

AGENDA: 6:00 pm

1. Call to Order and Land Acknowledgement
2. O Canada
3. Meeting Roll Call
4. Approval of the Agenda
5. Declarations of Conflict of Interest
6. [Confirmation of the Minutes: February 24, 2025](#)

Reports from Trustee Special Committees:

7. [Program – February 19, 2025](#)
8. [Policy – March 6, 2025](#)

Reports from Legislated Committees:

9. [Special Education Advisory Committee – February 26, 2025](#)

Reports from Staff:

10. [Student Trustees 2025-2026 \(Election Results\)](#)

11. Oral Reports from Liaison Committees:

- A. City/School Board Liaison Committee
- B. Hamilton-Wentworth Council of Home & School Associations
- C. Hamilton Foundation for Student Success
- D. Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)

12. Oral Reports from:

- A. Student Trustees' and Shakowennakara:tats Report
- B. Director's Report
- C. Chair's Report

13. Adjournment

Trustees: Kathy Archer*, Becky Buck, Sabreina Dahab^(R), Dawn Danko, Amanda Fehrman, Maria Felix Miller, Graeme Noble, Paul Tut, Todd White, Elizabeth Wong^(R), Abby Zaitley. Student Trustees Oluwafikunayomi (Fikun) Alabi, Victoria Li, and Shakowennakara:tats Daunte Hillen.

*electronic participation, ^(R) regrets

1. Call to Order

Chair Miller called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Trustees Danko/Buck moved that the agenda be approved.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Alabi, Li and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

3. Confirmation of the Minutes

RESOLUTION #25-15: Trustees White/Zaitley moved that the Minutes from February 10, 2025, be confirmed.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Alabi, Li and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

4. Parent Involvement Committee (PIC)

RESOLUTION #25-16: Trustees Buck/Danko moved that the Parent Involvement Committee report from February 11, 2025, be received.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Alabi, Li and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

5. Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

RESOLUTION #25-17: Trustees White/Danko moved that the Special Education Advisory Committee from January 29, 2025, be received.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Alabi, Li and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

6. Human Rights & Equity Community Advisory

RESOLUTION #25-18: Trustees White/Tut moved that the Human Rights & Equity Community Advisory report from January 29, 2025, be received.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Alabi, Li and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

7. Standing Committee Report

RESOLUTION #25-19: Trustees Danko/Noble moved that the Standing Committee report from February 10, 2025, be approved including the draft 2025-2026 School Year Calendars be submitted to the Ministry of Education.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Alabi, Li and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

8. Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation Services (HWSTS) update:

Associate Director Gerard provided an update from the recent HWSTS Governance meeting:

- Routes and Drivers
 - Open Routes: 1 bus route remains open.
 - Driver Leaves of Absence: 18 drivers currently on leave.
 - Spare Driver Pool: 10 active, plus the 18 on leave, totaling 28.
 - Training: 15 drivers are in various stages of training.
- Overall: The consortium is in a good position, with ongoing work to ensure driver availability does not impact operations.

- CAA Safety Patroller Program:
 - Previously in place but paused for various reasons.
 - Voluntary student program to train student patrollers.
 - Training sessions planned at Ancaster Fairgrounds, supported by CAA and Hamilton Police Services.
 - Program is set to relaunch in Fall 2025.

9. Hamilton-Wentworth Council of Home & School Associations

Trustee Danko provided an updated noting that the Hamilton Wentworth Council of Home and School Associations met on February 6, 2025, and their next meeting is scheduled for April 3, 2025.

Key Discussions from their recent meeting:

- Encouraging the board to increase parent engagement to boost volunteer participation in schools, which has not returned to pre-COVID levels.
- Seeking opportunities to provide feedback on the volunteer policy currently under public consultation.
- Requesting involvement in future consultations on PPM 128, which covers vaping, mobile device use, and parent engagement funding, as they were not included in previous discussions.

10. Hamilton Foundation for School Success

Trustee Fehrman provided an updated noting new members were welcomed at the recent AGM meeting and encouraged others to consider donating to Hamilton Foundation for Student Success. Prom Project takes place on April 5, 2025, with donations currently being accepted.

11. Ontario Public Schools Boards' Association (OPSBA)

Trustee Buck provided the following update:

- Trustee Expense Policy: OPSBA is updating the language but did not approve changes yet. Revisions are forthcoming, focusing on clarifications such as how many Board of Director meetings are covered and who is eligible to submit expenses for regional meetings.
- Jordan's Principle: The federal government is tightening their finances and Jordan's Principle is being impacted. This is impacting Indigenous communities and in particular, where Boards have supported work they are coming to learn that their costs will likely not be covered.
- OPSBA's Indigenous Trustee Council: Working with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nations to improve land acknowledgment language.
- Integrity Commissioner Roster: The Ministry of Education plans to create a roster and will consult school boards and trustee associations in the spring. Until then, OPSBA recommends using informal complaint procedures for minor breaches and formal procedures for severe, repetitive issues.

- OPSBA Awards: Nominations are open for trustees, teachers, education workers, administrators, students, and community members.

12. Student Trustees' and Shakowennakara:tats report

Shakowennakara:tats Hillen provided a verbal update:

- Attended the OSTA-AECO Conference earlier this month alongside Student Trustee Alabi and Li and it was both engaging and impactful for all attendees.
- Attended the John C. Holland Awards on February 22, 2025; it was inspiring to witness the achievements of individuals who are making a significant impact in our community.

Student Trustees Alabi and Li provided a verbal update:

- Student Senate is currently working on the Trailblazer Summit to finalize the logo and schedule.
- During the OSTA-AECO conference, learned about being their authentic self and were encouraged to step out of their comfort zone and try new things.
- Student Trustee Alabi was nominated by her school to speak at the Principals and Vice Principals learning event on the value of dignity and promoted joy, compassion, dignity and trust.
- Currently organizing the first-ever Black History Month Celebration on February 27, 2025 at Orchard Park Secondary.

13. Director's Report

Director Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini presented the [Director's Report](#) which highlighted the following:

- School Visits: Holbrook, Gatestone, Janet Lee, Ray Lewis and Templemead where she enjoyed breakfast, meeting with student leaders, tours, Black History Month displays, music and more.
- Honoured to find her name amongst other leaders showcased in the Black History Month display
- HWDSB success and celebration at the John C. Holland Awards and congratulated Student Alabi for being the recipient of the Immigrants Matter Bursary Award and the Pillar of Empowerment Award.
- Pink Shirt Day February 26, 2025 – a day dedicated to raising awareness and standing up against bullying.
- HWDSB Values Community Voice – We All Count data currently being collected until March 5, 2025.

14. Chair's Report

Chair Miller brought forth her report and acknowledged and thanked the efforts of all who worked diligently to keep our students safe during the recent snowstorms.

- John C. Holland – always fun and always fashionable. She thanked staff that helped prepare students for the various awards.
- Thank you to the communications team working hard to collect videos for the BIG CRUNCH (we take a literal bite out of Ontario apples for our nutritional programs - TASTEBUDS).

The meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

Reference: [Agenda Package](#) and [Recording](#)

COMMITTEE REPORT

Presented to: Board

Date of Meeting: March 24, 2025

From: Program Committee

Date of Meeting: February 19, 2025

The committee held a hybrid meeting on February 19, 2025, at 2:00 pm with Trustee Amanda Fehrman presiding.

Members: Trustees Kathy Archer*, Becky Buck, Sabreina Dahab^(R), Amanda Fehrman and Elizabeth Wong*.

* electronic participation, ^(R)regrets

MONITORING ITEM(S):

A. Elementary Program Strategy, Secondary Program Strategy & Elementary French Immersion Location Strategy and Application Process Review (update)

Staff shared an update on the review. Through a procurement process, staff secured Malatest Consulting services to conduct the review. The review will encompass the Program Strategy Review Scope as approved by the Program Committee on October 21, 2024. The consulting firm has developed a detailed workplan for this project divided into four phases. The first phase of the project is complete and staff are beginning the consultation process (which is the second phase of the review). Staff are on track to deliver the outcomes of the review in November 2025.

B. Safe Schools Action Plan 2021-2023, Caring and Safe Schools Action Plan 2024-2027

In January 2021, HWDSB implemented a two-year Safe Schools Action Plan, 2021-2023 that served as a roadmap to guide the Board's work to deliver upon the Safe Schools: Bullying Prevention and Intervention Review Panel's recommendations. In total, there were 104 recommendations. Staff can confirm that 101 of 104 (97%) of the recommendations are complete or ongoing.

Building on the insights from the Safe Schools Action Plan, 2021-2023, staff have created a Caring and Safe Schools Action Plan 2024-2027 which continues to prioritize identity, equity, and human rights as key elements to create safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environments. This approach recognizes the importance of relationships and partnerships, reflected through the Two Row Wampum, which emphasizes mutual respect and shared responsibility. The plan affirms the significance of diverse voices and identities, aiming to foster a sense of belonging for all students while acknowledging the vital role that each community plays in supporting and maintaining human rights and promoting equity. The plan has five key priorities with a corresponding action and commitments:

- Creating the Conditions for Learning
- Identity Affirming Curriculum, Teaching Practices and Learning Environments
- Responding to Student Need
- Secure Schools Awareness and Response
- Accountability and Transparency

C. 2023-2024 Student Suspension and Expulsion Data

Our commitment to compassionate, caring and safe schools is a priority as we work to support staff, students, and school communities thrive in HWDSB. In the 2023-2024 school year, the total number of suspension incidents decreased relative to the previous year. Of the students registered in 2023-2024 school year, HWDSB registered a 4.4% rate of suspension. Our data indicates a continued trend that consistently displays a lower number of reported suspensions compared to the number of investigations in both the elementary and secondary panels. In addition, HWDSB's 5-year data does show an overall reduction of expulsions. In the 2023-2024 school year, 38 students were expelled from school compared to 54 students in 2019-2020. The decrease in suspension and expulsions is attributed to progressive discipline practices and supportive interventions. Staff continue to strengthen preventative structures, resources, restorative practices, and student engagement strategies and active steps to address the disproportionalities we know that continue to exist in our suspension and expulsion data.

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Fehrman, Chair of the Committee

COMMITTEE REPORT

Presented to: Board

Date of Meeting: March 24, 2025

From: Policy Committee

Date of Meeting: March 6, 2025

The committee held a hybrid meeting on March 6, 2025, from 6:32 pm to 8:35 pm with Trustee Dahab presiding.

Members: Trustees Kathy Archer*, Sabreina Dahab, Maria Felix Miller* and Graeme Noble*.

Also in attendance Trustees Todd White and Abby Zaitley.

* electronic participation, ^(R)regrets

ACTION ITEMS(S):

A. Medical Health Supports Policy

Staff have revised the policy in accordance with PPM 161: Supporting children and students with prevalent medical conditions (anaphylaxis, asthma, diabetes, and/or epilepsy) and required consultations with interested parties. Staff have included the required policy statements aligned to the PPM. Staff will conduct further consultations of the various procedures that are aligned to this policy.

On the motion of Trustee Miller, the Policy Committee recommends that **the Medical Health Supports Policy be approved.**

CARRIED

MONITORING ITEM(S):

B. Property Disposition

The Committee initially reviewed the Property Disposition Policy in November. Committee members asked that the policy return following a review of feedback from the committee including language related to the exceptions list noted in the regulation, and adding information relevant to the phases or steps to be taken when disposing of property (including when Board approvals are needed).

The committee requested that a process or checklist outside of this policy be created to articulate a clear line of communication to ensure all steps have been followed before any disposition of property happens.

Staff will review and return next month with further revisions to the Property Disposition Policy.

C. Educational Excursions

Staff noted that the Educational Excursions policy has been reviewed as part of the policy review cycle. Staff have made minor updates to language throughout the policy and highlighted the following:

- Guiding Principles
 - Importance of our local context, equitable inclusion, communication to parents, caregivers and guardians.
- Intended Outcomes
 - Accessible, directly aligned to Ontario curriculum or the Multi-Year Strategic Plan
- Action Required
 - Maintain a detailed procedure with clear roles and responsibilities, mandatory planning tools, clear curriculum outcomes and how barriers will be addressed.

The committee requested that staff look at a macro approach to ensure educational excursions are accessible to all classrooms. Staff will review the committee’s feedback and return next month with further revisions to the Educational Excursions Policy.

Respectfully submitted,
Sabreina Dahab, Chair of the Committee



Medical Health Supports

Date Approved: XXXX

Projected Review Date: XXXX

Page 1 of 3

PURPOSE:

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board is committed to providing learning environments that are welcoming, respectful, accessible, and supportive of students with diverse medical needs. We will uphold human rights, safety, and well-being by supporting all students in feeling safe and secure in our classrooms and school communities.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- All health support services must be administered in a manner that respects the student's rights to privacy, dignity, cultural sensitivity, and identity-affirming practices to the degree possible in the circumstances.
- Students with medical/health needs will be accommodated in the school in which they are registered whenever possible.
- When considering a student's support plan, objective medical documentation and identity-affirming practices will be used for planning purposes.
- In an emergency, staff and/or volunteers may be required to provide emergency assistance for a student.

INTENDED OUTCOMES:

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board will:

- Ensure that all students receive a quality education and are accommodated according to the Ontario Human Rights Code to the point of undue hardship, including considerations for health and safety requirements.
- In collaboration with Ontario Health atHome and other regulated health professionals, share the responsibility for providing school health support services to support students in attending and participating in learning, recognizing their special health support needs.
- Support students with prevalent medical conditions and those who require medical health supports to fully access school in a safe, accepting, and healthy learning environment that supports well-being.
- Empower students, as confident and capable learners, to reach their full potential for self-management of their medical condition(s), according to their Plan of Care or other accommodation plan.

RESPONSIBILITY:

Director of Education

Members of Executive Council



Medical Health Supports

Date Approved: XXXX

Projected Review Date: XXXX

Page 2 of 3

TERMINOLOGY:

Identity-Affirming Practices: Practices which affirm and centre an individual's sense of self and identity, considering the impact of identity on mental health and well-being. This involves building positive connections by acknowledging, validating, and respecting a student's unique identity (including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, cultural background, socioeconomic status, and abilities) and prioritizing cultural knowledge and practices that are responsive to the student.

Ontario Health atHome: An organization that assists in coordinating in-home and community-based care through the assessment of patient care needs to support health and well-being.

Plan of Care: An individualized plan containing information about the medical conditions of a student.

Prevalent Medical Condition: As outlined in [Policy/Program Memorandum 161](#) (anaphylaxis, asthma, diabetes, and epilepsy).

Regulated Health Professional(s): Members of a regulatory college which are governed by the Regulated Health Professions Act.

ACTION REQUIRED:

Ensure procedures supporting the medical accommodation of students are:

- Developed and regularly reviewed.
- Articulate the expected roles and responsibilities of caregivers, school staff, principal, and school board in supporting students requiring accommodation, as well as the roles and responsibilities of the students themselves.
- Communicated regularly by school principals to ensure the roles and responsibilities of caregivers, students, and school staff are understood.
- Ensure that procedures under this policy follow any related Ministry of Education related policy, program, or memorandum (where applicable)

PROGRESS INDICATORS:

Intended Outcome	Assessment
Ensure that all school-aged children receive a quality education, and are accommodated, to the point of undue hardship including considerations for health and safety requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human rights incidents, inquiries • School climate surveys • Parent/community voice surveys • Student Voice Survey • SEAC Feedback



Medical Health Supports

Date Approved: XXXX

Projected Review Date: XXXX

Page 3 of 3

<p>In collaboration with the Ontario Health atHome and other regulated health professionals, share the responsibility for providing school health support services to support students in attending and participating in learning, recognizing their special health support needs.</p>	<p>Create a feedback mechanism to evaluate the effectiveness of the collaborative partnerships including partner and family voice.</p>
<p>Support students with prevalent medical conditions and those who require medical health supports to fully access school in a safe, accepting, and healthy learning environment that supports well-being.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual feedback from students, staff and principals. • Student Voice Survey
<p>Empower students, as confident and capable learners, to reach their full potential for self-management of their medical condition(s), according to their Plan of Care or other accommodation plans.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual feedback from students, staff and principals. • Student Voice Survey • SEAC Feedback

REFERENCES:

Government Documents

Education Act

Ontario Human Rights Code

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

Freedom of Information Act

Policy/Program Memorandum 81: Provision of Health Support Services in a School Setting

Memorandum dated August 14, 1989, Catheterization and Suctioning

Policy/Program Memorandum 161: Supporting Children and Students with Prevalent Medical Conditions (Anaphylaxis, Asthma, Diabetes and/or Epilepsy) in Schools

Policy/Program Memorandum 158: School board policies on concussion

Sabrina's Law – Bill 3 – An Act to Protect Anaphylactic Pupils, 2006

Ryan's Law - Ensuring Asthma Friendly Schools, 2015

Rowan's Law – Bill 193 – Concussion Safety, 2018

Committee Report

Presented to: Board

Meeting Date: Monday, March 24, 2025

From: Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Meeting Date: Wednesday, February 26, 202

The Committee held a hybrid meeting on Wednesday, February 26, 2025, beginning at 5:38 pm, ending at 7:36 pm, with Chair Judy Colantino presiding.

Present

Danielle Dion-Broadley, FASD Parent & Caregiver Support Group, Jessica Malcew, VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children, Judy Colantino, Down Syndrome Association of Hamilton, SEAC Chair, Julie Armstrong, Centre for Diverse Learners, Lindsay Bray, McMaster Children's Hospital Developmental Pediatrics and Rehabilitation Portfolio, SEAC Vice Chair, Lynn Vanderbrug, Lynwood Charlton Centre, Nancy Silva Khan, Autism Ontario (Central West Chapter), Sarah Pennington, Community Living Hamilton, Susi Owen, CNIB Hamilton and Niagara.

Regrets

Dawn Danko, Trustee Ward 7, Maria Felix Miller, HWDSB Chair, Trustee Ward 3, Melanie Roberts, Association for Bright Children of Ontario

Guests

Abby Zaitley, HWDSB Trustee, Ward 4 (virtual), Chris Tondreau, Interim HWETL Vice President (virtual)

MONITORING ITEMS:

A. Barrier Free Student Learning Environments Policy - consultation

Kimberly Chute, System Principal, Special Education, Inclusion & Equity, noted that the committee provided feedback to the policy and that updates will be shared at a future meeting.

B. IPRC Exceptionality Criteria - consultation

Danielle Buist, Manager, Special Education, Inclusion & Equity, Psychological Services noted that the committee provided feedback and that updates will be shared at a future meeting. IT was also shared that staff will compose a letter to be reviewed by the Committee and send to the Ministry of Education regarding the Ministry language in the IPRC Criteria.

C. MEMBERS' UPDATE

Julie Armstrong, Centre for Diverse Learners

- HWDSB students are invited to apply for the last 5 program spots available for the Leaps to Literacy Spring program beginning April 14th for 8 weeks (2 times/week). To register, please visit <https://diverselearners.ca/>

Judy Colantino, Down Syndrome Association of Hamilton, SEAC Chair

- Jessica Maclew, VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children, has been hired by HWDSB and has handed in her resignation from the Committee. The Chair on behalf of the Committee thanked Jessica for her contribution to the Committee.

Sharon Stephanian, Superintendent, Special Education, Inclusion & Equity

- Members of the Special Education, Inclusion & Equity team met for professional learning – presentations included an evaluation of the Autism Core Skills Checklist Pilot project which identified gaps in some Autism special classes. Psychological Services staff presented an online document 'Recommendations for Supporting Students Based on Cognitive Learning Profile' that includes live links to resources, the final resource will be shared with SEAC
- Yes I Can Awards – the CEC is shifting away from the practice of having a banquet style celebration and are moving to an approach to provide schools with the resources and supports to celebrate students within their own school communities
- Autism Carnival will be held on April 26th – more details to follow

Respectfully submitted by
Judy Colantino, SEAC Chair



BOARD REPORT

March 24, 2025

Student Trustees 2025-2026

Submitted By: Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini

Prepared By: Estella Jones, Superintendent, Board Math Lead K-12
Heather Miller, Officer of Trustee Services

Recommendation:

That the following students be confirmed to stand as Student Trustees with HWDSB for the term of office from August 1, 2025, to July 31, 2026.

- Sanad Bizanti, Ancaster High Secondary School (Student Trustee)
- Evelyn Watson, Orchard Park Secondary School (Student Trustee)

**names above are listed in alphabetical order by last name*

Background:

Similar to previous years, the election process for the two Student Trustee representatives was completed via electronic ballots and provided an opportunity for every Grade 7-12 HWDSB student to participate in voting for their top two (2) candidates to represent their voice at the boardroom table. Following the individual student submissions, the votes at each school were tallied, and each school (with Grades 7-12) submitted a final ballot with the school's top two (2) choices that were used in determining the successful candidates voted as Student Trustees for 2025-2026.

Student Trustee candidates were invited to submit a video recording of themselves answering a question related to the role of Student Trustee. The video and candidate biographies were made available on the HWDSB website for students to review before casting their vote for Student Trustees.

Cultivating Community: Reclaiming Our Spaces in Education (CC:ROSE) is a student-driven leadership and learning initiative (for Indigenous learners, by Indigenous learners) which began in 2018-19. Last year, CC:ROSE raised Daunte Hillen, Anishinaabe from Fort William First Nation to the title of Shakowennakarátats. Shakowennakarátats Hillen will continue in this role for the 2025-2026 school year.

BE YOU. BE EXCELLENT.

Status:

A total of six (6) applications were received with all candidates meeting the eligibility criteria. Applications were received from Ancaster High, Bernie Custis, Orchard Park and Westmount secondary schools (some schools had multiple applications submitted). A total of 1150 votes from students in Grades 7-12 participated in the Student Trustee election this year.

[O. Regulation 7/07](#) states that each school board must have at least two, but no more than 3 Student Trustees.

Financial Implications:

Financial implications are within the student trustee funding allocation provided by the Ministry of Education through the Grants for Student Needs.

Strategic Directions:**Upholding Human Rights, Safety & 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 & 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.