

AGENDA: 6:45 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: September 29, 2025](#)

Reports from Trustee Special Committees:

7. [Policy – October 9, 2025](#)

Reports from Legislated Committees:

8. [Special Education Advisory Committee – September 24, 2025](#)

Reports from Community Advisory Committees:

9. [French as a Second Language Advisory Committee – October 15, 2025](#)

10. Report from Committee of the Whole (Private) – October 27, 2025

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 Shakowennakarátats Report
- B. Director's Report
- C. Chair's Report

13. Adjournment

Trustees: Kathy Archer, Becky Buck, Sabreina Dahab, Dawn Danko, Amanda Fehrman, Maria Felix Miller, Graeme Noble, Paul Tut, Todd White, Elizabeth Wong, 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 7:16 p.m.

2. Swearing-In Student Trustees and Shakowennakara:tats 2025-2026

Chair Miller formally welcomed Student Trustees and Shakowennakara:tats for 2025-2026 to the board table. She expressed gratitude to the students, noting the importance of their role in representing the voices and perspectives of students across the system.

Student Trustee Bizanti, Watson and Shakowennakara:tats Hillen all read their Oath of Office before members of the Board, Senior Staff, and those observing in the gallery and online.

3. Approval of the Agenda

Trustee Buck requested a re-ordering of agenda items.

RESOLUTION #25-70: Trustees Buck/Tut moved that the agenda be approved as amended.

CARRIED

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

4. Confirmation of the Minutes

RESOLUTION #25-71: Trustees Archer/Tut moved that the Minutes from June 16, 2025, be confirmed.

CARRIED

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

5. Audit Committee

RESOLUTION #25-72: Trustees Danko/Archer moved that the Audit Committee report from September 16, 2025, be approved, including:

- Trustee Dawn Danko be appointed as Chair of the Audit Committee for 2025-2026.
- The "Annual Report to the Board of Trustees for the year ended August 31, 2025" be forwarded to the Board of Trustees for information.
- The "Annual Report to the Board of Trustees and Forwarded to the Ministry of Education for the year ended August 31, 2025" be sent to the Ministry.

CARRIED

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

6. Finance & Facilities

RESOLUTION #25-73A: Trustees Buck/Archer moved that staff provide an update to both communities regarding the status of the gym expansions at Queensdale and Billy Green schools.

CARRIED

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

RESOLUTION #25-73B: Trustees Tut/Fehrman moved that the Finance & Facilities Committee report from September 23, 2025, be approved as amended, including:

- The 2025-2026 Capital Priorities Projects be submitted to the Ministry of Education for funding consideration, as per Memorandum 2025: B04-Launch of 2025-26 Capital Priorities Program.
 - Lake Avenue Elementary School Addition
 - New Hess Street/Strathcona Elementary School on the former Sir John A. Macdonald site.
- That staff provide an update to both communities regarding the status of the gym expansions at Queensdale and Billy Green schools.

CARRIED

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

7. Parent Involvement Committee

RESOLUTION #25-74: Trustees Fehrman/Danko moved that the Parent Involvement Committee reports from June 10 and September 9, 2025, be received.

CARRIED

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

8. Special Education Advisory Committee

RESOLUTION #25-75: Trustees Danko/Tut moved that the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) report from September 10, 2025, be approved, including the [HWDSB Special Education Plan 2025-2026](#).

CARRIED

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

9. Faith Community Advisory Committee

RESOLUTION #25-76: Trustees Buck/Archer moved that the Faith Community Advisory Committee report from June 10, 2025, be received.

CARRIED

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

10. Back to School Presentation

Staff provided a Back to School [presentation](#) highlighting enrolment figures for both elementary and secondary schools, capital projects completed over the summer break, HWSTS transportation and Continuing Education Programs – Summer Learning Opportunities.

11. Trustee appointment to Committees (for the remainder of the 2024-25 term)

RESOLUTION #25-77: Trustees Dahab/Buck moved that Trustee Abby Zaitley be appointed to the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) and to the Finance & Facilities Committee for the remainder of the 2024-2025 term.

CARRIED

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

12. City/School Board Liaison Committee

Chair Miller provided an update from the September 25, 2025, meeting. Key discussion items:

- School Streets Feasibility Study: City staff presented findings from the Strathcona Elementary School pilot project.

- Stormwater Fees: Concerns raised by HWDSB about lack of budget provisions for such fees and requested a full exemption from the charge. City staff will report back on the request at the next meeting, scheduled for December 11, 2025.
- Education Development Charges – Childcare Facilities: City staff are exploring options related to EDCs charged for full-day child care spaces in new schools and will report back at a future meeting.

13. Hamilton-Wentworth Council of Home & School Associations

Trustee Danko shared that there is a meeting taking place this week to elect a President and Vice President for the 2025-26 school year and confirm future meeting dates.

14. Hamilton Foundation for Student Success

Trustee Fehrman shared that the first meeting of the 2025-26 school year will take place on October 7, 2025.

15. Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)

Trustee Buck provided the following update:

- Local Government Week is October 20-24, 2025
- OPSBA Public Education Symposium will be held January 23-24, 2026, in Toronto, ON. The theme is *What Matters Most: Supporting Ontario's Students*.
- OPSBAs 2026 Awards Program has launched, and nominations are being accepted until November 17, 2025.
- OPSBA continues to support trustees in advocacy efforts related to Bill 33: Supporting Children and Students Act (2025).

16. Student Trustees' and Shakowennakara:tats report

Shakowennakara:tats Hillen provide a verbal update:

- Attended the OSTA-AECO Leadership meeting with Student Trustee Bizanti in July
- Co-facilitated a civic leadership session with HCCI, spoke at McMaster's "Gear Up" program for incoming Black Students and delivered opening remarks at the System Leaders' Meeting at Sherwood Secondary School.
- September 30, 2025, is National Day of Truth and Reconciliation (Orange Shirt Day) and this day is a reminder that every child matters.

Student Trustees Bizanti and Watson provided a verbal update:

- Participated in OSTA-AGM this past May and learned the roles and responsibilities of the student trustees.
- Actively working to increase student engagement through the HWDSB Student Trustee Instagram account
- Student Trustee Bizanti was appointed as the incoming Vice President, Events for OSTA and is planning the schedule for guest speakers for the Fall General Meeting.

17. Director's Report

Shery Robinson Petrazzini welcomed everyone back and wished all a "Happy New Year". She [presented](#) the Director's Report and highlighted the following key themes:

- Culture of Improvement: Emphasis on continuous progress in transportation, facilities and student engagement.
- Equity & Inclusion: Focus on diverse pathways, student voice, and community partnerships.
- Strategic Communication: Enhanced outreach to families and staff.

September 30, 2025, is National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, and it is an important and solemn day which reminds us that reconciliation is an ongoing journey, to listen, learn and act towards healing and justice.

18. Chair's Report

Chair Miller extended a warm welcome to all students, staff and families for the 2025-2026 school year and acknowledged the work of caretaking and facilities staff over the summer to prepare school sites for reopening. The Chair welcomed the new student trustees and expressed appreciation for their commitment. Chair Miller expressed gratitude for the dedication and leadership shown by Trustees and reaffirmed the importance of advocacy and collaboration in the current challenging climate.

RESOLUTION #25-78: Trustees Noble/Wong moved that the board move into private session as per the Education Act, Section 207.2 (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.

CARRIED

19. Report from Committee of the Whole (Private)

RESOLUTION #25-79: Trustees Tut/Danko moved that the Committee of the Whole report from September 29, 2025, be approved, including:

- That the Audit Committee report from September 16, 2025, be received.
- That the Finance & Facilities Committee report from September 23, 2025, be approved, including;
 - That a property matter has been approved
 - That staff initiate Step 5 of the Discretionary Disposition Process for the sale of Beverly Central Elementary School and;
 - That the former Barton site be identified as a holding property for potential future use.
- That the terms and conditions for Professional Administrative Support Staff be approved and amended, effective immediately to August 31, 2027.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 11:33 p.m.

Reference: [Agenda Package](#) and [Recording, Recording 2](#)

COMMITTEE REPORT

Presented to: Board

Date of Meeting: October 27, 2025

From: Policy Committee

Date of Meeting: October 9, 2025

The committee held a hybrid meeting on October 9, 2025, at 6:10 pm with Trustee Dahab presiding.

Members: Trustees Kathy Archer*, Sabreina Dahab, Maria Felix Miller^(R), Abby Zaitley and Graeme Noble*.

Also in attendance: Trustee Todd White.

* electronic participation, ^(R)regrets

ACTION ITEM(S):

A. Boundary Review

Staff reviewed the feedback received from the Committee in May and have made additional minor changes to provide clarity on the Advisory Panel membership and roles. The committee requested that the term “co-chair” be changed to “facilitator”, and suggested having one facilitator (The Superintendent) with the role defined within the procedure. The committee requested that the final revisions of the policy be circulated before the Board meeting.

On the motion of Trustee Noble, the Policy Committee recommends that the Boundary Review policy be approved as amended.

CARRIED

B. Employee Expenses

Staff provided a review of the Employee Expense Policy as part of the policy review cycle and included minor updates to language throughout the policy. The Committee requested staff to add explicit language regarding the approval mechanism for out-of-province/country travel (through the Director of Education), a list of ineligible expenses and that staff provide the policy from 2017 to committee members for additional context.

On the motion of Trustee Noble, the Policy Committee recommends that the Employee Expense Policy be approved as amended.

CARRIED

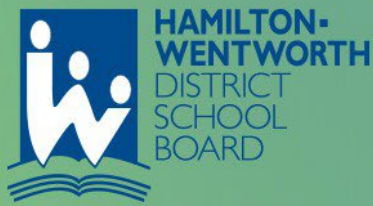
C. Trustee Expenses

Staff provided a review of the Trustee Expense Policy as part of the policy review cycle and included minor updates to language throughout the policy. The Committee requested that staff add clearer language for all other conference requests (outside of OPSBA, CSBA and OSTA-AECO), and that legal expenses be added to the Ineligible List (noting Trustees must go through the Director for legal advice).

On the motion of Trustee Noble, the Policy Committee recommends that the Trustee Expense Policy be approved as amended.

CARRIED

Respectfully submitted,
Trustee Dahab, Chair of the Committee



Boundary Review

Date Approved: XXXX

Projected Review Date: XXXX

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PURPOSE:

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) believes in optimizing and ensuring the effective and efficient use of all facilities to support student achievement. In alignment with the Long-Term Facilities Plan, guided by HWDSB's Multi-Year Strategic Plan, the Board determines school boundaries in accordance with its authority under Section 171 (1)7 of the Education Act.

The Board is committed to responding to changing demographics and program needs through boundary changes in a fair and transparent manner, prioritizing effective community engagement. New school boundaries or changes to existing school boundaries will consider the Guiding Principles of the Long-Term Facilities Plan and HWDSB's commitment to human rights and equity.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Boundary modifications should be considered to:
 - accommodate new school construction,
 - balance student enrolment,
 - address site or facility constraints; and/or
 - support evolving program needs.
- Address the short and long-term accommodation requirements of the impacted communities in a timely manner;
- Be mindful of the best and most prudent use of all resources available to HWDSB;
- Adhere to the guiding principles as defined in the Long-Term Facilities Plan including optimal school capacity, grade organization, transportation, facility requirements, site size and the balance between French Immersion and English track students in dual track schools ([Long-Term Facilities Plan](#));
- Consult with the impacted school communities to gain further insight into the boundary recommendation(s).
- Ensure Trustee(s) are engaged as a member of the Boundary Review Resource Team.

INTENDED OUTCOMES:

When a Boundary Review is conducted, HWDSB staff will:

- Ensure that community engagement for a Boundary Review process begins no later than the fall preceding the implementation year and concludes in time to support effective transition planning and the execution of the boundary change.
- Validate or amend school attendance boundaries to support and optimize the effective and efficient use of all facilities, while also supporting student well-being and achievement.
- Consider community and school engagement strategies through the Boundary Review process.
- Ensure the input of the affected Trustee(s) is received and regarded throughout the Boundary Review process.

Boundary Review

Date Approved: XXXX

Projected Review Date: XXXX

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RESPONSIBILITY:

Director of Education
Members of Executive Council

TERMINOLOGY:

Boundary Review Advisory Panel: Includes a minimum of two representatives from each affected school. Membership may consist of representatives from School Councils and/or Home & School Associations (where applicable). The school representatives (provided through the principal), along with the Boundary Review Resource Team members, analyze Boundary Review data, accommodation challenges, and boundary solutions.

Boundary Review: A formal process of public consultation undertaken to evaluate, create or modify school attendance boundaries.

Boundary Review Resource Team: This team includes the Family of Schools Superintendent, Trustee, Principal and Vice-Principal of the affected school(s), along with Planning, Accommodation and Rentals and other Board Administrative Support staff. The mandate of the Resource Team is to lead the Boundary Review process, including the establishment of boundary recommendations, the evaluation of the viability of the boundary modifications and facilitation of community consultation.

Consensus: Consensus at the Advisory Panel is developed by listening to the opinions and concerns of others - everyone works towards a suitable decision. Not everyone may be pleased with the outcome, but they accept it is the best decision for the community.

Final Staff Report: The Report to the Board of Trustees outlining the final recommendations from staff for the school Boundary Review, with feedback from the Boundary Review Advisory Panel.

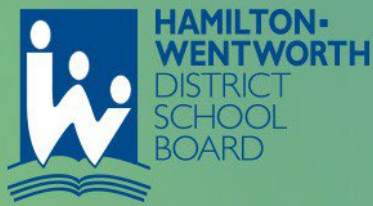
Initial Staff Report: The Report to the Board of Trustees from staff outlining the rationale and scope of the proposed Boundary Review.

Long-Term Facilities Plan: A comprehensive planning document illustrating municipal demographics, condition and utilization of current facilities and accommodation analyses designed to enhance student achievement. The plan is meant to support and promote the goals of the Multi-Year Strategic Plan, Board Improvement Plan, Human Rights Policy, Multi-year Accessibility Plan, Indigenous Education Circle Strategic Action Plan and other HWDSB Policies and Plans.

ACTION REQUIRED:

A Boundary Review, outside of the accommodation review process, may commence under the following circumstances:

- Initiated through the Long-Term Facilities Plan, upon Board approval,
- Recommendation through the Director of Education, upon Board approval, or



Boundary Review

Date Approved: XXXX

Projected Review Date: XXXX

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- Initiated through the Board of Trustees.

Consultation with impacted school communities and changes to the school boundaries will adhere to the HWDSB Boundary Review Procedure.

Boundary Review Advisory Panel Mandate and Composition:

Mandate:

The mandate of the Advisory Panel is to advise the Board of Trustees through the Final Staff Report.

The mandate of the Resource Team and the Advisory Panel is to analyze boundary solutions to identified accommodation challenges through discussions and inquiries about boundary options and/or information. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Establishing and reviewing Boundary Review evaluation criteria
- Discussing the viability of other alternatives to the proposed boundary recommendations
- Identifying key considerations and applying them to recommendations or alternatives explored
- Engaging the community of identified schools
- Reviewing community feedback

Advisory Panel and Resource Team Composition:

Advisory Panel members include:

The Boundary Review Advisory Panel shall include, at a minimum, two representatives from each affected school. Membership may consist of representatives from School Councils and/or Home & School Associations (where applicable).

Resource Team members include:

- Superintendent of Equity and Student Achievement (Facilitator)
- Manager of Planning, Accommodation and Rentals
- Trustee(s) of affected schools
- Planning & Accommodation staff
- Principal and/or Vice-Principal(s) of affected schools
- Research and Analytics staff
- Communications & Community Engagement staff
- Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation Services staff
- Other Board staff as deemed necessary (Facility Services, Program, etc.)

The role of the Resource Team assisting the Boundary Review Advisory Panel is to support the members by sharing helpful background information, answering questions and being a liaison between staff and community throughout the process. The Resource Team does not take part in choosing or promoting specific options, as the panel is responsible for making its own options.

Boundary Review

Date Approved: XXXX

Projected Review Date: XXXX

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Key Responsibilities and Activities of Advisory Panel and Resource Team:

Public Consultation

- The Resource Team will facilitate Advisory Panel meetings to present information in the Initial Boundary Review Report and boundary option(s) in order to facilitate discussions and solicit feedback. Decision-making at the Advisory Panel is done through consensus. When a clear consensus cannot be reached and multiple well-supported options are presented, all viable perspectives will be reflected and included in the final report.
- The Resource Team will facilitate a public information session to share information in the Initial Boundary Review Report, information gathered from Advisory Panel meeting(s), and boundary option(s). The intent of the Public Information Session is to respond to questions of clarification and receive feedback on the boundary option(s).

Board Approval

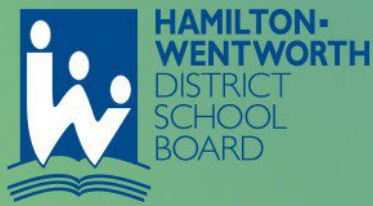
- The Superintendent of Equity and Student Achievement and Manager of Planning, Accommodation and Rentals will present the Final Report and recommended option for Board approval through the Director of Education.

Boundary Review Implementation

- Decisions regarding changes to boundaries where existing students may be impacted shall not be made after February 28th for implementation in the following school year.
- The Resource Team will begin the process of implementation, including informing other HWDSB departments of the pending boundary change. The Superintendent of Equity and Student Achievement will then form a transition committee to support students, staff, families, and community members through the changes.

Timelines

- Accommodation strategies are signaled through the Long-Term Facilities Plan (LTFP) or presentation of a Boundary Review Report to the Board from the Finance & Facilities Committee.
- The process, where possible, begins with Board Approval in May and concludes by the end of February as noted above.



Boundary Review

Date Approved: XXXX

Projected Review Date: XXXX

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PROGRESS INDICATORS:

Intended Outcome	Assessment
Ensure that community engagement for a Boundary Review process begins no later than the fall preceding the implementation year and concludes in time to support effective transition planning and the execution of the boundary change.	Measured through the commencement of the review process in the fall and completion to meet board planning timelines for the school year of implementation.
Validate or amend school attendance boundaries to support and optimize the effective and efficient use of all facilities, while also supporting student well-being and achievement.	Measured by monitoring and planning for pupil accommodation through the Long-Term Facilities Plan. This includes an annual analysis of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declining, increasing and shifting enrolments and demographics • Current funding and operational realities • Changing educational and program objectives • Physical limitations of schools and sites
Consider community and school engagement strategies through the Boundary Review process.	Measured through engagement with the Advisory Panel and public engagement with school communities.
Ensure the input of the affected Trustee(s) is received and regarded throughout the Boundary Review Process.	Measured through trustee participation in the review process and final Boundary Report.

REFERENCES:

Government Documents

Education Act



	POLICY NO: 3.5
Adopted	2017
Projected Review Date	2025
Revisions	2021, 2025

POLICY: EMPLOYEE EXPENSES

PURPOSE:

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) is committed to the accountability and transparency of public funds.

HWDSB will reimburse employees for reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred in carrying out their responsibilities while representing the interests of students, the community and/or the Board.

For an expense to be paid or reimbursed it must follow HWDSB policy and procedure and have the appropriate authorizations and approvals. The Board assumes no obligation to reimburse expenses that do not comply with this policy or the employee expense procedures.

The Employee Expense Policy applies to all employees and School Council members who submit expense reimbursement requests.

This policy applies to all employee expenses incurred using HWDSB budgets, school-generated funds, School Council funds, donations or any other funds generated on behalf of the HWDSB.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

The overarching principle is that employees shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred on authorized Board business in accordance with this policy.

This Policy is aligned with the Broader Public Sector Accountability Act and follows the Broader Public Sector (BPS) Expenses Directive, Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Directive. This policy is intended to be enacted in accordance with Policy A1.1: Human Rights.

The Board is committed to:

- Ensuring sound business practices are employed;
- Accountability for the use of public funds is maintained;
- The Board's reputation and integrity as a public employer is protected;
- Compliance with the Ministry of Education School Board Expenditure Guidelines (2006: B15) and the Broader Public-Sector Expenses Directive; and
- Ensuring expenses are reasonable and relevant to the duties and responsibilities of the employee, support the program objectives of the organization, and maximize the benefits to the Board.

INTENDED OUTCOMES:

- Staff who incur expenses while performing their duties on behalf of the Board are reimbursed in a fair, consistent and transparent manner.

- That all reimbursed employee expenses, from all HWDSB related funds, are consistent with the educational goals of the Board, procurement policies and fair business principles.
- HWDSB staff with expense approval authority will not approve any reimbursement of expenses that conflict with this policy and/or related procedures.
- Ensure compliance with Ministry of Education School Board Expenditure Guidelines (2006: B15) and the Broader Public-Sector Expenses Directive.

RESPONSIBILITY:

Director of Education
Members of Executive Council

TERMINOLOGY:

Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive: Sets out the requirement for the designated Broader Public Sector organizations to establish expense rules where expenses are reimbursed from public funds.

Employee: All individuals who agree to work on a full-time or part-time basis for HWDSB for a specified or indeterminate period of time. Salary or wages are paid to this individual and from this payment, deductions are taken for Canada Pension Plan, Income Taxes and Employment Insurance.

Ministry of Education School Board Expenditure Guidelines: The purpose of the guidelines is to define a province-wide standard intended for both trustees and school board staff that addresses the following areas of school board expenditure:

- use of corporate credit cards
- travel, meals and hospitality
- advertising
- advocacy

School Council: School Councils are established under the authority of the Education Act. Section 22 of Ontario Regulation 612/00 provides for School Councils to engage in fundraising activities.

School-Generated Funds: School-generated funds is a broad category which includes not only fundraising for school purposes, but also all funds that are collected and paid out through school accounts.

ACTION REQUIRED:

Procedures will be in place to operationalize this policy and ensure HWDSB employees designated as approvers of expense claims and all employees requesting reimbursement for employment expenditures follow the requirements of legislation and board policy and procedure, to meet the needs of students, educators, and staff while ensuring accountability and transparency of funds.

Claims

Claims for the reimbursement of Employees' expenses require the approval from the employee's immediate supervisor. For the Director of Education, approval by the Chair of the Board is required.

Exceptional Circumstances

It is noted that there may be exceptional circumstances that fall outside of this policy. For those exceptions to the policy, written authorization by the Director of Education and Treasurer of the Board is required.

Ineligible Expenses

The Board will not reimburse Employees for the following expenditures:

- Personal expenses
- Cost of 407 Transponder lease
- Cannabis or Alcoholic products
- Goods and services purchased from Board employees
- Charges for use of, or memberships in, recreational/fitness facilities
- Season/Individual tickets to cultural or sporting events
- In-room movie rentals and mini-bar charges
- Charges incurred by spouse or other family members
- Parking violations or traffic violations
- Automobile expenses, since these are reimbursed on a per-kilometre basis
- Expenses for hospitality, unless specifically allowed by this Policy
- Supporting a fundraiser or event for a specific political party
- Gifts of appreciation over \$50
- Gifts of any kind for staff members or their immediate families due to life events. A staff fund or collection from personal funds should pay for gifts for staff members or their immediate family. The exception is the death of a staff member or a member of their immediate family; the gift of condolence cannot exceed \$100, including taxes, delivery charges, etc.
- Cultural events such as holiday lunches or parties; retirement parties; year-end celebrations; school start-up of a new school year celebrations or other festive occasions (the exception is if specific funds have been provided through the Board's Budget for events such as new school openings, school anniversary celebrations, or other events).
- Out-of-Province/Country travel (unless pre-approved by the Director of Education)

PROGRESS INDICATORS:

Intended Outcome	Assessment
Staff who incur expenses while performing their duties on behalf of the Board are reimbursed in a fair, consistent and transparent manner.	Ensure employee expenditure reimbursement requests are reviewed and approved by authorized supervisors. The Financial Services Department will review approved expense reports for adherence to the appropriate policy and procedures.
That all reimbursed employee expenses, from all HWDSB-related funds, are consistent with the educational goals of the Board, procurement policies and fair business principles.	As a part of the annual audit of financial statements, a review is conducted to ensure maximum value is obtained and the spending of funds are consistent with the goals of the Board and fair business principles through this and the Procurement Policy (Policy 3.8).
HWDSB staff with expense approval authority will not approve any reimbursement of expenses that conflict with this policy and/or related procedures.	Exhibit the prudent and transparent use of the Board's financial resources through quarterly interim financial reporting and annual audited financial statements.
Ensure compliance with Ministry of Education School Board Expenditure Guidelines (2006:B15) and the Broader Public-Sector Expenses Directive.	This policy will be assessed against the Ministry of Education School Board Expenditure Guidelines (2006: B15) and the Broader Public-Sector Expenses Directive.

REFERENCES:**Government Documents**

[Ministry of Education Expenditure Guidelines](#)

[Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive \(2011, updated January 1, 2020\)](#)

[Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Directive, Province of Ontario](#)

	POLICY NO: 3.11
Adopted	2018, 2022
Projected Review Date	2026
Revisions	2022, 2025

POLICY: TRUSTEE EXPENSES

PURPOSE:

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) is committed to the accountability and transparency of public funds.

HWDSB will reimburse Trustees for reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred in carrying out their responsibilities while representing the interests of students, the community and/or the Board.

For an expense to be paid or reimbursed, it must follow policy and applicable procedures and have the appropriate authorizations and approvals. The Board assumes no obligation to reimburse expenses that do not comply with this policy.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

The overarching principle is that Trustees shall be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in carrying out their responsibilities as a Trustee of the Board and in accordance with this policy.

This Policy is aligned with the Broader Public Sector Accountability Act and follows the Broader Public Sector (BPS) Expenses Directive, Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Directive and the Ministry of Education Trustee Expense Guideline (July 2009). Trustees have the ability to strengthen HWDSB's Trustee Expense policy and procedures that have been aligned with the Ministry guidelines and directives. This policy is intended to be enacted in accordance with Policy A1.1: Human Rights.

The Board is committed to:

- Ensuring sound business practices are employed;
- Maintaining accountability for the use of public funds;
- Protecting the Board's reputation and integrity as a public employer;
- Complying with the Ministry of Education School Board Expenditure Guidelines (2006: B15) and the Broader Public-Sector Expenses Directive;
- Ensuring expenses are reasonable and relevant to the responsibilities of the Trustee while representing the Board, supporting the program objectives of the organization, and maximizing the benefits to the Board.

INTENDED OUTCOMES:

Trustees who incur expenses while performing their duties on behalf of the Board are reimbursed in a fair, consistent and transparent manner.

The Board complies with Ministry of Education School Board Expenditure Guidelines (2006: B15) and the Broader Public-Sector Expenses Directive.

RESPONSIBILITY:

Director of Education
Members of Executive Council

TERMINOLOGY:

Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive: The document which sets out the requirement for the designated Broader Public Sector organizations to establish expense rules where expenses are reimbursed from public funds.

Hospitality: The provision of food, beverage, accommodation, transportation, token gifts of appreciation and other amenities paid out of public funds to people who are not employed by:

- HWDSB,
- Designated BPS organizations (i.e. other school boards), or
- Any of the Ontario government ministries, agencies and public entities covered by the Ontario Public Service (OPS) Expense Directive.

Ministry of Education School Board Expenditure Guidelines: The purpose of the guidelines are to define a province-wide standard intended for both Trustees and school board staff that addresses the following areas of school board expenditure:

- use of corporate credit cards
- travel, meals and hospitality
- advertising
- advocacy

Trustee: Trustees are responsible for the operation of the public school system. They are elected in accordance with the Education Act at each municipal election, by the electoral group the school board represents.

A trustee is responsible, as a member of the Board:

- to govern and set policy for the Board
- to govern for the provision of curriculum, facilities, human and financial resources for the Board
- to advocate for the needs of their communities
- as a constituency representative, to explain the policies and decisions of the board to residents. Trustees are available to help taxpayers, parents and others to address any issues they may have about the public school system.

The term Trustee refers to both the Ward Trustee and Student Trustee within this policy.

ACTION REQUIRED:

Procedures will be in place to operationalize this policy and ensure HWDSB-designated approvers of Trustee expense claims and all Trustees requesting reimbursement for reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred in carrying out their responsibilities as Trustees follow the requirements of legislation and Board policy and procedure, to meet the needs of students, staff and families while ensuring accountability and transparency of funds.

Claims

Claims for the reimbursement of Trustees' expenses require the approval of the Chair of the Board. For the Chair of the Board, approval by the Treasurer of the Board is required.

Exceptional Circumstances

It is noted that there may be exceptional circumstances that fall outside of this policy. For those exceptions to the policy, written authorization by the Chair, Director of Education, and Treasurer of the Board is required.

Trustees are eligible for reimbursement of the following expenses on an ongoing basis:

- Long-distance telephone costs related to Board business
- Basic office supplies
- Home internet service
- Hospitality
- Travel

Trustees will not be reimbursed for the following equipment, as they are provided by HWDSB for use throughout the Trustee's term of office:

- Computer or tablet with software
- Printer
- Mobile device/phone (including associated service costs)

All equipment will be provided in accordance with current Board standards and is to be returned to the Board at the end of the Trustee's term of office.

Reporting Trustee Expenses

Trustee expenses will be posted quarterly (every three months) on the Board's website. These expenses are reported through the following categories:

- Travel (mileage, taxi)
- Internet
- Mobile device/phone
- Professional Development
- Other

Conference or Professional Development Activity

Trustee reimbursement for conferences or professional development activities shall not exceed \$1,000 per annum per Trustee, except for reimbursement for in-province conferences or professional development held by the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA), the Canadian School Boards' Association (CSBA) and the Ontario Student Trustees' Association (OSTA).

In support of Trustee's collective fiduciary responsibility, all conference requests, other than OPSBA, CSBA and OSTA-AECO, will be confirmed by the Chair or Vice-Chair as budget allows. Other than required attendance, registration priority will be given to Trustees who have not used their portion of the full budget.

When the CSBA holds its annual conference out of the province, the following Trustees shall have the first option to attend:

- Trustee designated as HWDSB's OPSBA liaison
- The Chair of the Board
- The Vice-Chair

Openings to the above allotment will be filled by drawing lots from those Trustees interested in attending.

In addition, in the event that a Trustee feels a need to exceed the above noted \$1,000 individual limitation, or to attend an out-of-province professional development event (other than CSBA as noted above), with accompanying costs not subject to the \$1,000 limit, application may be submitted to the Chair of the Board for permission to exceed the limitation on an exception basis or to attend the out-of- province event. Any such approval will be reported to the Board of Trustees.

If the Chair wished to exceed the \$1,000 limit, it would require the approval of the Board of Trustees. Any Trustee who wishes to dispute an expense decision by the Chair may bring the item forward to the full Board of Trustees.

Advance discounts should be realized on registration fees where possible.

Travel

Trustee travel to and from their residence to attend a meeting of the Board, a committee of the Board or carrying out the responsibilities of a board member, will be reimbursed for kilometers travelled based on the Canada Revenue Agency non-taxable mileage rate.

When required, transportation by taxi can be arranged with Trustee Services for HWDSB's current contracted taxi vendor.

Trustees are asked to travel by the most economical mode and share transportation whenever feasible.

Meals

Meal rates for breakfast, lunch and dinner will be updated at the beginning of each fiscal year. When more than one meal is claimed for any day, Trustees may allocate the combined maximum rates for each meal. For example, if a Trustee will be eating breakfast and lunch the combined rate will the maximum allowable dollar value of the meal rate for breakfast and lunch.

Where a meal is included as part of a professional event (e.g., conference, workshop, etc.), the meal entitlement will not apply. Exceptions will be made for dietary restrictions.

Reimbursement for purchases of alcohol or cannabis is not allowed. This includes:

- Alcohol consumed at a meal, event, conference, etc.
- Bottles of wine or other spirits, given as a gift or honorarium
- LCBO, Beer Store, wine store etc. gift certificates or gift cards, given as a gift or honorarium

In addition, the purchase of such items on Board purchasing cards and Board credit cards is not permitted.

Accommodation

Trustee reimbursement for overnight accommodation will be recognized when it is required and shall include: a reasonable room, parking, and internet costs.

Hospitality

Trustee hospitality should be extended in an economical, consistent and appropriate way when it will facilitate Board business or is considered desirable as a matter of courtesy.

Trustees may only accept infrequent and reasonable hospitality and may only accept infrequent and reasonable business gifts with a value of \$50 or less, including taxes and delivery. The frequency and nature of gifts or hospitality shall not be allowed to be such that the recipient might be, or might be deemed by others, to have been influenced in making a business decision because of accepting such gift or hospitality.

Discretionary Expenses

Expenses incurred must be directly connected with carrying out the responsibilities of a Trustee. There will be no reimbursement for expenses of a personal or political nature. Reimbursement for discretionary expenses shall not exceed \$1,000 per annum per Trustee.

Expenses allowed for reimbursement through discretionary expenses include:

- Hospitality expenses to hold school or ward-based meetings
- Admission fees to attend community-related presentations and events
- Consumable supplies for the home-based office such as paper and toner

Trustees may not submit the following discretionary expenses for reimbursement:

- Costs incurred to independently attend a fundraising event;
- Independent donations and/or contributions made to community-related presentations and events (includes those made in addition to, or instead of, admission fees);
- Independent donations to a fundraising event or charity; and/or
- Independent payment to a school or program.

If a Trustee receives a donation slip for any expenses reimbursed by the Board, the Trustee is asked to submit the donation slip with their expense claim.

Ineligible Expenditures

The Board will not reimburse Trustees for the following expenditures:

- Alcoholic or cannabis purchases including:
 - alcohol consumed at a meal, event, conference, etc.;
 - bottles of wine or other spirits as a gift/honorarium;
 - LCBO, Beer Store, wine store, etc. gift certificates as a gift/honorarium.
- Goods and services purchased from Board employees as stipulated in the Education Act S217;
- Charges for use of recreational/fitness facilities;
- In-room movie rentals and mini-bar charges;
- Charges incurred by spouse or other family members;
- Parking or traffic violations;
- Automobile expenses, since these are reimbursed on a per-kilometre basis;
- Expenses for hospitality, unless specifically allowed by this Policy;
- Expenses for re-furnishing or redecorating offices;
- Supporting a fundraiser for a specific political party;
- Supporting an event for a specific political party;
- Legal Counsel expenses;
- Purchase of gift certificates; and
- Gifts, unless specifically allowed by this Policy.

PROGRESS INDICATORS:

Intended Outcome	Assessment
Trustees who incur expenses while performing their duties on behalf of the Board are reimbursed in a fair, consistent and transparent manner.	<p>Ensure Trustee expense reimbursements are reviewed and approved by the appropriate authorization. Finance will only process an expense claim once appropriate authorization is obtained.</p> <p>Each Trustee's expenditure is published quarterly on the HWDSB website.</p>
The Board complies with Ministry of Education School Board Expenditure Guidelines (2006: B15) and the Broader Public-Sector Expenses Directive.	Exhibit the prudent and transparent use of the Board's financial resources through quarterly interim financial reporting on the HWDSB website and submission of annual audited financial statements.

REFERENCES:**Government Documents**

[Ministry of Education Expenditure Guidelines](#)

[Broader Public Sector Expenses Directive \(2011, updated version January 1, 2020\)](#)

[Trustee Expense Guideline \(2009\)](#)

Committee Report

Presented to: Board

Meeting Date: Monday, October 27, 2025

From: Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Meeting Date: Wednesday, September 24, 2025

The Committee held a meeting in room 308, Education Centre on Wednesday, September 24, 2025, beginning at 5:32 pm, ending at 7:23 pm, with Chair Judy Colantino presiding.

Present

Judy Colantino, Down Syndrome Association of Hamilton, SEAC Chair, Maria Felix Miller, HWDSB Chair, Trustee Ward 3
Melanie Roberts, Association for Bright Children of Ontario, Sarah Pennington, Community Living Hamilton, Susi Owen, CNIB
Hamilton and Niagara, Vanessa Doslea, Lynwood Charlton Centre

Regrets

Danielle Dion-Broadley, FASD Parent & Caregiver Support Group, Dawn Danko, Trustee Ward 7, Lindsay Bray, McMaster
Children's Hospital Developmental Pediatrics and Rehabilitation Portfolio, SEAC Vice Chair, Nancy Silva Khan, Autism Ontario
(Central West Chapter), Samantha Sweet, Centre for Diverse Learners

MONITORING ITEMS:

A. SEAC Orientation

- An overview of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) procedures was presented, outlining roles and responsibilities, meeting norms, and other key components, in accordance with Ontario Ministry of Education Regulation 464/97 [guidelines](#)

B. Engagement Framework Consultation

- The committee divided into breakout groups to provide feedback on the development of a framework for engagement of students and families who access special education supports and services

C. Membership Update – Centre for Diverse Learners

- The committee approved membership update for Centre for Diverse Learners, appointing Carolyn Rankin-Boutin as alternate member and Samantha Sweet as the primary member

D. MEMBERS' UPDATE

Maria Felix Miller, HWDSB Chair, Trustee Ward 3

- Re-org occurring October 9th, schools will connect with impacted families
- Ministry is reviewing the Board of Trustees structure across the province

Judy Colantino, SEAC Chair, Down Syndrome Association of Hamilton

- The Association held their annual walk funding campaign to support programs and services

Sharon Stephanian, Superintendent, Special Education, Inclusion & Equity

- We're now in the second year of EA onboarding, with staff providing highly positive feedback – EAs feel more confident in their role and are committed to continue in the role – we had 66 new EAs attend onboarding training - all positions were successfully filled the first day of school
- We remain committed to professional learning on every PA Day - for the upcoming COPE PA Day on November 21st, Michael Jacques will serve as the keynote speaker, accompanied by a series of engaging breakout sessions
- On November 21st, secondary learning resource teachers and secondary special class teachers will participate in a full day of subject-specific professional learning
- We are continuing with professional learning for learning resource teachers and special class teachers throughout the school year
- New ASD special class teachers will take part in seven full days of professional learning throughout the year as part of their professional learning community

- We're launching the Special Education Student Advisory Circles – these circles are designed to amplify student voice, especially those who access special education supports and services – educators will receive facilitation materials and discussion prompts throughout the year – so far, we have 11 classrooms volunteering to participate – we will share feedback with SEAC
- Over the summer, the Ministry provided funding to school boards for facility improvements related to accessibility. Associate Director Matthew Gerard will attend an upcoming meeting to share details on how these funds are being utilized to enhance accessibility in our schools.

Respectfully submitted by
Judy Colantino, SEAC Chair

Committee Report

Presented to: Board

Meeting date: October 27, 2025

From: French as a Second Language Advisory Committee

Meeting date: October 15, 2025

The committee held a meeting on Wednesday, October 15, 2025, from 6:00 to 7:00 pm, chaired by Jeremy Galea.

Members present were: Sabrina Varghese, Shawn Harvey, Salome (Sally) Sanchez Ojeda, Anais Cho, Avery Downton, Keya Dudhwala, Ellen Syracopoulos, Katharine Muis, Lauren Amedo, and Jeremy Galea.

Regrets: Trustee Graeme Noble, Trustee Todd White, Aaron Thompson.

MONITORING ITEMS:

A. Review of Mandate and Terms of Reference for Advisory Committees.

Staff reviewed the Board of Trustees Governance document in relation to the mandate and operations of a community advisory committee.

B. Membership and Chair

The committee selected Jeremy Galea to be the Chair for 2025-26. Eleven members and their terms of office were confirmed for the committee.

C. 2025-2026 Work Plan

The committee identified several topics for future meetings, including updates on the Grade I French Immersion application process, DELF exam preparation, inclusion in French Immersion programs, and an update of the Program Strategy Review.

D. HWDSB Engage Update

Members received a high-level overview from Sally Landon, HWDSB Manager of Research and Analytics, about gathering feedback via the HWDSB Engage website. This consultation, held at the start of the school year, focuses on evaluating the impact of the Board Improvement Plan. Members were invited to share their feedback through the platform.

E. Staff Updates

Superintendent Michelle Lemaire provided an overview and update regarding the Program Strategy Review being conducted by consultant, Malatest.

FSL K-12 Program Consultant, Lisa Reynolds, shared the following updates:

- Professional Development is in progress for early reading screening to support instructional planning and intervention.
- New resources will be provided to schools to enhance independent reading in Junior Literacy within French Immersion classrooms.
- November 21 PD Day will include a focus on Secondary FSL, covering:
 - French cultural opportunities in the community
 - SHSM Program

- DELF Examineur/Correcteur training
- DELF exam updates include 2026 examination dates and level explanations.
- Ten educators from both Elementary and Secondary panels will re-certify to administer the DELF exam.
- HWDSB HUB contains resources to support language acquisition

F. Community Update

Canadian Parents for French provided an overview of the organization and how to become a member. Information was shared about French language after-school programming.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeremy Galea, Chair