



## **POLICY STATEMENT**

The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board encourages partnerships that reflect the Board's mission, vision and core commitments, are supportive of the Board's strategic goals and objectives and enhance the learning of our students.

**RESPONSIBILITY: Director of Education**

### **Definitions:**

*Educational Partnership:*

An ongoing, mutually beneficial and supportive arrangement between school(s) and business, labour and community agencies. Partners share values, objectives, resources and responsibilities to achieve desired learning outcomes.

*Partnership Agreement:*

A formal, written document that outlines the terms and conditions of an educational partnership. The agreement is signed prior to the implementation.

*SIP – School/Service Improvement Plan*

Is a process through which appropriate stakeholders collaborate to set goals for improvement, develop strategies to achieve the goals and measure effectiveness.

*Service Leader:*

Service Leaders are responsible for the staff, business processes, functions and delivery of service for an entire department or work team within a department. The role of the service leader is to provide guidance, direction, and support for the successful implementation of the strategic direction/operational plan and continuous improvement of the initiatives, activities and processes delivered by their department.

*System partnership:*

A partnership that whose activities extend beyond one school and applies to all HWDSB service departments. .

### **OFFICE OF INNOVATION & PARTNERSHIP:**

The Office of Innovation and Partnership exists to:

- Support the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board to implement its Strategic and Operational Plans, Core Commitments, Mission and Vision
- Identify and establish public and private partnerships to enhance learning opportunities for students
- Bring resources to the Board not covered by operational budgets

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES:**

Partnerships provide an opportunity for the Board, schools and our student population to access additional resources and services through a mutually beneficial relationship with an external group or organization. The primary objective of partnership is to support school-readiness, student learning, enriched programs, internal and external pathway opportunities and to enhance the quality and relevance of learning.

Partnerships are non-exploitive of students, staff, schools or the Board and are formed with groups or organizations that demonstrate good citizenship, a commitment to public education and who do not engage in activities, provide services or products that are inappropriate for student consumption or use.

Partnership is defined by the highest form of collaboration. Partners share effort and measurable outcomes that result from mutually defined goals. Although partners may contribute resources – monetary or in-kind – these will enhance and not define the nature of the partnership.

Partnerships are not defined or governed by a fee-for-service or purchasing agreement or driven by fundraising goals.

Partnerships are recognized and encouraged as strategies to achieving goals set out in the Board's improvement planning process.

Partnerships are a valuable asset to be celebrated for their creativity and respected for their contribution to the education of our students.

### **OBJECTIVE OF THIS POLICY:**

The objective of this policy is to provide a framework for the implementation of partnerships that will enhance the educational experience of students. This policy sets standards for partnerships and creates requirements for screening, consultation, approval, evaluation, formal agreements, approval, recognition, conflict resolution and termination of partnership activity.

### **ACTION REQUIRED:**

The nature of partnerships will vary based on individual school improvement plans, departmental service improvement plans and the goals of the Board. However, a common approach to establishing and maintaining partnerships will maximize the benefit and learning from each partnership experience. Establishing appropriate and sustainable partnerships requires the following:

- Consideration of the school's improvement plan (SIP) or departmental service improvement plan
- Consideration of the Board's strategic goals
- A plan to identify and approach potential partners
- A written partnership agreement that speaks to the common goals, principles and expectations of all partners
- A plan to evaluate partnership activities
- Consolidation, recognition and/or extending partnership activities
- Consideration and respect for the application of other Board policies and administrative processes related to community use of schools, access to Board facilities and properties, and pre-existing agreements/contracts.
- Consideration of risk management and issues of Board liability.
- Consideration of the "Duties of a Principal" as defined in the Education Act.

### **Standards for Partnership**

Partnerships will provide ways and possibly means to meet goals set out in the school improvement plans, departmental service improvement plans and/or to further the goals of the Board for effective schools, effective environments and effective staff.

### **Screening of Partners**

Due diligence is key to the screening of potential partners. Before entering into a partnership there is a need for the school, the department and/or the Board to determine what the expectations are of the partnering organization and that the partnering organizations meet the community standard for a suitable association with the school and/or Board. This will include but may not be limited to:

- the reason for the organization's interest in partnering with the school and/or the Board;
- the organization's ownership and history
- the nature of product or service of the partnering organization
- the key contact within the partnering organization
- the authority of the key contact to bind that organization.

### **Consultation with key stakeholders:**

The principal or system leader will ensure that any key stakeholders are made aware of the potential partnership and take into consideration any issues or concerns that may be presented.

### **Partnership agreements**

Once key stakeholders have been consulted and an agreement to proceed with the partnership is determined, a partnership agreement will be prepared. The purpose of the partnership agreement is to clearly define activities, roles and responsibilities for each of the partners. Terms of the partnership will include an agreed statement of partnership principles. Copies of the agreement, signed by all parties, will be distributed to each partner and kept on file at the school and will be submitted to the Office of Innovation and Partnership. School administrators will inform School Councils and Home & School Associations of partnerships associated with their school communities. A template for a partnership agreement is attached to this policy.

### **Approval of partnerships**

The principal/service leader will ensure liabilities are minimized and appropriate central departments and stakeholders are consulted. The superintendent responsible for the school/department pursuing the partnership must obtain approval with for moving forward to formalize the partnership. All partnerships must be:

- consistent with a school's improvement plan, the departmental service improvement plan and/or the board's goals
- consider the impact on staff, student or parental time, the school community and existing partnerships
- coordinated to develop a plan to fulfill partnership obligations that identifies the required commitment of resources including staff time, performance measures, an evaluation plan and a plan for recognition of the partners.

The principal will sign partnership agreements at school level. The principal will send the agreement to the Innovation and Partnership Office for signature and filing.

At the system level, partnerships will be signed by the appropriate member of Executive Council and the Office of Innovation and Partnership. If the appropriate member of Executive Council agrees the partnership fulfills the requirements stated above, the principal/service leader will develop the agreement with the partner and send the signed agreement to the Innovation and Partnership Office for signature and filing.

### **Evaluating partnerships**

A review of the goals, outcomes and the working relationship between partners can lead to stronger partnerships. Each partnership will be evaluated against the goals and objectives set out in a partnership agreement. Evaluation will include feedback from all stakeholders - teaching, administrative and operational staff, the parental community and students when appropriate.

The process and time frame for evaluating a partnership will be included in the written partnership agreement. At a minimum, partnerships of long duration will be evaluated every second year.

### **Conflict Resolution**

Partnership agreements will contain a process and time frame for resolution of conflicts that arise in the course of the working relationship. The conflict resolution process must identify potential areas of conflict such as, but not limited to, a change in resource requirements, project timelines, and a change in personnel or school administration associated with the partnership.

### **Celebrating partnerships**

All partnerships will be recognized with a certificate suitable for framing, issued by HWDSB. Schools are encouraged to celebrate school-based partnerships in their own way with respect for the partners needs/wishes in that regard.

### **Terminating partnership agreements**

Partnership agreements can be terminated by any of the partnering organizations with appropriate notice of termination. Specifics related to the termination of partnerships must be detailed in the partnership agreement. Termination will be entertained only once the conflict resolution process has been exhausted.

The process and time frame for termination of a partnership will be included in the written partnership agreement.

### **KEY MEASURES OF SUCCESS:**

A report on partnerships will be submitted to the Board of Trustees on an annual basis. The report will include number and type of new, existing and terminated partnerships, estimated total value provided to students and the plan for recognition of partnerships.

### **RELATED POLICIES/POLICY DIRECTIVES:**

Fundraising/Sponsorship  
Community Use of Schools  
Equity  
Community Relations  
Education Act

### **RESOURCES:**

**Appendix I – Partnership Agreement Template**  
**Educational Partnership Manual**



April Morganti,  
Manager, Partnership & Community Engagement  
Innovation and Partnership Officer  
905 527 5092 ext. 2661

**Partnership Agreement**  
between  
**xxxxxxx**  
and  
**Hamilton Wentworth District School Board**  
Dated: **xxxxxxx**

This educational partnership is a mutually beneficial, ongoing, and supportive arrangement between the parties to provide enhanced learning in the area of \_\_\_\_.

The parties agree to work cooperatively in delivering the \_\_\_\_ year program, starting \_\_\_\_\_. It is intended that the program use \_\_\_\_\_.

**Terms of the Partnership**

In one or two paragraphs state:

- The main goal(s)/ objective(s) of the partnership
- Benefit(s) to students
- Main partnership activities

**(Name of School), HWDSB agrees to:**

Design activities that enhance the delivery of the following in school curricula:

1. Monitor the progress of the pilot programs and set priorities based on needs identified in the SIP
2. Provide space, data etc....
3. Populate this area with what you will commit to the partner and ask them what they might like from HWDSB
4. It is recommended that your partner also contribute to this area to ensure all needs are met

(Include any other agreed upon responsibilities)

**(Partner Organization) agrees to:**

1. Collaborate with HWDSB Communications Department regarding promotional activities and events.
2. Operate within the context of HWDSB policies and procedures including, \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Participate in both program evaluation and celebratory events.
4. It is recommended that HWDSB contributes to the content of this area to ensure all needs are met.

(Include any other relevant partner responsibilities)

**Goals and Objectives of the Program:**

Should be measurable and time based to ensure easy evaluation

**Communication and Conflict Resolution:**

All parties agree to review quarterly, the progress to date to ensure viability of the program and adjust processes accordingly.

**Resources Committed to the Program:**

- Time (staffing resources)
- Money
- Physical (e.g., computer lab, school gymnasium)

**Insurance:**

Do they have appropriate insurance to be working with our students?

It is agreed that the parties will share their time, resources, expertise, and energy to provide students with curriculum enhancing experiences that are cost-effective to the HWDSB.

Contribution to the program will be reflected in the school's annual report.

It is agreed that the partnership will be evaluated yearly and, if warranted, revised from time to time.

**\*\*\*PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR SOSA AND YOUR NAME FOR SIGNATURES.**

---

**April Morganti, Manager,  
Partnership & Community Engagement**

---

**Name & Title**

---

**Signature**

---

**Date**

---

**Date**