

**AGENDA: 6:00pm**

1. Call to Order/Roll Call
2. HWDSB Land Acknowledgement
3. Approval of the Agenda
4. Review of the Committee Workplan
5. 2026-2027 Non-School Based Staffing Report
6. 2026-2027 Accommodation Strategy Schedule
7. 2026-2027 Budget Status Update - Consultation Feedback Report
8. Adjournment and Resolution into Private Session as per the *Education Act*, Sub Section 207(2)
  - a) the security of the property of the board;
  - b) the disclosure of intimate, personal or financial information in respect of a member of the board or committee, an employee or prospective employee of the board or a pupil or his or her parent or guardian;
  - c) the acquisition or disposal of a school site;
  - d) decisions in respect of negotiations with employees of the board;

<b>Finance and Facilities Committee Work Plan</b>	
<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Public Agenda Items</b>
<b>Sept. 23</b>	Review annual work plan
	Average Secondary Class Size
	Capital Projects Update
	2025 Capital Priorities Projects Submission
	Queensdale Gymnasium Project Update
	Billy Green Gymnasium Project Update
<b>Oct. 21</b>	Elementary Enrolment Update
	Secondary Enrolment Update
<b>Nov. 25</b>	Average Elementary Class Size
	Final Financial Report - August 31, 2025
	Consolidated Financial Statements
<b>Dec. 16</b>	Analysis of Heating, Ventilation, Cooling in Schools
	Enrolment Summary as at October 31, 2025
	Interim Financial Status Report as of November 30, 2025
	Capital Projects Update
	Key Parameters and Assumptions to Guide the Development of the
	2026-2027 Budget (Generative Discussion)
	Budget Priorities to Guide the Development of the 2026-2027
	Budget Consultation
<b>Jan. 13</b>	Key Parameters and Assumptions to Guide the Development of the
	2026-2027 Budget
	Budget Priorities to Guide the Development of the 2026-2027
	Budget Consultation
	Waterdown Boundary Review Final Recommendation
	Proceeds of Disposition Update
<b>Feb. 24</b>	Binbrook II Boundary Review Final Recommendation
	Budget
	Proceeds of Disposition Update
	Employee Recruitment and Staffing Update
<b>Mar. 31</b>	Capital Projects Update
	2026-2027 School Based Staffing Projections
	Interim Financial Status Report as of February 28, 2026
	Employee Recruitment and Staffing Update
	Employee Attendance Monitoring Report (FIN & HR)
<b>Apr. 14</b>	Long Term Facilities Plan Update - Accommodation Strategy
	Schedule
	2026-2027 Non-School Based Staffing Projections
	2026-2027 Core Education Funding (if released)
<b>May. 5</b>	2026-2027 Budget Development
	Enrolment Summary as at March 31, 2026
<b>May. 26</b>	Long Term Facilities Plan Update
	Community Use of Schools Rental Rates
	Interim Financial Status Report as of April 30, 2026
	2026-2027 Budget Development
	Employee Recruitment and Staffing Update
	Employee Attendance Monitoring Report (FIN & HR)
<b>Jun. 2</b>	Capital Projects Update
	Average Secondary Class Size
	2026-2027 Budget Approval
<b>Jun. 9</b> <b>TENTATIVE</b>	2026-2027 Budget Approval (if needed)



## FINANCE AND FACILITIES COMMITTEE

April 14, 2026

### 2026-2027 Non-School Based Staffing Report

Submitted By: Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini, Director of Education

Prepared By: Matthew Gerard, Associate Director, Business Services and Treasurer  
Jagoda Kirilo, Senior Manager of Financial Services

---

#### Recommendation

That the preliminary allocation of the following full-time equivalent non-school based staffing positions for the 2026-2027 school year be approved:

Elementary Teachers	166.00
Secondary Teachers	46.68
Professional & Paraprofessional	191.80
Library & Guidance	19.50
System Principals & Consultants	49.50
Board Administration	123.50
Facilities	67.50
Transportation	7.00

These staffing levels represent a reduction of 44.08 FTE non-school based staff from the 2025-26 revised estimates staffing levels.

---

#### Background

Annually, Financial Services presents staffing for elementary and secondary teachers, professional & paraprofessional, library & guidance, coordinators & consultants, board administration, facilities and transportation that is considered non-school based staffing. Staffing levels change due to changes in enrolment, Ministry of Education (Ministry) class size regulations and budget adjustments and/or programming needs. Due to the uncertainty of the Responsive Education Program (REP) funds, positions supported by these allocations have been removed from the preliminary budget. Examples of REP grants for the 2025-2026 school year include Early Reading Screening, Licenses for Reading Intervention Supports, Focus on Fundamental Math, Graduation Coaches for Black Students, and Special Education Needs Transition Navigator.

## Status

As a part of its planning for the 2026-2027 school year, staff have taken the following steps:

- **Enrolment projections** – staff have maintained an extremely conservative approach to enrolment projections going into the 2026-2027 school year.
- **Census-Based Updates** – HWDSB is projected to lose \$2.5M in revenue due to changes in the census information. Staffing has been reduced in both Learning Services and Business Services to account for this reduction in funding.
- **Support for Students** – At this time, **13.60 full-time equivalent (FTE) non-school based staff funded through the Support for Students Funding have been excluded** from the calculation until such time as staff can work with HWDSB union leaders to discuss the planned staffing.

In spring 2026, the Ministry is expected to provide information regarding 2026-2027 education funding through the Core Education Funding. The impact of this funding announcement will be calculated once the Core Education Funding Model Technical Paper and Grant Estimate forms are available from the Ministry. Consequently, as the budget development process continues, it may be necessary to increase or decrease staffing levels in the above recommended actions. Any changes will be tabled at the Finance and Facilities Committee prior to final Budget approval by the Board of Trustees by June 2026.

For the 2026-2027 school year, enrolment is projected to **decrease a total of 358 pupils comprising 133 elementary pupils and 225 secondary pupils**. This decrease has resulted in the reduction of non-school based staffing due to reductions in revenue and preliminary reductions in both Learning Services and Business Services personnel in order to preserve other student-facing supports such as Educational Assistants, and non-school based staffing such as literacy and numeracy supports (e.g. Reading Specialists, Math Facilitators). Due to these changes, a total of **44.08 FTE non-school based staff has been reduced as outlined in Appendix A**.

Therefore, staff are recommending non-school based staffing of **671.48 FTE for the 2026-2027 school year**. This will adjust staffing to the anticipated funding from the Ministry, comply with our collective agreements, and most importantly, allocate limited resources to the areas of greatest student need.

The timing of this recommendation allows HWDSB to comply with staffing and redundancy deadlines contained in Collective Agreements.

## Next Steps

Staff will continue work on staffing for the 2026-2027 school year. As staff continue to develop the budget for the 2026-2027 school year, the feedback provided through the 2026-2027 Budget Consultation will provide valuable insights that will inform the development of the budget over the next several months leading to June 2026.

## **Financial Implications**

Staffing represents a substantial portion of the HWDSB's budget. The majority of HWDSB staff are deployed directly to schools as school-based staff. A smaller portion of HWDSB staff are represented as non-school based staff. Financial Implications will be presented in subsequent budget reports.

## **Strategic Directions**

### **Building a Sustainable Education System**

*We will adapt to a rapidly changing world through responsible fiscal management, investing equitably in accessible and sustainable facilities and supporting a robust workforce.*

<b>Appendix A - Non School Based Staffing</b>								
	<b>2026/27 Estimates</b>			<b>2025/26 Revised Estimates</b>			<b>Increase</b>	<b>Notes</b>
							<b>(Decrease)</b>	
<b>Positions</b>	<b>CORE</b>	<b>Support for Students Fund</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>CORE</b>	<b>Support for Students Fund</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>CORE</b>	
Elementary Teachers	166.00	6.10	172.10	178.00	6.10	184.10	(12.00)	1,2,3
Secondary Teachers	46.68	1.00	47.68	59.16	1.00	60.16	(12.48)	1,2,3
Professional & ParaProfessional	191.80	2.50	194.30	201.40	2.50	203.90	(9.60)	1,2,3
Library & Guidance	19.50	0.00	19.50	21.00	0.00	21.00	(1.50)	1,2
Coordinators & Consultants	49.50	3.00	52.50	52.00	3.00	55.00	(2.50)	1,2,3
Board Administration	123.50	0.00	123.50	126.50	0.00	126.50	(3.00)	1,2
Facilities	67.50	1.00	68.50	70.50	1.00	71.50	(3.00)	1,2,3
Transportation	7.00	0.00	7.00	7.00	0.00	7.00	0.00	
	671.48	13.60	685.08	715.56	13.60	729.16	(44.08)	

1. Change in Staffing due to Enrolment adjustments
2. Budget Adjustments
3. Support for Student Funds FTE excluded



## FINANCE AND FACILITIES COMMITTEE

April 14, 2026

### 2026-2027 Accommodation Strategy Schedule

Submitted By: Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini, Director of Education

Prepared By: Matthew Gerard, Associate Director, Business Services and Treasurer  
David Anderson, Senior Manager, Facility Services  
Ellen Warling, Manager, Planning, Accommodation & Rentals  
Nicole Thibeault, Senior Planner, Planning, Accommodation & Rentals

---

#### Recommendation

That the 2026-2027 Accommodation Strategy Schedule be approved.

---

#### Background

On an annual basis, staff conduct a comprehensive review of short and long-term enrolment projections, school renewal needs, and property and facility data by planning areas across the Board to identify immediate, short-term, or medium-term accommodation strategies. This analysis considers accommodation pressures, utilization trends, and facility requirements to determine appropriate solutions for each planning area. The results of this work inform the development of the Board's Accommodation Strategy Schedule.

A range of potential accommodation solutions may be identified through this process, including:

- Boundary Reviews
- Capital Priorities Program Funding Submissions
- Property strategies including land purchases and holding properties
- Temporary Boundary Reviews
- Pupil Accommodation Reviews

#### Status

The Accommodation Strategy Schedule attached in Appendix A includes the following for the 2026-2027 school year:

##### Boundary Reviews

The New Binbrook and Waterdown Elementary School boundary reviews were completed February 2026. The boundaries for both schools have been approved by the Board of Trustees and will take

effect once each school opens in the 2027-2028 school year. A transition committee will be struck in the fall of the 2026-2027 school year for each new school.

**There are no planned boundary reviews for the 2026-2027 school year.**

#### Pupil Accommodation Reviews

As of February 2026, the moratorium on Pupil Accommodation Reviews remains in place across Ontario. The last formal Pupil Accommodation Review Guideline (PARG) update occurred in 2018 however no supporting documentation or templates were released to accompany the guidelines. Staff will continue to await the updated guidelines from the Ministry to update the Board Policy and Procedure.

**There are no planned Pupil Accommodation Reviews for the 2026-2027 school year.**

#### Potential Accommodation Strategies

Staff have identified potential future accommodation strategies which could provide accommodation relief to areas with utilization pressures, program imbalance and grade structure and facility condition strain.

Staff have identified the resubmission of the Lake Avenue Capital Priority business case for the 2026-2027 school year, if it is not successful through the current submission. Staff will continue to monitor, and update proposed Capital Priorities submissions under future reports when the opportunity presents itself through the Ministry.

#### **Financial Implications**

All associated costs are contained within existing budgets.

#### **Strategic Directions**

##### **Building a Sustainable Education System**

*We will adapt to a rapidly changing world through responsible fiscal management, investing equitably in accessible and sustainable facilities, and supporting a robust workforce.*

Planning Area	2025-2026	Immediate (2026-2027)	Short Term (2-5 Yrs)	Medium Term (6-10 Yrs)
<b>1 Westdale</b>				
Dalewood				
Cootes Paradise				
Glenwood				
<b>2 Flamborough</b>				
Allan Greenleaf	<i>Boundary Review</i>			
Balaclava	<i>Boundary Review</i>			
Flamborough Centre	<i>Boundary Review</i>		Boundary Review	
Guy Brown	<i>Boundary Review</i>			
Mary Hopkins	<i>Boundary Review</i>			
Millgrove			Boundary Review	
Waterdown - New School	<i>Boundary Review</i>		Capital Project: New School	
<b>3 Central Mountain</b>				
Franklin Road				
GL Armstrong				
Norwood Park				
Pauline Johnson				
Queensdale				
Ridgemount				
<b>4 East Hamilton City 1</b>				
Hillcrest				
Parkdale				
Rosedale				
Viscount Montgomery				
WH Ballard				

Planning Area	2025-2026	Immediate (2026-2027)	Short Term (2-5 Yrs)	Medium Term (6-10 Yrs)
<b>5 West Hamilton City</b>				
Bennetto				
Cathy Wever				
Central				
Dr. Davey				
Earl Kitchener				
Hess Street	<i>Capital Priorities Submission</i>		Boundary Review	
Queen Victoria			Boundary Review	
Kanetskare			Boundary Review	
Strathcona	<i>Capital Priorities Submission</i>		Boundary Review	
<b>6 Glanbrook</b>				
Bellmoore	<i>Boundary Review</i>			
Binbrook - New School	<i>Boundary Review</i>		Capital Project: New School	
Michaelle Jean				
Mount Hope			Capital Project: Addition	
<b>7 East Hamilton Mountain</b>				
CB Stirling				
Helen Detwiler				
Highview				
Huntington Park				
Lawfield				
Lincoln Alexander				
Lisgar				
Ray Lewis				
Richard Beasley				
Templemead				

Planning Area	2025-2026	Immediate (2026-2027)	Short Term (2-5 Yrs)	Medium Term (6-10 Yrs)
<b>8 Lower Stoney Creek</b>			Land Purchase Capital Priorities Submission	Boundary Review Capital Project: New School
Collegiate				
Eastdale				
South Meadow				
Winona				
<b>9 West Hamilton Mountain</b>				
Buchanan Park				
Chedoke				
Gordon Price				
Holbrook				
James Macdonald				
Mountview				
RA Riddell				
Westview				
Westwood				
<b>10 Ancaster</b>			Boundary Review	
Ancaster Meadow				
Frank Panabaker - North				
Frank Panabaker - South				
Rousseau			Capital Priorities Submission	
Spring Valley				
Tiffany Hills				
<b>11 East Hamilton City 2</b>				
Lake Avenue	<i>Capital Priorities</i>	Capital Priorities Submission		
Sir Isaac Brock	<i>Holding Property</i>	Holding Property	Holding Property	Holding Property
Sir Wilfrid Laurier				
Viola Desmond				

Planning Area	2025-2026	Immediate (2026-2027)	Short Term (2-5 Yrs)	Medium Term (6-10 Yrs)
<b>12 Central Hamilton City</b> AM Cunningham Adelaide Hoodless Memorial (Hamilton) Prince of Wales Queen Mary				
<b>13 Dundas and West Flamborough</b> Dundana Dundas Central Sir William Osler Yorkview Greensville Rockton			Boundary Review	
<b>14 Upper Stoney Creek</b> Billy Green Gatestone Janet Lee Mount Albion Shannen Koostachin Upper Stoney Creek- New School Tapleypoint	<i>Boundary Review</i>		Temporary Boundary Review  Capital Project: Addition  Capital Project: New School	

Planning Area	2025-2026	Immediate (2026-2027)	Short Term (2-5 Yrs)	Medium Term (6-10 Yrs)
<b>North Secondary</b>				
Bernie Custis				
Glendale				
Orchard Park				
Sir John A. Macdonald	<i>Holding Property</i>	Holding Property	Holding Property	Holding Property
Sir Winston Churchill				
<b>South Secondary</b>				
Hill Park	<i>Holding Property</i>	Holding Property	Holding Property	Holding Property
Nora Frances Henderson				
Saltfleet				
Barton	<i>Holding Property</i>	Holding Property	Holding Property	Holding Property
Sherwood				
Sir Allan MacNab				
Westmount				
<b>West Secondary</b>				
Ancaster High	<i>Holding Property</i>	Holding Property	Holding Property	Holding Property
Dundas Valley				
Waterdown				
Westdale				

**Definitions:**

**Boundary Review:** A public review process undertaken to create or modify the boundary of one or more schools. A boundary may require modification due to new school construction, balancing enrolments and/or program changes.

**Capital Priorities Program Funding Submission:** Application to the Ministry of Education for funding to construct new schools and additions. Projects are related to accommodation pressure, school consolidation and/or facility condition.

**Capital Project - Addition:** Construction of an addition approved via the Capital Priorities Funding Program.

**Capital Project - New School:** Construction of a new school approved via the Capital Priorities Funding Program.

**Holding Property:** School property remaining in Board inventory for future growth and pupil accommodation.

**Land Purchase:** Acquisition of real property for the purpose of student accommodation.

**Temporary Boundary Review:** A public review process undertaken to create or modify the boundary of one or more schools to temporarily accommodate students until a permanent accommodation solution is in place, e.g. new school construction completed.



## FINANCE AND FACILITIES COMMITTEE

April 14, 2026

### 2026-2027 Budget Status Update – Consultation Feedback Report

Submitted By: Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini, Director of Education

Prepared By: Matthew Gerard, Associate Director, Business Services and Treasurer  
Jagoda Kirilo, Senior Manager of Financial Services

---

#### Recommendation

That the 2026-2027 HWDSB Budget Status Update - Consultation Feedback Report be received.

---

#### Background

At its January 13, 2026, meeting, the Finance and Facilities Committee approved the following budget priorities to be consulted on during the preparation of the 2026-2027 school year budget.

The goals of a public consultation on the 2026-2027 budget are as follows:

- To create and improve awareness of the Core Education Funding Model and areas of spending truly at the HWDSB's discretion;
- To garner feedback from the community on where the HWDSB might allocate resources at its discretion; and
- To garner feedback from the community on where the HWDSB might identify cost savings and efficiencies in order to maintain a balanced budget.

The survey will solicit feedback on the strategic goals in the following general themes:

- Importance of the goal relative to the other goals;
- Areas of investment to support the goals;
- Potential efficiencies or other cost savings that may be leveraged; and
- General feedback on the budget.

In last year's survey, respondents consistently asked for greater transparency, clearer communication about the budget, and more opportunities for meaningful local engagement. To provide more information related to HWDSB's budget, create awareness of the budget survey and allow an opportunity for questions, finance staff met with the following committees and provided

a presentation related to the budget development process, enrolment trends (key driver), core education funding overview, funding pressures and details related to the budget survey.

- Parent Involvement Committee – February 10, 2026
- Student Senate – February 11, 2026
- Home & School Association – March 2, 2026
- Special Education Advisory Committee – February 25, 2026
- Human Rights & Equity Advisory Committee – February 26, 2026
- Indigenous Education Council – Presentation shared with the committee
- Rural Schools Committee – Presentation shared with the committee
- Public Information Session – March 4, 2026

### Status

HWDSB's Budget Consultation for the 2026-2027 school year included a survey posted on the HWDSB Engage project page. Approximately 500 people accessed information on the Engage page while the survey garnered over 1,000 responses. The 2026-27 Budget Consultation Survey was designed to gather community input on priority areas for investment within the Board's limited discretionary funding and to inform decision-making that reflects student needs, system goals, and community values. The survey focused on identifying where respondents believe resources have the greatest impact on student learning, special education supports, mental health and wellbeing, learning materials, student preparedness and pathways, and school facilities. Through structured prioritization questions and open-ended feedback, the consultation sought to understand trade-offs, effectiveness of current supports and programs, opportunities for operational efficiencies, and emerging needs. In addition, the survey gathered feedback on preferred methods for future engagement and communication to enhance the accessibility, transparency, and effectiveness of the Board's budget consultation process. The consultation opened March 3, 2026, and closed on March 20, 2026.

### Key Takeaways:

- **Strong support** for investment in direct, in-class supports (e.g., EAs, support staff, mental health professionals), and teachers.
- **Safe, clean, well-ventilated and well-maintained** classrooms and learning environments are viewed as foundational to high levels of student achievement and well-being.
- **Strong support** for physical resources in classrooms such as supplies, textbooks, and other learning materials.
- Support for the **strategic use of technology in classrooms**. Feedback was clear that technology is valued when used strategically to support learning needs but cannot replace other learning resources in their entirety (i.e. hands-on resources).
- Respondents expressed their desire for **summary level updates about the budget sent through either School Messenger or email**.

Detailed responses to the Budget Consultation and analysis by staff are contained in Appendix A to this report.

Using the feedback provided through the Budget Consultation, staff will undertake the following:

- Staff will use this consultation report to inform budget decisions for the 2026–2027 school year.
- Findings will be shared with senior leadership, trustees, and the broader community with an update on the [Engage project page](#).
- In the final 2026-2027 Budget Report, staff will emphasize how the budget reflects its commitment to the Multi Year Strategic Plan and to the feedback provided through public consultation.

## **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

## **Strategic Directions**

### **Upholding Human Rights, Safety and Well-Being**

*We will support all students and staff to feel safe and secure in our classrooms and school communities.*

### **Providing Equitable Quality Education**

*We will offer equitable quality educational opportunities to improve student engagement, learning and achievement for future-readiness.*

### **Collaborating with Students, Families & Communities**

*We will build reciprocal relationships and partnerships to enhance access and engagement for students, families, and communities.*

### **Building a Sustainable Education System**

*We will adapt to a rapidly changing world through responsible fiscal management, investing equitably in accessible and sustainable facilities and supporting a robust workforce.*

### **Reinforcing Indigenous Educational Wellness and Reconciliation**

*We will honour our commitment to Truth and Reconciliation by nurturing respectful and reciprocal relationships among Indigenous Peoples and Treaty Partners, and by cultivating intergenerational healing and wellness in a restorative education system.*

## Purpose of Consultation

Each year, HWDSB develops a budget that reflects our shared commitment to supporting student achievement, well-being, and equitable learning environments. While many funding decisions are determined by the province, HWDSB actively seeks community input on the areas where local choices can make the greatest impact.

Community members were invited to examine a short informative document on the EngageHWDSB platform about how Board funding works prior to completing a survey. Approximately **500** people accessed information in the Engage project and over **1000** people contributed feedback through the survey.

## Summary of Findings

The consultation findings are presented in the tables and summaries below.

**Participants were asked to rank, from first to last, what they believe has the greatest impact for students with Special Education needs.**

	Respondent Rankings						Score	Order of Importance
	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth		
<b>In-person supports (i.e. EAs and CYCPs)</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>5.55</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>
<b>Learning Materials for students</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>3.86</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>
<b>Professional/ paraprofessionals (i.e., psychologists, speech and language pathologists)</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>3.69</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>
<b>Consultants</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>3.03</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Professional learning for staff</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>2.72</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Professional assessments</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>2.15</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup></b>

When respondent rankings are weighted and given a score out of six, we see that In-person Supports are considered to have the greatest impact by far. Professional Assessments are considered by respondents to have the least impact.

Participants were asked to select 3 investments in learning materials/tools that are most valuable to their student(s)'s learning.

	Frequency
<b>Classroom supplies &amp; equipment</b>	<b>87%</b>
<b>Textbooks &amp; learning materials</b>	<b>72%</b>
<b>Learning software licenses</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>Student devices</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>Tools to support learning in the trades</b>	<b>38%</b>
<b>Broadband/WiFi reliability</b>	<b>17%</b>

Both Classroom Supplies & Equipment, and Textbooks & Learning Materials appeared in a large majority of respondents' lists. Internet connectivity was least often ranked in the top 3.

Participants were asked to select what factor they find has the greatest impact on student mental health and well-being.

<b>Regulated professionals in schools (i.e. social workers, psychologists, etc.)</b>	<b>48%</b>
<b>Staff training</b>	<b>26%</b>
<b>Student mental health literacy</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>Parent/family workshops</b>	<b>10%</b>

Nearly half of those who answered the question suggested that Regulated Professionals have the greatest impact on student mental health and well-being, significantly more than the next highest factor.

Participants were asked to select what factor they think will best support their student(s) in their individual learning pathway.

<b>A variety of approaches, programs, and resources</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>Land-based learning experiences within outdoor education and experiential learning opportunities</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>A wide range of programs and innovative partnerships with diverse industries and post-secondary institutions</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Collaboration with students and families around resources, information and supports</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>A smooth and effective progression from Grade 8 to Grade 9</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Credit recovery interventions or credit rescue opportunities in secondary</b>	<b>2%</b>

A third of respondents selected access to a variety of approaches (e.g. STEAM, Robotics), programs (e.g. Dual Credit, Co-operative education), and resources (e.g. Credit recovery) as the best support for students in their individual learning pathways. A smooth progression from Grade 8 to Grade 9, and Credit Recovery interventions were ranked lowest.

Open-ended questions asked participants to describe valued programs or resources, to identify ways in which HWDSB can reduce costs or achieve operational efficiencies, to identify

**what they believe should be the top Facilities priorities, and to share anything else they felt was relevant.**

Thematic analysis of responses to these open-ended questions found similar themes across all questions, hence, they are summarized here in a consolidated form.

### Frontline Classroom Staffing (Educational Assistants, Support Staff, Teachers)

Across all narrative questions, respondents consistently emphasized that frontline, in-class staff are the most critical factor for student safety, inclusion, learning, and well-being. Participants repeatedly described:

- Shortages of Educational Assistants, Child and Youth Care Practitioners, Learning Resource Teachers, and in-school mental health professionals
- Unsafe classroom conditions, frequent disruptions, evacuations, and reduced learning time
- Teacher burnout caused by large classes and crisis management demands

In summary, respondents view adequate classroom staffing as a non-negotiable foundation for safety, inclusion, and learning, and believe it should be prioritized over administrative and consultative roles.

### Special Education and Mental Health Supports

Consistent with responses about staffing, participants repeatedly highlighted that special education and mental health supports are under-resourced and overextended. Respondents emphasized:

- Long waitlists and limited access to speech-language, occupational, and mental health services
- Strong preference for direct, in-school intervention rather than itinerant or consultative models
- Frustration that inclusion is being implemented without sufficient staff, space, or supports

In some questions respondents introduced stronger support for specialized or self-contained classrooms for students with complex needs, framed not as exclusionary but as necessary for safety and effective learning.

In summary, participants consistently argue that early, direct, and adequately staffed interventions are essential, and that inclusion without resources undermines equity and safety for all students.

## Classroom Conditions and Learning Environments

Similar to responses about staffing, participants repeatedly returned to the idea that learning environments matter. Across questions, respondents stressed that students cannot learn in overcrowded, unsafe, or poorly maintained spaces. Key points repeated throughout include:

- The importance of smaller class sizes, with strong opposition to split classes
- Concerns about violence, supervision gaps, and deteriorating facilities
- The connection between classroom conditions, teacher burnout, and student disengagement

In the facilities-focused question, respondents provided more detailed descriptions of how air quality, extreme temperatures, washroom conditions, and accessibility barriers directly affect attendance, dignity, and learning.

In summary, safe, well-maintained, and manageable learning environments are framed as prerequisites for any improvement in student outcomes.

## Learning Materials and Hands-on Resources

As echoed in earlier questions about learning tools, respondents consistently supported a return to foundational, hands-on resources, including textbooks, library books, manipulatives, and paper-based materials. Repeated sentiments include:

- Frustration with shortages of textbooks, paper, and library services
- Concern that overreliance on screens reduces attention, literacy, and deep learning

In one question, respondents more clearly distinguished between overuse of technology and strategic use, advocating for balance rather than elimination.

In summary, participants overwhelmingly favour hands-on, physical learning materials, particularly in elementary grades, with technology used selectively and purposefully.

## Technology and Devices

Consistent with earlier feedback, respondents expressed mixed but nuanced views on technology. Similar to previous questions, they noted:

- Benefits of reliable laptops, assistive technology, and learning software for accessibility and differentiation
- Concerns about excessive screen time, especially with tablets and cell phones

In cost-efficiency discussions, respondents increasingly framed reduced device reliance as both a pedagogical and financial consideration.

In summary, technology is supported when it enhances instruction and accessibility, but respondents strongly oppose its use as a replacement for staffing, materials, or direct instruction.

### Experiential, Arts, and Specialized Programming

Across multiple questions, participants consistently praised arts, music, experiential learning, trades, and specialized pathways for engagement and well-being. As previously noted, respondents view these programs as vital for:

- Engagement of diverse learners
- Career exploration and real-world skill development

Some questions brought up equity concerns with respondents noting that limited access, transportation barriers, and uneven distribution of programs can exacerbate disparities.

In summary, respondents support maintaining and expanding specialized and experiential programs, provided they are equitably accessible and do not divert resources from core classroom supports.

### Cost Reduction and Operational Efficiencies

Although explicitly asked about efficiencies, respondents consistently returned to themes raised earlier and not necessarily in answer to the question. Similar to prior questions, participants strongly opposed cuts to classroom staffing, supplies, or supports. Common suggestions included:

- Limiting reliance on external consultants
- Improving procurement, shared services between boards, and facility efficiencies

Some respondents added calls for greater transparency, system coherence, and reduced duplication across schools and boards.

In summary, participants accept cost-saving measures only when they protect or strengthen direct classroom supports.

### Summary

Across all questions, respondents delivered consistent messaging: invest where students and educators experience learning daily. Frontline staffing, safe and well-maintained classrooms, core learning materials, and early supports are seen as having the greatest impact. Repetition across responses reflects the strength and clarity of these shared priorities. Participants repeatedly encourage HWDSB to focus limited resources on classrooms and students, while seeking efficiencies elsewhere.