school and classroom closures due to insufficient staffing.

As always, our commitment remains focused on providing a quality education for every student in a safe, accepting, and caring environment.

Sincerely,

Jane Thomson
 Chair

Jan Johnstone
 Vice-Chair

cc: The Honourable Bill Walker, MPP, Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound

May 4, 2022

Via email: minister.edu@ontario.ca
christine.elliott@ontario.ca

The Honorable Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education
315 Front Street, 14th Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 0B8

The Honorable Christine Elliott
Minister of Health
5775 Yonge Street, 16th Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2E5

Dear Minister Lecce and Minister Elliott,

In February, the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) of the Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) was copied on several letters of concern related to funding, programs, services, supports and well-being that have an impact on students with special education needs. The TVDSB SEAC supports the letters from:

- the Dufferin-Peel District Catholic District School Board (DPCDSB) related to COVID Protocols and Equipment,
- the Durham District School Board (DDSB) regarding Bill 172 and insufficient SIP Funding,
- as well as the Halton District School Board (HDSB) with regards to concerns about PPM 81,
- and the Nursing Shortage and Online Learning Accessibility concerns identified by the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board (RCCDSB).

The letters referenced raise important issues of access, safety and well-being for students and staff in Ontario schools. We appreciate that other Special Education Advisory Committees in Ontario have raised concerns about these issues and the Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) SEAC joins with them in highlighting related concerns and recommendations.

The TVDSB SEAC has previously written in relation to students with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and looks forward to a response to those concerns.

This time of uncertainty has shone a light on and heightened the need for crisis protocols, collaborative processes, and adequate funding in order to respond efficiently and effectively to emergent conditions and ongoing needs for students with special education needs. It is key that transparency and consultation are paramount in decision-making to establish those priorities. SEACs and provincial groups should have input at all stages locally and provincially.

COVID/Emergency Protocols: The Dufferin-Peel District Catholic District School Board (DPCDSB) sent a letter regarding COVID protocols and equipment. Additionally, TVDSB SEAC recommends that to protect students and staff as new variants emerge, and for any future outbreaks of disease, that measures should be taken to ensure school buildings and facilities meet all recommended air quality and safety criteria.

It is imperative that testing and prevention measures be prioritized and expedited, and that appropriate PPE continues to be readily available to staff as well as students in need. In addition, decision-making and planning should always include input from all stakeholders to ensure inclusive practices are maintained. For example, when the issue of PPE was brought up at our SEAC, concerns were shared with regards to the need for PPE with transparent windows to accommodate students who are deaf or hard of hearing, or with other exceptionalities such as Autism, that rely on facial expression for effective communication. Access to PPE with transparent windows would be valuable for students with various challenges that affect their ability to process information in order to be successful in school.

Accessibility issues for accommodating students with special education needs in online learning:

There needs to be a commitment to develop technology, services and supports for special education students that are unable to access their curriculum remotely due to their disabilities and/or level of need for support and access to equipment. This is a real challenge for students with special education needs who are at a different learning level, including individual education learning goals different from their peers, and unable to participate in online learning with their classroom teacher to access their curriculum. This resulted in some students learning at home with full-time support and delivery of material and programming from parent(s) and/or caregiver(s). Students may also require additional supports to transition that must be accommodated. Also, there are compounded challenges for students in rural areas with limited access to internet. There needs to be greater investments in software and infrastructure with a collaborative approach to identify needs, gaps, and a clear plan, subject to periodic review, for addressing these issues.

The Covid pandemic has heightened many of the inequalities for people with disabilities through the loss and reduction of services at schools, home and in the community and resulted in learning loss that needs to be mitigated. In order to address gaps that widened during the pandemic, it is essential that special education services be fully funded to increase student supports at this critical time. We urge the Ministry to plan proactively for the future when new variants emerge, and to be prepared for any disease outbreaks. This preparation will help to overcome these challenges and reduce their impact on students with special education needs. All students have a right to an education and that includes equitable access in order to provide every opportunity for success now and in the future.

Inadequate SIP funding: SIP funding supports children and youth with the most complex needs to receive an education and to be a part of their school community. However, the true costs of supporting a student with a SIP claim are significantly higher than the amount provided by the Ministry of Education. In August of 2018, the Ministry announced that it was clawing back an increase to this funding that had been announced earlier in the year. TVDSB has operated its Special Education Programming at a deficit for the last several years as the costs of supporting children and youth with special education needs continues to rise. This is in part due to the deficit funding of students requiring SIP supports.

TVDSB SEAC urges the Minister to evaluate the true costs associated with SIP claims and the costs to our most vulnerable students and make the necessary changes to update methods for evaluating and allocating funding to special education, and to fully fund special education supports accordingly.

TVDSB SEAC further urges the Minister to acknowledge that vulnerable students with complex needs require increased support to reintegrate into the classroom and school community after a worldwide pandemic.

Additionally, we urge the Minister to provide all supports and services necessary to contribute to their long-term success as citizens of Ontario, and to fund this accordingly. By not doing so, this government is instead reinforcing the continued decline of students' skills, mental health, and overall well-being. Covid has impacted their lives and denied them the right to the educational services that they need and deserve.

TVDSB SEAC further urges the Minister to acknowledge that by not fully funding special education needs now, they are denying equal opportunities, and students with complex needs will instead rely even more heavily on systems and supports from the government as adults.

Draft PPM 81: TVDSB SEAC appreciates the opportunity to provide input to PPM 81 and echoes the letter from Halton District School Board outlining that PPM 81 is making decisions and setting policy on health regulated procedures performed within the classroom, that "covers vital day to day and lifesaving services" to our most vulnerable students, without the time and fulsome engagement this consultation deserves by all stakeholders. This decision will have enormous ramifications and should not be taken lightly.

The TVDSB SEAC would also like to express concern about PPM 81 and the downloading of nursing and health regulated procedures onto unqualified school board personnel. This creates serious safety and liability concerns for both staff and families. We are aware that the province of Ontario is experiencing a Nursing shortage. However, the Ontario education system is also experiencing staffing shortages. In worst case scenarios, the personnel shortage denies students access to curriculum as well as impeding their ability to be successful. In particular, the TVDSB has an ongoing shortage of candidates to fill Educational Assistant hiring needs. Proceeding with PPM 81 changes could exacerbate staffing challenges.

In addition, TVDSB SEAC asks the Minister to understand that families qualify for in-home nursing because there is a need for that child and their caregiver to have that additional support in their home for the wellbeing of the child. PPM 81 opens the door to families being asked to divert this support to their child's classroom; thereby, directly impacting the subsequent support levels they receive in their home and their ability to continue to provide care safely for their child with medically complex needs.

We understand that an update to the current PPM outlining the implementation of medical procedures and therapies is needed. However, the TVDSB SEAC urges the Ministry of Education to reconsider implementation of PPM 81 until a more fulsome and intentional engagement can be addressed with all stakeholders (including families, school boards, Education Assistant Unions, Teachers Unions and Nursing Unions). We ask that you do what is in the best interest of our most vulnerable children and youth. TVDSB SEAC further urges the Ministry to consider identifying opportunities to increase the number of support staff in Ontario schools as this shortage needs to be addressed as a first priority.

Shortage of nurses: The nursing shortage continues to be an issue in safe and full inclusion for all students in the education system. We join with the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board in appealing to the government to institute an inter-ministry plan to ensure that students have access to the care they need to 'access the learning they require and deserve.'

In conclusion, the pandemic, and last two years of response measures, have tested the system's resilience and highlighted areas of concern and gaps in services. Clearly, an inclusive, collaborative approach, and ongoing emergency preparedness planning, are needed to ensure continuity in services, equal opportunities, and access to education. We hope to all learn through reflecting on data and experience from this time of struggle, and the deeper insights that have emerged, so that system capacity can grow and create a better educational experience for all students, staff, and families every day.

Thank you.



Christine Thammavongsa,
Chair, Special Education Advisory Committee
Thames Valley District School Board



Sherri Moore,
Vice-Chair, Special Education Advisory Committee
Thames Valley District School Board

Cc: Chair Lori-Ann Pizzolato, Thames Valley District School Board
Mark Fisher, Director of Education, Thames Valley District School Board
Chairs, Chairs of all Ontario Special Education Advisory Committees



Waterloo Region District School Board

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May 9, 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 meeting on April 11, 2022, the Board of Trustees for the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB), agreed to write to you to urge the Ministry of Education (Ministry) to consider making the following amendments to the Suspension/Expulsion reporting requirements:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board write a letter to the Minister of Education requesting that the Suspension/Expulsion, Annual Reports and monthly Suspension/Expulsion reports, be amended to include an in-depth analysis of students with exceptionalities that have been suspended or expelled; and

That this analysis also includes the different types of exceptionalities and the number of students with exceptionalities that have been suspended or expelled;

Minister Lecce, we ask for your consideration of this request, as it will provide an additional level of information that will inform future practices and programs to support students with exceptionalities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Piatkowski".

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

CC: Special Education Advisory Committees in Ontario Public School Board; Ontario Public Supervisory Officers' Association



May 11, 2022

Indigenous Education Advisory Council (IEAC)
 Waterloo Region District School Board
 51 Ardelt Ave
 Kitchener, ON, N2C 2R5

Dear Indigenous Education Advisory Council Members,

At the April 11th Committee of the Whole meeting, the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) Trustees agreed on a response to the Indigenous Education Advisory Council (IEAC) recommendations. The following motion (confirmed at the monthly Board meeting on April 25) outlines the actions to be taken, in response to the IEAC delegation to the Board of Trustees on February 14 and the follow-up letter received from IEAC:

That the Waterloo Region District School Board Trustees refer recommendations one (ICCT training) and five (Indigenous trustee position) of the letter from the Indigenous Education Advisory Council (IEAC) to the Agenda Development Committee to schedule the training and to schedule a discussion on an Indigenous trustee position at the WRDSB; and

That recommendations three (a commitment to TRC's Calls to Action) and four (mission statement based on TRC's Calls to Action) are referred to the strategic planning committee for their consideration; and

That a response is provided to the IEAC outlining the actions taken.

The following actions have been taken per the motion above:

- 1) The Agenda Development Committee discussed recommendations one and five at a meeting on May 2, 2022. The ICCT training will be scheduled for the fall of 2022 after the municipal election so that the new board can all receive the training.
- 2) The Agenda Development Committee has tentatively scheduled the discussion regarding an Indigenous Trustee position for a Committee of the Whole meeting in June 2022. The date will be confirmed at the June 6, 2022 meeting of the committee.

**Waterloo Region District School Board**

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- 3) Recommendations three and four regarding the TRC's Calls to Action have been forwarded to the strategic planning committee for consideration during the 2022-2025 Strategic Planning process.

The WRDSB is committed to changing to better serve Indigenous students by listening to and working with Indigenous educators and community members. WRDSB knows there is a need for accountability and continues to invest in training Trustees and staff. Individual Trustees have been asked to reflect on their own statements and actions and to decide on the best way to be accountable with respect to the concerns that you have raised about those.

IEAC is a valuable advisory body to the Board and we greatly appreciate your work. We acknowledge and understand your concerns. We encourage you to continue to engage with us as well as WRDSB staff to help us improve the system for Indigenous students and all students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Piatkowski".

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