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

*electronic participation, ^(R) regrets

1. Call to Order

Chair Miller called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

RESOLUTION #26-21: Trustees Tut/Danko moved that Trustee Wong be approved as absent for the March 9, 2026, Board Meeting.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Bizanti, Watson and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

2. Approval of the Agenda

RESOLUTION #26-22: Trustees Tut/Fehrman moved that the agenda be approved.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Bizanti, Watson and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

3. Confirmation of the Minutes

RESOLUTION #26-23: Trustees Danko/Tut moved that the Minutes from February 23, 2026, be confirmed.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Bizanti, Watson and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

4. Written Notice of Motion: Enhancing School-Area Traffic Safety for Students in Ward 4 (Trustee Zaitley)

Whereas student safety around schools in Hamilton's lower east city has become an increasing concern due to higher traffic volumes, narrow streets, and limited drop-off and pick-up space. In one survey, 78% of Ontario parents reported witnessing unsafe driving behaviours in school zones, and only 37% consider the roads around their child's school to be safe (CAA South Central Ontario, 2022).

Whereas families and school communities in Ward 4 have raised concerns regarding incidents involving vehicles and students, underscoring the need for proactive, collaborative approaches to school-area safety

Whereas the City of Hamilton and community partners such as the Daily School Route have experience and expertise in school-area traffic safety and active transportation initiatives (walking, biking, using a wheelchair, etc).

Following discussion by the Board of Trustees, the statement requesting staff report back was removed. The Chair of the Board also noted that the topic of enhancing road safety around schools will be requested as an agenda topic at an upcoming City-School Board Liaison Committee meeting.

RESOLUTION #26-24: Trustees Zaitley/Dahab moved that the Board initiate exploratory discussions with the Ward 4 City Councillor's office and the Daily School Routes Program Manager to identify opportunities for collaboration related to active transportation, and school-area traffic concerns for Ward 4 schools, with a view to the 2026/2027 school year using the existing ward 12 initiative as a framework.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Bizanti, Watson and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

5. DELEGATION(S): Guiding Principles – Program Strategy Review, Equity of Access

The Chair welcomed the delegates to the meeting and thanked them for bringing forward their perspectives as briefly outlined below – the meeting [recording](#) can be reviewed to listen to the delegates remarks.

- A. Alex Johnstone – a former trustee of our Board, and a parent of a soon to be HWDSB kindergarten student, shared her family's experience entering the special education pathway and how proposed French Immersion changes—such as deferring entry to Grade 2 and offering English instruction for math and science—would improve accessibility for students like her daughter. She urged trustees to ensure that equity includes students from *all pathways* so that specialized programs remain viable options for children with diverse learning needs.
- B. Carolyn Proulx-Wootton – a parent of a child in the SAGE Quest program is advocating for change in the term 'equity' in the guiding principles. The term equity is being used as a rationale to potentially limit enrollment, or close programs. She urged the Board to adopt an equity approach that removes structural barriers and open more locations, for programs like SAGE, so more students can benefit.
- C. Dr. Jessica Braimoh – a parent of a child currently in the SAGE Quest program shared her experiences and comments on the guiding principles. She highlighted for the Board that equity should not mean reducing diversity of learning environments, but rather equity must consider the social role of choice. Research on school choice shows that choice systems produce both benefits and inequalities and that the SAGE program fosters belonging, identity development, and community for students like her child.

Motion by Trustees Noble/Fehrman that the Board take a 15-minute recess in observation of Ramadan.

6. Correspondence: Avon Maitland DSB re: Potential Changes to English Public School Board Governance

RESOLUTION #26-25: Trustees Danko/Buck moved that the correspondence from Avon Maitland District School Board regarding the potential changes to English Public School Board Governance be received.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Bizanti, Watson and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

7. Program Committee

The Board considered the Program Committee report from February 19, 2026, and suggested amendments to the Guiding Principles – Program Review Strategy.

1. Student Achievement and Well-Being

Students will engage in dynamic, inclusive learning that fosters achievement, well-being, and joy in learning. All programs will support diverse pathways and enhance the overall student experience.

2. Continuous Improvement and Alignment with Student Outcomes

Program offerings will directly support the [HWDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#) and [Board Improvement Plan](#) priorities in literacy, numeracy, and future preparedness¹. Programs will be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect student voice, post-secondary options, and local workforce and community needs.

Future preparedness is defined as preparing every student with the skills, knowledge and experiences needed to thrive in a complex, and changing world. Future preparedness ensure we collaborate with students and families to ensure students have what they need to build their individual pathway.

3. Evidence-Informed Decision Making

Program creation, expansion and closure decisions will be guided by evidence. We will use qualitative and quantitative data to monitor outcomes, inform improvements, and ensure resources are distributed equitably to meet the diverse needs of HWDSB students.

Ethical Indigenous education research will be conducted in partnership with local Indigenous communities, ensuring reciprocity, accountability, and full respect for Indigenous data sovereignty (OCAP).

4. Equity of Access

Programs will be designed, reviewed and distributed to reduce barriers and inequities in access and participation. Geographic and demographic considerations will ensure all students have equitable access.

5. Fiscal Responsibility and Sustainability

All program decisions will be evaluated for long-term viability, fiscal sustainability, responsible and equitable use of resources. Programs with high costs or low enrolment will be reviewed regularly. New initiatives will be piloted with clear cost-benefit analysis.

6. Inclusive Community Engagement and Lived Experience

Program decisions will promote inclusive, safe, and supportive learning environments where every student experiences belonging and meaningful opportunities.

Transparent engagement processes will ensure student, parent, staff, and community voices are sought to inform program creation, expansion, and closure.

¹ Future preparedness is defined as preparing every student with the skills, knowledge and experiences needed to thrive in a complex, and changing world in collaboration with students and families to ensure students have what they need to build their individual pathway.

7. Phased and Communicated Implementation

Implementation will prioritize listening to voices that have not historically been centered and addressing barriers to engagement. Clear, accessible communication will keep families and staff informed about programs, processes, and changes.

Implementation plans will be phased, strategic, and responsive, prioritizing urgent equity and sustainability and viability needs while minimizing disruption to student learning.

RESOLUTION #26-26: Trustees White/Danko moved the following **amendments** to the Guiding Principles – Program Review Strategy:

- Guiding Principle 4. Equity of Access
 - Include timing considerations and “all students from diverse pathways”
 - Define the term Equity
- Guiding Principle 5. Fiscal Responsibility and Sustainability
 - Include staff resources or staff designations as part of the reference to resources
- Create a Guiding Principle related to Learning from current Programs that can be carried forward in cases where programs may need to be closed
- Create a Guiding Principle related to Removal of Barriers – Minimization of caps, waitlists, lotteries, and fees where possible.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Bizanti, Watson and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

RESOLUTION #26-27: Trustees Fehrman/Buck moved that the remainder of the Program Committee report from February 19, 2026, be received.

CARRIED

Student Trustees Bizanti, Watson and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

NOTE: During discussions of the amendments, Trustees Dahab and Tut moved that the Guiding Principles and proposed amendments be referred back to the Program Committee for further review and discussion.

This motion **lost** on the following division:

In Favour (4): Trustees, Archer, Dahab, Tut, Zaitley.

Shakowennakara:tats Hillen

Opposed (6): Trustees Buck, Danko, Fehrman, Miller, Noble, White

Student Trustees Bizanti and Watson

8. Finance & Facilities Committee

RESOLUTION #26-28: Trustees Tut/Fehrman moved that the Finance & Facilities report from February 24, 2026, be approved including the following recommendations for the Binbrook II Boundary Review:

A. That the geographic area described below becomes the boundary for the new Binbrook Elementary School (ES) and is removed from the Bellmoore ES and Shannen Koostachin current attendance boundaries:

Commencing at the northwest intersection of Binbrook Road and Trinity Church Road, running south on Trinity Church Road to include residents on the east side and ending at Lake Niapenco,

picking up again on the other side of Lake Niapenco to include both sides of Trinity Church Rd to Haldibrook Road, then east within the City of Hamilton municipal boundary on Haldibrook Road to include residents on the north side of Haldibrook Road until it ends, then a direct line to Short Road including residents on the north side until it ends, then a direct line to Irvine Road to include residents on the north side of Irvine Road up to Westbrook Road, then north on Westbrook Road to include residents on the west side of Westbrook Road up to Binbrook Road, then heading west on Binbrook Road to include residents on the south side up to Trinity Church Road.

B. That the boundary change is effective upon the opening of the new Binbrook ES. At that time, all new JK to 8 students located within the new boundary will attend the new Binbrook ES.

C. That existing Bellmoore ES students living in the new Binbrook ES boundary have an option to remain at Bellmoore ES until graduation with no transportation provided. New elementary siblings of these students, not attending Bellmoore ES at the time of the new school opening, will be required to attend the new Binbrook ES.

D. That Shannen Koostachin ES students living in the new Binbrook ES boundary entering Grade 7&8, at the time of opening of the new Binbrook ES, will be given the option to remain at Shannen Koostachin ES with no transportation provided. Younger existing or new sibling registrations of these students will be required to attend the new Binbrook ES.

E. In accordance with the Ontario Education Act and all applicable Ministry of Education directives, should the Boundary Review transition planning process determine that viable grade programs cannot be established at the new Binbrook ES upon opening, these students will attend the new school. For the purposes of this recommendation, a viable program is defined as the ability to deliver the curriculum and required instructional components as intended by the Ministry of Education, including program organization, assessment, and reporting practices, and supports for student learning and transitions.

F. All student transportation will be provided in accordance with Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board's [Transportation Policy No. 3.10](#).

G. That a Transition Committee for each of the affected schools currently operating is struck by the Superintendent of Equity and Student Achievement upon approval of the boundary change.

CARRIED

Trustees Bizanti, Watson and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.
Trustee Dahab was not present for this vote.

9. Parent Involvement Committee

RESOLUTION #26:29: Trustees Fehrman/Zaitley moved that the Parent Involvement Committee report from February 10, 2026, be received.

CARRIED

Trustees Bizanti, Watson and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

The Board moved into private session for discussions of items related to Section 207 (2) of the Education Act.

The meeting resumed in public session at 10:24 pm. Trustee Danko did not return to the public session.

10. Report from Committee of the Whole (Private) – March 9, 2026

RESOLUTION #26-30: Trustees Tut/Fehrman moved that Committee of the Whole report from March 9, 2026, be approved, including:

- That the Finance & Facilities Committee report from February 24, 2026, be received.
- That the local HWPC Terms and Conditions contract between the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board and the Hamilton-Wentworth Principals Council (HWPC) be amended to August 31, 2027.

CARRIED

11. Notice of Motion: Letters to the Premier, Minister of Education & Ombudsman (Trustee Buck)

WHEREAS the Minister of Education has stated that he is considering eliminating the role of democratically elected English Public School Board Trustees and has stated that French and Catholic Trustees may not be removed;

WHEREAS the removal of English Public School Boards of Trustees would result in the loss of legislated First Nation representation where it currently exists;

WHEREAS the removal of English Public School Boards of Trustees would also result in the loss of Student Trustees in those boards, which is the sole legislated role giving voice to Ontario students in English Public Schools;

WHEREAS there has been no formal public consultation on the proposal to remove the role of English Public School Board Trustees and polls have shown support for the role of Trustees and are skeptical that the proposed governance changes will improve public education;

WHEREAS the removal of democratically elected Trustees at supervised Boards has resulted in less open, public meetings which can result in less accountability;

WHEREAS the role of the Ontario Ombudsman is to examine the transparency, fairness and accountability of policies and government.

RESOLUTION #26-31: Trustees Buck/Fehrman moved that the Chair of the Board be directed to write a letter to the Minister of Education and Premier requesting that a formal provincial-wide consultation process be developed and implemented before making any governance changes or decisions that would result in the elimination of English Public School Board Trustees; and

Request that the government conduct research to support an evidence-based decision regarding the best governance model to support the public education system, while also promoting open dialogue and two-way conversations; and

That the Chair of the Board be directed to write a letter to the Ontario Ombudsman in support of recent letters from English public district school boards asking the Ombudsman's office to review the potential impacts of removing English Public School Board Trustees with respect to fairness, openness, transparency and accountability; and

That a copy of the letters be sent to the Premier and Minister of Education, and all MPPs, MPs, and OPSBA Member Boards.

CARRIED

Trustees Bizanti, Watson and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

RESOLUTION #26-32: Motion by Trustees Noble/Buck to extend the Board meeting to 11:00 pm

CARRIED

Trustees Bizanti, Watson and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

12. Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)

Trustee Buck provided an update as follows:

- the Ontario Public Student Trustee Leadership Scholarship is open. The scholarship is to recognize outstanding achievement in a leadership role and provide financial support to a graduating public board student trustee to assist with their post-secondary education plans (University, College, or Apprenticeship). Two scholarships, in the amount of \$500 each, will be awarded. Information can be found [on the OPSBA website](#). The application deadline is May 15, 2026.
- Board of Director's meeting was held on February 28 and the discussion mainly centered on the proposed OPSBA governance restructuring.

13. Student Trustees Report

Student Trustees Bizanti and Watson provided the following update:

- Student Senate held its first meeting of the month and included presentations on budget development processes from Finance and AI in education.
- Planning is underway for the Student Leadership Conference being held at 20 Education Court on April 17. Students from each high school within HWDSB have been invited to be on the panel.
- Student trustees attended OSTA-AECO Education Action Conference gaining training in governance, policy navigation, Indigenous partnership building and student well-being leadership.

Shakowennakara:tats Hillen provided the following update:

- District schools engaged in Black History Month learning and celebrations, highlighting Black excellence and strengthening culturally responsive and identity-affirming programming.
- HWDSB students and staff participated in the Reverend John C. Holland Awards, reinforcing the Board's commitment to celebrating student leadership and community contributions.
- Recognition of student leadership – including the **Unity Award** and the **Sankofa Pro Scholarship/Bursary**.
- Participated in a keynote panel with People for Education at McMaster University on the role of public schools in social mobility and economic inclusion, providing district-level student representation in provincial dialogue.

RESOLUTION #26-33: Moved by Trustees Buck/Noble that the Board Meeting be extended to 11:30 pm.

CARRIED

Trustees Bizanti, Watson and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen voted in favour.

14. Director's Report

Director Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini provided her [monthly update](#) and highlighted key system priorities, ongoing initiatives, and recent progress aligned with the Multi-Year Strategic Plan. The oral report emphasized current achievements across student learning, well-being, equity, and operational effectiveness, and outlined upcoming areas of focus for the remainder of the school year. The Director also shared relevant provincial updates, departmental highlights, and next steps in major board-wide strategies.

15. Chair's Report

Chair Miller reflected on the meeting's themes of student voice, community engagement, and partnership, highlighting delegations, program review dialogue, and ongoing work supporting safety and community collaboration.

Chair Miller emphasized the importance of democratic governance structures, noting concern about potential impacts should elected trustees be removed.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 p.m.

Reference: [Agenda Package](#) and [Recording](#), [Recording2](#)