

WATERLOO REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

NOTICE OF MEETING

The regular monthly **Board Meeting** of the Waterloo Region District School Board will be held in the Boardroom, Building 2, 1st Floor, 51 Ardelt Avenue, Kitchener, Ontario, on **Monday, June 26, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.**

AGENDA

Call to Order

Territorial Acknowledgement and O Canada

Oak Creek Public School Choirs

Approval of Agenda

Consent Agenda**

Receipt/Approval of Minutes:

Approve Minutes - Audit Committee Meeting of February 8, 2023

Approve Minutes - Special Education Advisory Committee Meeting of May 10, 2023

Receive Minutes - Board Meeting of May 29, 2023

Approve Minutes - Special Budget Meeting of June 7, 2023

Approve Minutes - Committee of the Whole Meeting of June 12, 2023

Approve Minutes - Special Budget Meeting of June 14, 2023

Approve Minutes - Committee of the Whole Meeting of June 19, 2023

Receive Minutes - Special Board Meeting of June 19, 2023

Receipt/Approval of Monthly Reports:

47 Staffing Information – Retirements and Resignations

G. Shantz

50 Staffing Information – Appointments

G. Shantz

Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

Announcements/Celebrating Board Activities

Communications Good News Update

E. Dougan-McKenzie

Delegations

Staff Follow Up

Reports

59 Accessibility Plan Update

D. Ahluwalia/ R. Dallan / E. Wainaina

**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.

Board Reports

69 Ontario Public School Boards' Association Board of Directors - June 8, 2023 Trustee Johnson

Board Communications

74 Thames Valley District School Board to the Minister of Education

76 Greater Essex County District School Board to the Minister of Education

77 Halton District School Board to Minister of Education - Funding

79 Halton District School Board to Minister of Education - Mental Health and Well-being

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

June 26, 2023

**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, Associate Director, in consultation with Leadership Council.

Staffing Statistics – Retirements
Current at June 26, 2023

| Retirements: Elementary Teaching Staff | | | | |
|---|-------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| First | Last | Position/Location | Retirement Date | Years of Service |
| Karen | Bell-Scott | Teacher, Riverside PS | June 30, 2023 | 31 |
| Arlene | Bender | Occasional Teacher | June 13, 2023 | 33 |
| Hilda-Anne | Bulman | Itinerant Teacher, Special Education | June 30, 2023 | 34 |
| Brian | Helminck | Teacher, Winston Churchill PS | June 30, 2023 | 36 |

| Retirements: Secondary Teaching Staff | | | | |
|--|----------------|--|------------------------|-------------------------|
| First | Last | Position/Location | Retirement Date | Years of Service |
| Virginia | Barbu-Amorim | French Department Head, Huron Heights SS | June 29, 2023 | 26 |
| Jennifer | Devitt | Teacher, Kitchener CI | June 30, 2023 | 34 |
| Geoffrey | Haddaway | Math Department Head, Preston HS | June 30, 2023 | 30 |
| Jane | Schultz-Janzen | Consultant, Learning Services | June 30, 2023 | 35 |

| Retirements: Administrative & Support Staff | | | | |
|--|----------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| First | Last | Position/Location | Retirement Date | Years of Service |
| Ratko | Boskovic | Custodian, Grand River CI | June 30, 2023 | 27 |
| Nick | Chiarelli | Principal, Grandview PS (NH) | June 30, 2023 | 15 |
| Rochelle | Christie | Child Youth Worker, Special Education | June 29, 2023 | 22 |
| Shirley | Elliott | Library Clerk, Westmount PS | July 4, 2023 | 22 |
| Sandra | Kirk | Educational Assistant, Cedarbrae PS | April 18, 2023 | 19 |
| Debra | Martz Melanson | Secretary, Kitchener CI | June 24, 2023 | 7 |
| Sharon | Uttley | Accounting Manager, Finance | August 31, 2023 | 14 |
| Madonna | White | Support Specialist, ITS | June 30, 2023 | 36 |

Staffing Statistics – Resignations
Current at June 26, 2023

| Permanent Staff Resignations | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|--|-------------------------|
| First | Last | Position/Location | Resignation Date |
| Stephanie | Amaral | Elementary Teacher, Keatsway PS | August 31, 2023 |
| Valerie | Bless | Elementary Teacher, Lester B Pearson PS | June 12, 2023 |
| Jason | Brown | Custodial Lead Hand, Waterloo Oxford District SS | June 30, 2023 |
| Jessica | Buttars | Early Childhood Educator, Hespeler PS | June 29, 2023 |
| Novica | Draganic | Tradesperson, Maintenance | June 16, 2023 |
| Kimberley | Goertz | Educational Assistant, Doon PS | May 19, 2023 |
| Kim | Graham | Vice Principal, Centennial PS (C) | August 20, 2023 |
| Shanyn | Graham | Educational Assistant, JW Gerth PS | June 28, 2023 |
| Spartak | Lacka | Custodian, Meadowlane PS | June 8, 2023 |
| Jennifer | LaCoste | Speech Pathologist, Special Education | August 14, 2023 |
| Tanya | Lang | Secretary, Jacob Hespeler SS | June 16, 2023 |
| Barbara | Levai-Sharpe | Head Secretary, Sandowne PS | June 26, 2023 |
| Jane | Mitchinson | Consultant, ITS | June 30, 2023 |
| Kate | Ninomiya | Elementary Teacher, Sir Adam Beck PS | June 2, 2023 |
| Sarah | Nowak | Psych. Services Consultant, Special Education | August 31, 2023 |
| Krista | O'Hara | Educational Assistant, Queen Elizabeth PS | June 8, 2023 |
| Marina | Rae | Custodian, William G Davis PS | June 22, 2023 |
| Catherine | Stephens | Elementary Teacher, Hillcrest PS | June 9, 2023 |
| Kelsey | Wiggins | Educational Assistant, Jacob Hespeler SS | June 29, 2023 |



Report to Board of Trustees

June 26, 2023

Subject: Staffing Information – Appointments

Recommendation

This report is provided for information of the Board.

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 been advised of the appointments.

Prepared by: Graham Shantz, Associate Director, in consultation with Leadership Council.

Staffing Information – New Appointments
Current at June 26, 2023

| New Appointments: Administrative and Support Staff | | | |
|---|-------------|--|-----------------------|
| First | Last | Position / Location | Effective Date |
| Tina | Ackland | Early Childhood Educator, Forest Glen PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Hiba | Al Dewany | Educational Assistant, Waterloo CI | September 1, 2023 |
| Shaymaa | Al-Gburi | Early Childhood Educator, Forest Hill PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Amy | Allan | Early Childhood Educator, Bridgeport PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Sheena | Alliniece | Educational Assistant, Elizabeth Ziegler PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Elif | Altayli | Early Childhood Educator, NA MacEachern PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Sonita | Andrade | Early Childhood Educator, Franklin PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Lubna | Aslam | Early Childhood Educator, Westmount PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Ashley | Aubin | Educational Assistant, Empire PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Kelly | Ayers | Early Childhood Educator, King Edward PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Sabrena | Ball | Child Youth Worker, Moffat Creek PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Emily | Bannon | Itinerant EA, Special Education | September 1, 2023 |
| Amanda | Barrow | Early Childhood Educator, Howard Robertson PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Kaitlyn | Beal | Early Childhood Educator, Lexington PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Darlene | Bechthold | Secretary, Trillium PS | August 28, 2023 |
| Kathleen | Bernier | Educational Assistant, Rosemount PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Rachel | Born | Educational Assistant, Rockway PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Nial | Both | Educational Assistant, Alpine PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Emily | Bowman | Early Childhood Educator, Lester B Pearson PS | September 1, 2023 |

| New Appointments: Administrative and Support Staff (cont'd) | | | |
|--|----------------|---|-----------------------|
| First | Last | Position / Location | Effective Date |
| Katelyn | Brennan | Educational Assistant, Mary Johnston PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Elaine | Brookfield | Itinerant EA, Special Education | September 1, 2023 |
| Naomi | Brown | Educational Assistant, Chicopee Hills PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Devon | Budgell | Early Childhood Educator, Silverheights PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Audrey | Butt | Early Childhood Educator, Suddaby PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Lyndy | Carter-Legere | Early Childhood Educator, Suddaby PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Isabella | Chavez Bedon | Early Childhood Educator, JF Carmichael PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Charina | Chopitea | Educational Assistant, Laurel Heights SS | September 1, 2023 |
| Carmen | Cordova | Educational Assistant, Kitchener CI | September 1, 2023 |
| Gillian | Coulter | Educational Assistant, Jacob Hespeler SS | September 1, 2023 |
| Brittany | Cousins | Early Childhood Educator, Lexington PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Marissa | Couto | Early Childhood Educator, Howard Robertson PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Ashley | Craggs | Early Childhood Educator, Lester B Pearson PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Sarah | Crookston | Early Childhood Educator, St. Jacobs PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Iman | Daoud | Educational Assistant, Prueter PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Caroline | Davidson | Educational Assistant, Saginaw PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Reiniele | De Sousa Alves | Early Childhood Educator, Suddaby PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Qendresa | Dervishi | Itinerant EA, Special Education | September 1, 2023 |
| Brittany | Deschamps | Early Childhood Educator, Silverheights PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Karen | Destun | Early Childhood Educator, Blair Road PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Ineet | Dhaliwal | Early Childhood Educator, Wilson Avenue PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Christina | Di Federico | Educational Assistant, Bridgeport PS | September 1, 2023 |

| New Appointments: Administrative and Support Staff (cont'd) | | | |
|--|-------------|--|-----------------------|
| First | Last | Position / Location | Effective Date |
| Dawn | Doherty | Educational Assistant, Forest Heights CI | September 1, 2023 |
| Aimee | Doughty | Educational Assistant, Southwood SS | September 1, 2023 |
| Aline | Dugal | Educational Assistant, Breslau PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Jacqueline | East | Educational Assistant, Riverside PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Jade | Esteves | Educational Assistant, Smithson PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Timothy | Fangrad | Educational Assistant, Breslau PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Candace | Farrow | Educational Assistant, Special Education | September 1, 2023 |
| Kaneez | Fatima | Early Childhood Educator, Sandowne PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Candice | Fenton | Early Childhood Educator, Highland PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Jalyssa | Ferreira | Educational Assistant, Forest Heights CI | September 1, 2023 |
| Emma | Fiedler | Early Childhood Educator, Sandowne PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Alicia | Fisher | Early Childhood Educator, Elizabeth Ziegler PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Sierra | Garcia | Early Childhood Educator, Hespeler PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Iuliana | Ghintuiala | Early Childhood Educator, Trillium PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Deepika | Gill | Early Childhood Educator, Silverheights PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Christina | Gingerich | Early Childhood Educator, Conestogo PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Rachelle | Girard | Early Childhood Educator, Hillcrest PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Desiree | Greenfield | Early Childhood Educator, King Edward PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Vanessa | Haffner | Educational Assistant, Centennial PS (W) | September 1, 2023 |
| Sabiha | Hamid | Early Childhood Educator, Centennial PS (C) | September 1, 2023 |
| Lindsay | Hamilton | Educational Assistant, Southwood SS | September 1, 2023 |
| Jessica | Harris | Educational Assistant, JF Carmichael PS | September 1, 2023 |

| New Appointments: Administrative and Support Staff (cont'd) | | | |
|--|-----------------------|---|-----------------------|
| First | Last | Position / Location | Effective Date |
| Sylvia | Hartig | Educational Assistant, Bluevale CI | September 1, 2023 |
| Danielle | Hayhurst | Educational Assistant, Smithson PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Jorge | Hernandez Baldizon | Educational Assistant, Forest Hill PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Rebecca | Hofstede | Early Childhood Educator, Sandowne PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Sarah | Holland | Early Childhood Educator, Silverheights PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Emily | Huston | Child Youth Worker, Special Education | September 1, 2023 |
| Gabriela | Jimenez Lopez | Early Childhood Educator, Sandhills PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Andrew | Johnson | Educational Assistant, Centennial PS (C) | September 1, 2023 |
| Marissa | Johnson | Educational Assistant, Centennial PS (W) | September 1, 2023 |
| Sukriti | Joshi | Early Childhood Educator, Abraham Erb PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Shamini | Jude | Early Childhood Educator, Chalmers Street PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Stephanie | Kapp | Educational Assistant, Cedarbrae PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Zohora | Kara | Early Childhood Educator, Suddaby PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Manmeet | Kaur | Educational Assistant, William G Davis PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Ramandeep | Kaur | Educational Assistant, Alpine PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Gregory | Keelan | Educational Assistant, Elizabeth Ziegler PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Elizabeth | Kennedy | Early Childhood Educator, JF Carmichael PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Ashley | Kitzman | Educational Assistant, Saginaw PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Nicholas | Kleser | Educational Assistant, Jean Steckle PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Laura | Kocher | Educational Assistant, Williamsburg PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Alana | Krause | Early Childhood Educator, Suddaby PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Sherri | Kropf | Educational Assistant, Millen Woods PS | September 1, 2023 |

| New Appointments: Administrative and Support Staff (cont'd) | | | |
|--|-------------|---|-----------------------|
| First | Last | Position / Location | Effective Date |
| Jelena | Krsmanovic | Early Childhood Educator, Pioneer Park PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Emily | Kruis | Early Childhood Educator, Coronation PS | September 1, 2023 |
| John | Kruzlics | Educational Assistant, Clemens Mill PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Taylor | Leblanc | Educational Assistant, Oak Creek PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Joshua | Lemont | Educational Assistant, Laurelwood PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Kairong | Liu | Early Childhood Educator, Vista Hills PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Kellie | Loosemore | Educational Assistant, Jacob Hespeler SS | September 1, 2023 |
| Ellen | MacLean | Educational Assistant, Laurel Heights SS | September 1, 2023 |
| Megan | Martin | Early Childhood Educator, Suddaby PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Brianne | McCallum | Early Childhood Educator, Westmount PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Caleigh | McLelland | Early Childhood Educator, Franklin PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Pamela | McNabb | Educational Assistant, Cedarbrae PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Julia | Medeiros | Early Childhood Educator, Tait Street PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Lori | Merlihan | Educational Assistant, Rosemount PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Abbey | Merry | Educational Assistant, Grand View PS (C) | September 1, 2023 |
| Ashley | Minett | Educational Assistant, Hespeler PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Kiara | Mitchell | Early Childhood Educator, Grandview PS (NH) | September 1, 2023 |
| Lauren | Morton | Child Youth Worker, Cedarbrae PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Constance | Mtsambiwa | Early Childhood Educator, Highland PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Abigail | Mulder | Early Childhood Educator, Elizabeth Ziegler PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Normadeen | Mullings | Early Childhood Educator, Franklin PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Rachel | Murray | Early Childhood Educator, Forest Glen PS | September 1, 2023 |

| New Appointments: Administrative and Support Staff (cont'd) | | | |
|--|----------------|--|-----------------------|
| First | Last | Position / Location | Effective Date |
| Mandi | Naismith | Early Childhood Educator, Crestview PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Christine | Needler | Educational Assistant, Bridgeport PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Alyssa | Neudorf | Educational Assistant, Laurel Heights SS | September 1, 2023 |
| Helai | Omar | Educational Assistant, Williamsburg PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Lavinea | Oprea | Educational Assistant, Doon PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Lindsay | Passant | Early Childhood Educator, Northlake Woods PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Julie-Anne | Pastorius | Educational Assistant, Special Education | September 1, 2023 |
| Nidhiben | Patel | Educational Assistant, Blue Heron PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Ashley | Pendergast | Early Childhood Educator, Stewart Avenue PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Ashley | Portt | Early Childhood Educator, Hillcrest PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Karissa | Puim | Educational Assistant, Coronation PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Nazima | Qasim | Early Childhood Educator, Winston Churchill PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Bailey | Quenneville | Educational Assistant, Lester B Pearson PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Ariana | Ranger | Early Childhood Educator, Westmount PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Lee Ann | Rastel Smith | Educational Assistant, Elmira District SS | September 1, 2023 |
| Laura | Risebury | Early Childhood Educator, Suddaby PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Valeria | Rojas Quintana | Early Childhood Educator, Chicopee Hills PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Alicia | Russell | Educational Assistant, Parkway PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Kelly | Samuels | Educational Assistant, Sandhills PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Timothy | Schleich | Child Youth Worker, Brigadoon PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Victoria | Scott-Mcgarva | Educational Assistant, Clemens Mill PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Aleena | Sebastian | Educational Assistant, Courtland Avenue PS | September 1, 2023 |

| New Appointments: Administrative and Support Staff (cont'd) | | | |
|--|------------------|--|-----------------------|
| First | Last | Position / Location | Effective Date |
| Nicole | Shrigley | Educational Assistant, Laurel Heights SS | September 1, 2023 |
| Amy | Snider | Educational Assistant, MacGregor PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Kelsey | Snow | Educational Assistant, WT Townshend PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Katelyn | Somers | Early Childhood Educator, JF Carmichael PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Faith | Sommer | Early Childhood Educator, Forest Glen PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Madison | Spencer | Educational Assistant, Glenview Park SS | September 1, 2023 |
| Julia | Spiegl | Educational Assistant, Westmount PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Beverly | Stancovich | Educational Assistant, Queen Elizabeth PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Donat | Sterling | Child Youth Worker, Rosemount PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Kimberly | Strasbourg | Early Childhood Educator, Winston Churchill PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Sonja | Stuber | Child Youth Worker, Chicopee Hills PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Madison | Such | Early Childhood Educator, Mackenzie King PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Phoenix | Sweetman | Early Childhood Educator, Sheppard PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Tina | Tarrant-Resendes | Educational Assistant, Avenue Road PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Patience | Thomas | Educational Assistant, Southwood SS | September 1, 2023 |
| Melissa | Thomson | Early Childhood Educator, Vista Hills PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Tazin | Thun | Educational Assistant, Smithson PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Fatmanur | Topkaya | Early Childhood Educator, Lester B Pearson PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Olivia | Trecapelli | Educational Assistant, Hespeler PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Nicole | Tsonis | Early Childhood Educator, Elizabeth Ziegler PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Hira | Umer | Early Childhood Educator, Empire PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Constantinos | Vacalopoulos | Educational Assistant, Prueter PS | September 1, 2023 |

| New Appointments: Administrative and Support Staff (cont'd) | | | |
|--|-------------|--|-----------------------|
| First | Last | Position / Location | Effective Date |
| Kelly | Vachon | Early Childhood Educator, Sheppard PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Vanessa | Warren | Educational Assistant, Central PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Amanda | Watkins | Early Childhood Educator, Coronation PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Lisa | Westerman | Educational Assistant, Chalmers Street PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Valerie | White | Educational Assistant, Waterloo CI | September 1, 2023 |
| Ashley | Wright | Early Childhood Educator, Empire PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Xaiomu | Yang | Early Childhood Educator, Lester B Pearson PS | September 1, 2023 |
| Constance | Ysselstein | Educational Assistant, | September 1, 2023 |

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

Human Resources & Equity Services



Report to the Board

June 26, 2023

Subject: 2021-2026 Accessibility Plan Update

Recommendation

This report has been prepared for the information of the Board of Trustees.

Status

The 2021 - 2026 Accessibility Plan Working Group has met throughout the 2022-2023 school year to monitor staff's progress to the plan approved by the Board of Trustees on June 1st, 2021. Appendix A provides a summary of staff's work to meet the objectives outlined in the plan.

Background

The WRDSB is a designated public organization as described in Schedule 1 of *Ontario Regulation 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards (Regulation)* of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*. As a designated public sector organization, the WRDSB is required under section 4 of the Regulation to:

- Establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers;
- Post the accessibility plan on their website and provide in an accessible format upon request; and
- Review and update the accessibility plan at least once every five years.

The 2021-2026 Accessibility Plan is available on the WRDSB website at <http://www.wrdsb.ca/accessibility>.

Financial implications

The financial implications of the 2021-2026 Accessibility Plan are mostly within existing budgets approved annually by the Board of Trustees.

Communications

Subsequent to the June 26, 2023 Board Meeting, this report will be posted to the WRDSB's website.

Prepared by: Deepa Ahluwalia, Human Rights and Equity Advisor
Esther Wainaina, Human Rights Officer
in consultation with Coordinating Council

APPENDIX A - 2021-2026 Accessibility Plan Status Update

The use of colored representation as progress indicators may be used to give a sense of the progress we are making on implementing specific objectives:

| | | |
|----------|--|--|
| R | <i>red indicates we are still in the planning phase and implementation is not yet underway</i> | |
| Y | <i>yellow indicates that a plan is in place and that we are in the initial phases of implementation</i> | |
| G | <i>green indicates implementation is on track</i> | |
| ✓ | <i>A blue check means implementation of a given strategy is complete</i> | |

| CUSTOMER SERVICE | | | | | | | |
|---|---|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Multi-year plan objectives | Intended Outcomes | Status Update | Mar 2022 | May 2022 | Nov 2022 | Mar 2023 | Jun 2023 |
| Improve staff understanding of their roles and responsibilities as it relates to the provision of accessible customer service. | Staff and volunteers complete mandatory training as required. | Mandatory training for new staff is in place. Plans for WRDSB-specific updates for accessibility training are underway | R | R | R | G | G |
| | Feedback is acknowledged and responded to in a timely manner. | | R | R | R | G | G |
| Formalize the WRDSB's process of reviewing policies, procedures, guidelines, and protocols with a focus on the AODA and Code requirements. | Service delivery addresses the needs of stakeholders regardless of visible or invisible disabilities. | Trustees and Senior Team members have been trained on the Policy Review Guide. Trustees have implemented the policy review process through the Policy Working Group. Policies, procedures and guidelines are posted to the WRDSB website in a timely manner. | Y | Y | Y | G | ✓ |
| | Policies, procedures, guidelines, and protocols are posted to the WRDSB's website in a timely manner. | | Y | Y | Y | G | ✓ |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Formalize the process of engaging stakeholder groups for feedback. | Feedback is acknowledged and responded to in a timely manner. | Website Feedback and Accessibility Feedback Forms are available on WRDSB websites. When received, feedback is provided in a timely manner. | R | R | R | Y | G |
| | Service delivery addresses the needs of stakeholders regardless of visible or invisible disabilities. | | R | R | R | Y | G |
| | Feedback will be reviewed, assessed, adapted or integrated within the existing or future multi-year plan. | | R | R | R | Y | G |
| EMPLOYMENT | | | | | | | |
| Multi-year plan objectives | Intended Outcomes | Status Update | Mar 2022 | May 2022 | Nov 2022 | Mar 2023 | Jun 2023 |
| Review and revise processes and procedures as needed related to workplace accommodation, to ensure they reflect current regulatory requirements and best practices and ensure they are inclusive and applicable to all staff. | Enhancements are achieved prior to conclusion of this plan. | BP5000: Employment and AP3370: Recruitment and Selection Practices have been reviewed and updated to ensure more inclusivity and accommodation for persons with disabilities. Review process for AP3810: Workplace Accommodation Programme is underway. | Y | G | G | G | G |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Explore ways in which the WRDSB can enhance professional learning related to the duty to accommodate and bias - free hiring practices amongst WRDSB system leaders (hiring teams). | System leaders are more knowledgeable regarding the Duty to Accommodate and bias-free hiring. Concerns from staff related to accommodations are reduced and resolved informally. | Staff in the process of formalizing professional learning that will be delivered to the Senior Team in the fall of 2023. Development and delivery of training on the Duty to Accommodate for System Leaders is being planned. | Y | Y | G | G | G |
| Enhance the diversity and inclusivity of the WRDSB workforce by identifying and expanding targeted recruitment groups with inclusion for persons of varying ability. | WRDSB will endeavour to become an employer of choice. | Special programs for priority hiring of historically disadvantaged groups implemented to include persons with Disabilities | R | Y | Y | G | ✓ |
| Implementation of the Individual Emergency Evacuation Plan (IERP) template and request process. | Track number of requests received for support in the development of IERPs from Administrators and Supervisors. | Plans are maintained at schools and are reviewed annually or more frequently as needed. Staff are working on a process of offering additional support and tracking of the plans centrally. | R | R | Y | Y | Y |
| COMMUNICATIONS & INFORMATION | | | | | | | |
| Multi-year plan objectives | Intended Outcomes | Status Update | Mar 2022 | May 2022 | Nov 2022 | Mar 2023 | Jun 2023 |
| Improve accessibility of website design | Designs implemented across the appropriate WRDSB web properties (WRDSB.ca, school websites). | Website redevelopment project slowed down by the procurement of a web content monitoring tool | | Y | Y | Y | Y |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|---|---|---|
| | Accessibility monitoring tool to be used to measure WCAG 2.0 compliance percentage once implemented and to ensure future upgrades or updates. | Website redevelopment project slowed down by the procurement of a web content monitoring tool | | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| | Accessibility monitoring tool will also be used to identify any areas of improvement. | Website redevelopment project slowed down by the procurement of a web content monitoring tool | | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Improve accessibility of existing and future content on WRDSB websites. | Accessibility monitoring tool to be used to measure WCAG 2.0 compliance percentage of content across WRDSB web properties and to ensure compliance of any future and existing content. | Website redevelopment project slowed down by the procurement of a web content monitoring tool | | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Continue to build supports and offer resources to staff to empower and prioritize the creation of accessible web content. | Use accessibility monitoring tool to track WCAG 2.0 web accessibility across all WRDSB web properties and identify areas where more support for staff is needed | Website redevelopment project slowed down by the procurement of a web content monitoring tool | | G | G | Y | Y |
| Receiving and addressing feedback from our users and community. | Continued user and community feedback via these forms allows us to measure the success of our work. | Accessibility Feedback Forms are available on WRDSB websites. Need to improve understanding of how feedback is received, addressed, and tracked for accountability purposes. | | G | G | Y | Y |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--|
| Capability to provide student records in an accessible format to persons who request them. | Framework developed to support requests for student records in accessible formats for current and former students requiring this documentation. | ITS Staff are working on this objective. | | Y | Y | Y | Y | |
| Support the development of training materials for staff that meet accessibility guidelines. | Framework developed and in place to support departments with the creation of accessible training materials throughout the WRDSB. | COMMS Staff are working on this objective. | | Y | Y | Y | Y | |
| | Monitor feedback from staff regarding accessibility concerns with training materials. | | | Y | Y | Y | Y | |
| PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT | | | | | | | | |
| Multi-year plan objectives | Intended Outcomes | Status Update | Mar 2022 | May 2022 | Nov 2022 | Mar 2023 | Jun 2023 | |
| Ensure that all students are able to physically access all program offerings in each WRDSB school. | By 2025, complete accessibility projects (mobility) at the 8 remaining non-accessible schools and the 8 remaining partially accessible sites. | Plans are in place to finish accessibility upgrades to all schools contingent on available funding. Staff have allocated additional funding from the School Renewal Allocation to support accessibility projects. | G | Y | Y | G | G | |
| | Existing accessibility upgrades are updated to meet revised code requirements and stakeholder needs. | | G | Y | Y | G | G | |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Continued improvement of the WRDSB's ability to efficiently use financial resources to support accessibility-related projects. | | G | G | G | G | G |
| Focus on developing a standard for both vision and hearing impairment related accessibility upgrades. | Development of a design standard for vision and hearing impairment related accessibility upgrades. | Design standards are being developed in collaboration with external consultants | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Improve transparency of accessibility-related upgrades to school sites through more effective communication. | Site specific accessibility information is publicly available for each WRDSB site. | The newly launched Accessibility Status by School on the WRDSB Accessibility web page provides current, site-specific information on accessibility features | R | R | R | G | ✓ |
| | Publicly available site specific accessibility information is complete and accurate within three (3) months of the completion of capital projects. | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Identify student needs sooner to facilitate advanced planning for facilities-related accommodations. | Meeting students' needs quicker through more efficient capital project planning. | Staff continually work with the System Administrator Learning Support Services - Special Education to identify and address physical environment needs for students | R | R | R | Y | ✓ |
| | Minimal unanticipated requests for accommodation upgrade capital projects. | | R | R | R | Y | ✓ |
| | | | | | | | |

| TRANSPORTATION | | | | | | | |
|---|---|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Multi-year plan objectives | Intended Outcomes | Status Update | Mar 2022 | May 2022 | Nov 2022 | Mar 2023 | Jun 2023 |
| Design and monitor service for home to school transportation in keeping with the Board's policies and procedures. | Transportation service that meets individual students' needs, while maintaining maximum inclusion and integration | STSWR staff regularly review processes to ensure fulfillment of requirements communicated from Spec Ed | G | G | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | Successful implementation of ISTP requirements by contracted service providers. | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Review existing practices and procedures to ensure these reflect current best practices and principles of equity and inclusion and proactively address barriers to access and integration. | Procedures are up to date, clear and comprehensive. | Review of Policy BP4009 - Student Transportation completed in 2022. Review of AP 4260 - Student Transportation needs to occur. | ✓ | ✓ | G | G | G |
| Ensure compliance with STSWR policies and procedures, and commitment to safe, efficient and effective service by all staff, including service delivery partners. | Fewer concerns raised by students and families related to services provided by service delivery partners. | Family surveys indicate high levels of satisfaction. Complaints are resolved in a timely manner. | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

| SYSTEMIC | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Multi-year plan objectives | Intended Outcomes | Status Update | Mar 2022 | May 2022 | Nov 2022 | Mar 2023 | Jun 2023 |
| Develop, as needed, further policies, procedures, and/or guidelines to support the Accessibility Plan and other Board initiatives related to the rights of persons with disabilities and the creation of equitable and inclusive learning and working environments. | WRDSB policies and procedures reflect best practices, consistent with the approach of boards in other jurisdictions. | The current Accessibility Policy has been reviewed by staff. Anticipating a policy review process in the Fall of 2023 | Y | G | G | G | G |
| Develop a plan for, and begin to deliver, system-wide professional development regarding the duty to accommodate persons with disabilities. | Increased understanding among staff and management regarding the duty to accommodate persons with disabilities. | Training on duty to accommodate completed in June 2022 for Multi-Disciplinary Teams. Senior Team training scheduled for Fall 2023 | G | G | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Develop a plan for and provide support for school-based student learning opportunities that focus on enhancing students' understanding of inclusive communities that welcome individuals of all abilities. | Increased understanding among both staff and students of the ways in which schools can help to foster inclusive communities as seen through school-wide initiatives and more inclusive classroom learning environments. | Human Rights/SpecEd staff continue to collaborate on PD and delivery of school-based learning and building of inclusive communities | R | Y | G | G | ✓ |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| Create a new Human Rights Policy and Code-Based Complaints Procedure. | Greater awareness of basic human rights. | All staff participate in mandatory online Human Rights training. Code-based complaints resolution procedures launched in July 2022 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| | Human rights complaints addressed through the Human Rights Branch. | | G | G | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Prioritize the AODA and accessibility work through intentional efforts. | Increased attention to the AODA and accessibility at the WRDSB. | Communication strategies to prioritize accessibility and increased awareness of ongoing work currently being discussed | Y | Y | G | G | G |
| Program implementation and monitoring results. | Collect data and conduct surveys to measure the implementation and impact of the WRDSB Accessibility Plan. | A system of regular meetings and quarterly progress updates achieved. Annual updates to the Board of Trustees in 2022 and 2023. Stakeholder group engagement for feedback on progress of the plan to be completed in Fall 2023 | R | R | R | R | Y |
| | Annual update to the plan. | | Y | G | G | G | ✓ |



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Cathy Abraham
President

Stephanie Donaldson
Executive Director

Leading Education's Advocates

OPSBA Board of Directors Meeting – June 8, 2023

The Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) [Board of Directors](#) held a meeting at Blue Mountain on June 8, 2023.

Education policy and program matters that were discussed in public session at the meeting are summarized below:

2022-2023 OPSBA Annual Report

The full 2022-2023 OPSBA Annual Report was presented to trustees and is [now available online](#).

Labour Relations

Updates were provided in private session on recent developments related to labour relations and collective bargaining.

Legislative Update and Government Relations, Public Affairs, and Communications

As of June 8, 2023, the Ontario Legislature is on summer recess and will return in late September.

Bill 98, The Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act

This legislation was introduced on April 17, 2023, by Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education. The bill proposes changes to the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*, the *Education Act*, and the *Ontario College of Teachers Act, 1996*. It also suggests minor wording changes to the French version to the preamble of *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*. The Ministry of Education issued several communications about this legislation including [a news release](#) and [backgrounder](#), as well as two memos from the Minister and Deputy Minister; one is a high-level overview of the legislation and the second is a list of the proposed changes. The bill was also [posted](#) for commentary on the Ontario's Regulatory Registry with a feedback deadline of May 16, 2023. The bill passed on June 8.

OPSBA's initial statement (April 17): [OPSBA statement on The Better Schools and Student Outcomes Act - OPSBA](#)

OPSBA undertook an extensive consultation and advocacy plan that involved senior staff, the Policy Development and Education Program Work Groups, Executive Council, as well as key stakeholders. It also referred to any relevant past commentary made by the Association. This led to the public release of [the OPSBA response on Bill 98](#). The Association will be following up regarding upcoming consultations on Joint Use of Schools and apprenticeship pathways, as well as other areas of concern related to the bill, including the role and responsibility of Integrity Commissioners in school boards.

Take Your MPP to School Day

The objective of this week-long initiative, which took place May 23 to 26, was to raise the awareness among MPPs of the role of trustees and build upon the relationships with MPPs following OPSBA's Advocacy Day in November 2022. It's also an opportunity to showcase the amazing students, staff, and programs happening in local schools, as well as the local realities of education in school communities. Nearly 50 MPPs participated in the event, with some visiting multiple OPSBA member board schools. There are still some visits to come in June. Photos from the visits are [shared on the OPSBA Facebook page](#).

OPSBA Brand Refresh

OPSBA is in the early stages of working with a Toronto-based design firm to undergo a brand refresh of all design, information and website properties. This is a long-term project with a goal of completion within the next year.

To see the Association's appearances in the media, visit [OPSBA in the Media](#). Full Legislative Updates, including information on other Bills, are available on the [OPSBA Connects blog](#). All OPSBA submissions to the government are available [on the OPSBA website's](#) Advocacy and Action page.

Education Finance

School boards are moving forward finalizing their budgets to meet the Ministry's end of June deadline. Most boards are experiencing funding pressures from underfunded benchmarks, and one-third of school boards have preliminarily indicated they are in a deficit situation.

The Board of Directors passed the following motion:

That the Ontario Public School Boards' Association advocate to the Ministry of Education to address the deficits in funding that support the delivery of programs affecting student success and well-being.

A summary of important B and SB memos that have been released since the last Board of Directors meeting in February was provided. B & SB memoranda for 2022-23 and prior years can be accessed on the [Ministry of Finance website](#).

Program Policy

Education Partner Discussion Table

The Education Partner Discussion table, convened by OPSBA in 2021, collaboratively created a discussion paper entitled, [Beyond knowledge: Preparing students for an uncertain future](#), which was released in May 2023 in both English and French. The key recommendation is to engage the provincial government in the next phase of these discussions. This document presents the big ideas that need further discussion to determine how to best implement these priorities in an evidence-informed manner way. The communication plan allows for all education partners to share this evidence-informed discussion paper and use it in advocacy efforts with the government. A letter has been sent to the Minister to request a meeting to share the report and to discuss next steps in the engagement of the government.

French as a Second Language (FSL)

OPSBA has led the research and promotion of workable solutions to the issue of attracting and retaining sufficient numbers of FSL teachers. All deliverables have been completed and released. OPSBA has created a [dedicated FSL microsite](#) to house all the reports, resources and materials to support school board efforts.

Indigenous Education / Indigenous Trustees' Council (ITC)

Updates were provided on the following items, which included an overview of the recent May 15 ITC meeting:

Changes to Indigenous Education Funding/GSN

The Ministry of Education has outlined changes in how Indigenous Education will be funded in the 2023-2024 school year. There is concern regarding potential negative impacts to Indigenous programming, which has been raised by some school boards and communicated through Indigenous trustees. To build understanding of the changes, the Ministry of Education met with ITC representatives on May 1, 2023, but Council concerns with the changes to Indigenous Education Funding were not alleviated. The ITC [sent a letter to Minister Lecce](#) outlining continued concerns on June 9.

Consultation on Indigenous Education Priorities

ITC representatives were invited to participate in a ministry consultation session on May 19, which was meant to identify targeted Indigenous Education Priorities for the 2023-24 school year.

Black Trustees Caucus (BTC)

The BTC brings together trustees who are Black/identify as Black to collaborate, influence change, and act as a resource where needed. The establishment of a BTC was authorized by the OPSBA membership at the 2022 Annual General Meeting and its Terms of Reference were approved at the June 8, 2023, Board of Directors meeting. The BTC now has a focused mandate that is aligned with OPSBA's Multi-Year Strategic Plan, ensuring that appropriate connections are being made to systemic racism and anti-Black racism. The BTC will also identify opportunities to employ the use of data to measure progress, particularly as it relates to outcomes and equity for Black/Black-identifying youth within Ontario's public education system. In the course of their work within OPSBA, the BTC will develop and share policy papers and other tools and resources to support school boards to better address Afrocentric education and support Black/Black identifying students and families when warranted.

Elections for 2023-2024 Chair and Vice Chair will be held at the AGM.

Work with the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC)

The OHRC recently held round table discussions with students and duty-holders in the education sector regarding tackling anti-Black racism in education. As they review the feedback gathered from these consultations, they have plans of developing a public-facing document for the near future. They will meet with the BTC and others to discuss the next phase of this initiative.

2023 OPSBA Awards

The 2023 OPSBA Awards Judging Committee met on May 2 to consider this year's awards nominations. OPSBA thanks those who served on this year Awards Judging Committee:

- Karen McGregor, Trustee, Limestone DSB, Chair of the Committee
- Beth Mai, Trustee, Thames Valley DSB
- John McAllister, Trustee, Upper Canada DSB
- Scott Piatkowski, Trustee, Waterloo Region DSB
- Danica Leblanc, Trustee, Lakehead DSB
- Chantal Phillips, Trustee, Near North DSB
- Nadeem Mahmood, Trustee, York Region DSB
- Jaine Klassen Jeninga, Trustee, Kawartha Pine Ridge DSB

This year's award recipients are:

Jack A. MacDonald Award of Merit (student)

Braydon Anthony Bandurka, Cobourg Collegiate Institute, Kawartha Pine Ridge DSB

Certificate of Recognition

- Calvin Bell, Beaver Valley Community School, Bluewater DSB
- Gavin Hickey, Sir Wilfred Laurier S.S., Ottawa Carleton DSB

OPSBA Achievement Award (volunteer and non-teaching staff)

- Susan Neal, Forest Valley Elementary School, Ottawa-Carleton DSB
- Phillip Rennison, Lisgar C.I., Ottawa-Carleton DSB
- Sandra Pedersen, Bells Corners P.S., Ottawa-Carleton DSB
- Andrew Jarabek, Bells Corners P.S., Ottawa-Carleton DSB
- Natasha Klages, Chesley District Community School, Bluewater DSB
- Marianne Stewart & the School and Family Health Team, Lakehead DSB
- Nolan Steen, Touring Service, Hastings and Prince Edward DSB
- Frank Lew, Greenbank Public School, Durham DSB
- Phouvieng Sackda, Zion Heights Middle School, Toronto DSB
- Laurie Vonk, Victoria Terrace P.S., Upper Grand DSB
- Gary Adduono, Terrace Bay Public Elementary School, Superior Greenstone DSB
- Romana Siddiqui, Parent Involvement Committee, Peel DSB

President's Award in recognition of 25 years of trustee service in public education

- Judy Hunda, Trustee, Rainbow DSB
- Dena Morrison, Trustee, Rainbow DSB

Dr. Harry Paikin Memorial Award (trustee)

Doreen Dewar, Trustee, Rainbow DSB

Fred L. Bartlett Memorial Award (teacher)

Jon Swain, Teacher, Limestone DSB

OPSBA Multi-Year Strategic Plan

To fulfill OPSBA Board of Directors' accountability for engaging in strategic planning, a comprehensive strategic planning process began in the Fall of 2023. This process included a jurisdictional and environmental scan and numerous opportunities to collect input from educational partners. Based on feedback, the following refreshed multi-year strategic priorities emerged and have now been approved by the Board of Directors for the 2023-2027 time frame.

Student Success, Equity, and Well-Being

OPSBA promotes and advances high-quality, equitable, and inclusive learning environments to support student success and well-being.

Local School Board Governance

OPSBA supports the role and leadership of local, democratically elected school boards in Ontario's English public education system.

Truth and Reconciliation

OPSBA develops and strengthens relationships to facilitate access to programs, resources and supports for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students that reflect the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

Effective Relationships and Sustainable Resourcing

OPSBA works with members, partners, the government and Federations/Unions to ensure that fiscal and human resources match school board needs and priorities.

Canadian School Boards Association (CSBA)

[CSBA Congress](#) and the National Trustees Gathering on Indigenous Education is being held from July 3 to 5, 2023, in Banff, Alberta. Registration is now open.

For more information on any of the above reports, please contact OPSBA at inquiry@opsba.org or your school board's OPSBA [Board of Director member](#). The next OPSBA Board of Directors meeting will take place on September 22 and 23, 2023, in Toronto.



Mark Fisher, Director of Education and Secretary

2023 June 6

The Honourable Stephen Lecce
 Minister of Education
 Ontario Ministry of Education
 438 University Avenue, 5th Floor
 Toronto, ON M5G 2K8

Dear Minister Lecce,

Re: Unfunded Employment Insurance and Canada Pension Plan Expenses

On behalf of the Thames Valley District School Board of Trustees, I am writing once again to urge the Ministry of Education to address the substantial impact on our budget of longstanding increases in Employment Insurance (EI) and Canada Pension Plan (CPP) benefit expenses.

As Chair of the Board for Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB), I first wrote to you about this issue in July of 2021. I have also raised this topic with you during several Minister calls and informal discussions.

At the Special Board Meeting on May 9, 2023, the following motion was unanimously carried:

That Chair L. Pizzolato write a letter to the Minister of Education, MPs, MPPs, OPSBA, and other Boards of Education, advocating for increased funding to offset the statutory benefit increase shortfall related to CPP and EI rates and amounts, highlighting previous communication efforts with the government on the issue.

Since 2019, TVDSB has estimated approximately \$12.2 million in additional EI and CPP statutory benefit expenses because of maximum earnings amounts and rate changes. Additional increases are projected in the coming years.

Since the government has not provided a corresponding increase in benefits funding benchmarks within the Grants for Student Needs (GSN), the Board is required to meet these costs by utilizing funds that could have been directed towards student achievement and well-being initiatives.

Thames Valley District School Board - Office of the Chairperson

1250 Dundas Street, London, Ontario, N5W 5P2 Tel: 519-452-2000 Fax: 519-452-2396 website: www.tvdsb.ca

We build each student's tomorrow, every day.

As previously stated, this is a longstanding issue for TVDSB, and no doubt other school boards as well. The benefits benchmark has not increased to recognize the increase in statutory benefits that started in 2019.

My fellow Trustees and I strongly believe that the Ministry needs to fund these legally required benefit expenses and should address these expenses in the GSN. We trust that you will carefully consider this important and recurring issue. This letter has been copied to federal and provincial officials, the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) and other Boards of Education so that they may have the opportunity to join in the conversation.

Sincerely,



Lori-Ann Pizzolato
Chair of the Board

c: Trustees
Mark Fisher, Director of Education
Ernie Hardeman, Member of Provincial Parliament Oxford
Rob Flack, Member of Provincial Parliament Elgin-Middlesex-London
Teresa Armstrong, Member of Provincial Parliament London-Fanshawe
Terence Kernaghan, Member of Provincial Parliament London North Centre
Peggy Sattler, Member of Provincial Parliament London West
Monte McNaughton, Member of Provincial Parliament Lambton-Kent-Middlesex
Lindsay Mathysen, Member of Parliament
Arielle Kayabaga, Member of Parliament
Peter Fragiskatos, Member of Parliament
Karen Vecchio, Member of Parliament
Dave McKenzie, Member of Parliament
Lianne Rood, Member of Parliament
Ontario Public School Boards' Association

Greater Essex County District School Board

451 Park St. W., P.O. Box 210, Windsor, ON N9A 6K1 · 519-255-3200



VIA EMAIL ONLY

June 9, 2023

Honourable Stephen Lecce
Minister of Education
5th Floor, 438 University Ave.
Toronto, ON M5G 2K8
Email: Minister.edu@ontario.ca

Dear Minister Lecce:

On behalf of the GECDSB Board of Trustees I am requesting an amendment to the Education Act that would allow Student Trustees to independently move and second motions during board meetings.

Under Section 55(4) of the Education Act, Student Trustees are not entitled to move a motion but may suggest a motion which would need to be moved and seconded by members of the Board of Trustees.

Student representation and participation are essential to the good governance of a school board. We believe student voice at the board table must be expressed freely and fairly. Student voice strengthens student engagement and is an essential part of board discussion and decision making. Furthermore, this request to amend the Education Act is encouraged by the Ontario Student Trustees' Association whose priorities include Student Trustee governance.

Section 55(6) of the Education Act states that Student Trustees shall have the same opportunities for participation at meetings of the board and its committees as does a member. The requested amendment to the Education Act supports Section 55(6) by providing Student Trustees with an authentic means to participate fully in board meetings, expressing student voice and advocating for the students they were elected to represent.

I trust that you will seriously consider our request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gale Simko-Hatfield".

Gale Simko-Hatfield
Chairperson of the Board

Copy to: Honourable Lisa Gretzky, MPP, Windsor West: lgretzky-qp@ndp.on.ca
Honourable Andrew Dowie, MPP, Windsor – Tecumseh: Andrew.Dowie@pc.ola.org
Honourable Anthony Leardi, MPP Essex: Anthony.Leardi@pc.ola.org
Honourable Trevor Jones, MPP, Chatham-Kent-Leamington: Trevor.Jones@pc.ola.org
Honourable Chandra Pasma, MPP, Education Critic: CPasma-CO@ndp.on.ca
School Board Chairs: TGoertz@opsba.org

Building Tomorrow Together!
www.publicboard.ca



June 16, 2023

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

Dear Minister Lecce,

The funding allocation provided by the Ministry of Education is insufficient to cover the costs of operation that the Halton District School Board (HDSB) faces. Specifically, it does not sufficiently account for mandatory increases to statutory benefit enhancements, inflation, funding for remote learning, increases in special education supports, the rising costs of supply teachers and increases in transportation costs. As such, the HDSB is facing reductions in services and a small deficit budget in order to continue providing quality education for our growing, high-performing school board.

Halton's base Grants for Student Needs (GSN) funding this year is projected to be 9.6% higher than it was in 2018-19 on a per-student basis. While this sounds good, inflation between April 2018 and April 2023 was 17.3% and will likely run above 3% again in the coming year. As such, we are facing a real cut of approximately 10% per student over the last five years, when accounting for inflation.

At a draft budget presentation held on May 24, many pressures were brought to the attention of Trustees. Key areas where the Ministry's funding allocations have not been adjusted to match actual expenses, putting pressure on our budget, include:

- Special Education and Mental Health (approx. \$17.5 million over funding)
- Student Transportation (approximately \$2.8 million over funding)
- Statutory Benefits (CPP enhancement) (\$7 million increase unfunded)
- Temporary Student Accommodations (approximately \$1.2 million over funding)

As a result of these and many more funding pressures, we are facing a reduction in classroom teachers and Early Childhood Educators this year despite a growing student population. Further, our budgets for School Operations (Facilities) and Library and Guidance will be impacted in very serious and negative ways. If the Ministry were to address the four items above, it would allow us to dramatically reduce cuts to and eliminate the small deficit in this year's budget.

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

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

www.hdsb.ca

This is not an issue of Halton receiving above-average supports; the HDSB currently receives the second-least GSN funding per student among the province's 72 school boards. To further the budget pressures, non-GSN revenues (e.g. tuition fees, rental income, interest income, etc.) have not returned to pre-pandemic levels. In short, this is a structural funding issue affecting school boards across the province.

The Ministry has publicly stated their focus on supporting student learning and improving graduation rates. However, a funding shortfall will result in fewer supports to students, impacting the ability of the HDSB to continue to provide the highest quality education, demonstrated in part by EQAO scores well above the provincial average scores and high graduation rates.

The Trustees request that the Ministry revisit their provisions for inflation within the GSN and provide funding to cover the mandatory statutory benefit increases. With these investments, critical learning supports and programs could be maintained to continue to address student needs. In addition, as part of the 2024/2025 budget planning, the Trustees request that the Ministry revisit the transportation allocation, special education allocation and the temporary accommodations allocation.

The HDSB has always been fiscally responsible. However, we currently face a structural deficit - i.e., the need to cut permanent staff to achieve a balanced budget - which is created by shortfalls in the GSN. This will impact student learning and mental health for the future as well as student programs and supports for special education, as the funding shortfall continues to increase every year.

Sincerely,



Margo Shuttleworth
Chair

Cc: Effie Triantafilopoulos, MPP
Natalie Pierre, MPP
Parm Gill, MPP
Stephen Crawford, MPP
Ted Arnott, MPP
Cathy Abraham, President, Ontario Public School Boards' Association
OPSBA Member Board Chairs



June 16, 2023

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

Dear Minister Lecce,

On April 24, 2023, the Toronto Youth Cabinet, supported and endorsed by 9 other provincial organizations, shared a letter with Minister Lecce which highlighted the importance of continued investments in mental health supports and initiatives in Ontario schools to address the rising mental health crisis facing Ontario students.

The recommendations shared by this group, which have been researched, tested, and used in other jurisdictions with proven positive student mental health outcomes, are as follows:

- Mandatory mental health literacy, K-12, to be embedded within the curriculum
- Designation of Mental Health Days, for mental health or behavioral reasons, as a legally excused student absenteeism reason, without the requirement of a doctor's note
- Additional mental health staff, at every category, to establish lower student-to-mental health staff ratios and increase culturally-appropriate access across all Ontario schools
- Provincial data collection system to track mental health supports and services in schools along with mental health outcomes for students, and
- Culturally-appropriate socio-emotional screening of students in all grades and conducted throughout a student's education

At our **Jun 1, 2023** , the following motion was passed:

Be it resolved that the Chair correspond with the Minister of Education to highlight HDSB's continued commitment to mental health and well-being of students and to indicate full support of the HDSB Board of Trustees for the student-led advocacy which aims to address the rising mental health crisis facing Ontario students.

Although Student Trustees do not have the authority to move and second motions, our board recognizes the importance of hearing their voices in matters concerning student health and well being.

Halton District School Board's (HDSB) Student Trustee Ethan Ruggiero stated, "From speaking with students across the region, it is clear that students feel the impact on their mental health in the

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

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post-COVID world. From visiting schools across the system students are articulating their concern about accessing mental health resources due to the backlog of requests for social workers, being negatively affected by the stigma present within the classroom and feeling intimidated by the process to access support within the community and the school board. Although the school board is working diligently to respond to the demand of mental health support we could do better with more support from the Ministry of Education through increased funding for mental health workers, adding mental health literacy in the curriculum and mental health days for students.”

Student Trustee Cindy Wang added, “Schools, as the place where youth go to gain knowledge and form some of their most special memories, must do more to enable them to learn more about mental health and support them in taking care of their well-being. Students have been demanding action like incorporating Mental Health Days, bringing in culturally appropriate mental health screening, and increasing mental health literacy for a long time, because we know that there's no way around destigmatizing mental health without these changes being made. It's time that we start seeing these changes because every student has mental health, every student deserves it, and every student will thrive from it.”

We encourage the Ministry to consider the voice of the HDSB students in recognizing that mental health and well-being should be considered a top priority, as good mental health is fundamental to a student’s ability to learn and to succeed at school and in life.

Sincerely,

Margo Shuttleworth
Chair

Joanna Oliver
Trustee, Oakville Ward 4
Student Trustee Mentor

Ethan Ruggiero
Student Trustee

Cindy Wang
Student Trustee

CC: Effie Triantafilopoulos, MPP
Natalie Pierre, MPP
Parm Gill, MPP
Stephen Crawford, MPP
Ted Arnott, MPP
Cathy Abraham, President, Ontario Public School Boards’ Association
OPSBA Member Board Chairs