



**NOTICE OF SPECIAL BOARD MEETING**

Wednesday June 24, 2015

1:00 p.m.

20 Education Centre Dr, Hamilton, Ontario  
Trustee Boardroom

\*\*\*\*\*

**AGENDA**

1. Call to Order
2. O Canada
3. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

Presentation:

4. Reimagine HWDSB – report on feedback collected by PCG Consultants.

5. Adjournment

# Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board

## Strategic Directions Review

June 24, 2015

Prepared by PCG Education



*This page intentionally left blank*

## Contents

Executive Summary.....	5
Project Overview.....	5
Findings .....	5
Emerging Themes.....	5
Key Conclusions .....	5
Key Recommendations .....	5
Background .....	6
Reviewing Strategic Directions: Project Origin .....	7
Current Strategic Directions.....	7
Achievement Matters .....	7
Engagement Matters .....	7
Equity Matters .....	7
Data Collection and Analysis.....	8
Data Collection.....	8
Surveys.....	9
Focus Groups.....	9
Community Forums.....	10
Data Collection Summary .....	11
Emerging Themes.....	12
Achievement .....	13
Communication.....	14
Community Partnership.....	15
Culture (Wellness / Respect / Trust).....	16
Engagement .....	17
Equity .....	18
Resources.....	19
Conclusions – Recommendations .....	20
Conclusions .....	20
Recommendations .....	21



---

Appendix A: Online Survey.....	22
Appendix B: Focus Group Protocol .....	31
Appendix C: Data Analysis.....	33
Focus Group Findings.....	33
Online Survey Findings.....	35

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Project Overview

In anticipation of the appointment of a new Director of Education, HWDSB trustees engaged in a comprehensive review of the board's Strategic Directions as well as an effort to find out what HWDSB stakeholders thought about the board and its performance. HWDSB contracted [PCG Education](#) as an impartial third party to conduct this review and provide a written summary of those findings.

PCG Education worked collaboratively with HWDSB to facilitate Focus Groups, a Stakeholder Survey and Community-At-Large Meetings to collect multiple data points and applied an appreciative inquiry lens to analyse findings. In all, there were 120 participants in 18 focus groups representing a cross-section of Board and community stakeholders. 739 people responded to the Stakeholder Survey and 4 Community-At-Large Meetings were held. A brief summary of PCG's findings, conclusions, and recommendations are listed below, and in further detail in this report.

### Findings

#### Emerging Themes

Based on the data collected, 7 key themes emerged<sup>1</sup>.

- ✓ Achievement
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Community Partnership
- ✓ Culture (Wellness / Respect / Trust)
- ✓ Engagement
- ✓ Equity

#### Key Conclusions

1. The current set of Strategic Directions is in alignment with the views of the HWDSB community.
2. Trustees are expected to play an active role in supporting the work of the Strategic Directions.
3. HWDSB will need to address some critical issues in the areas of Culture, Communication, and Resources.

#### Key Recommendations

1. HWDSB should actively engage in the completion of Phase 2 of the Strategic Directions Review process, specifically, planning for successful execution of the Strategic Directions.
2. In pursuit of recommendation #1, HWDSB should incorporate the additional key themes that emerged during the course of this work.

---

<sup>1</sup> Presented in alphabetical order

## BACKGROUND

The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) is an amalgamation of the City of Hamilton and Wentworth County schools. Located in Southern Ontario on the Niagara peninsula, Hamilton encompasses scores of unique neighbourhoods as well as five adjacent communities: Ancaster, Dundas, Flamborough, Glanbrook, and Stoney Creek. As a city, Hamilton's population is in excess of 500,000 citizens, making it not only one of the largest cities in Ontario but across Canada as well. In size, Hamilton ranks 5<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> in Ontario and Canada respectively. In all, HWDSB boasts a staff of 7,000 employees who serve nearly 50,000 students across 108 school sites. A co-terminus Catholic School Board operates an additional 55 schools in the same catchment area.

The city of Hamilton sits on the south shore of Lake Ontario where rising smoke stacks are a lasting reminder of a once-vibrant industrialized steel manufacturing center. Declining demand for domestically produced steel has reduced the economic contribution of the industry to the Hamilton economy. Today, the City of Hamilton is a central hub of business services and is a bedroom community to the greater Toronto area.

In addition to the harbour and significant lakefront, the Hamilton community is also notable for an upper and lower city, both of which are separated by the Niagara escarpment. This distinguishing feature creates physical separations between the inner city, suburban, and rural neighbourhoods. The upper communities are recognizable by residential subdivisions and big box retail stores, while the lower communities are a combination of old architecture, newer high rises, and heavily congested roadways with fewer shopping and retail options.

Post-secondary universities and colleges, most notably McMaster University and Mohawk College, serve the students and communities of Hamilton and surrounding areas.

## REVIEWING STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS: PROJECT ORIGIN

As part of a previous long-range plan, HWDSB developed, adopted and communicated a set of strategic directions that were intended to inform the actions of the board, staff, school communities and students themselves.

### Current Strategic Directions

The following strategic directions have been, and are currently, available to the public on the HWDSB website<sup>2</sup> and are posted in many of the Board's schools.

#### Achievement Matters

- HWDSB will prepare all elementary students to be ready for success at the secondary school level.
- HWDSB will prepare all secondary students to be ready for success in their chosen pathway: apprenticeship, college, community, university or workplace.
- HWDSB will prepare all adult students to be ready for success in their chosen pathway: apprenticeship, college, community, university or workplace.

#### Engagement Matters

- HWDSB will achieve high levels of student engagement in our schools.
- HWDSB will achieve high levels of parent engagement in our school communities.
- HWDSB will maintain and strengthen collaborative relationships with employee groups.
- HWDSB will maintain and strengthen collaborative relationships with community partners.

#### Equity Matters

- HWDSB will ensure equitable resource allocation to schools, staff and students.
- HWDSB will ensure that our diverse learners receive the appropriate programming and support to achieve their full potential.
- HWDSB will provide safe, inclusive and respectful learning environments for all students and staff.

The Board of Trustees is interested in reviewing the alignment between the previously developed strategic directions and the present concerns and priorities of the HWDSB community.

---

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/board/strategic-directions/>



## DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

HWDSB staff, students, and the community-at-large participated in an inclusive process in which they discussed the current state of education in HWDSB, the existing Strategic Directions, and shared their ideas and aspirations for what might be possible in reimagining the future of HWDSB. Contracted by the board, PCG Education facilitators asked participants to imagine their desired future and bluntly told to give the “good, the bad and the ugly”. Bold messaging came from HWDSB trustees to encourage all contributors to “just tell us what we need to hear!” While an appreciative inquiry<sup>3</sup> lens was applied, attendees often framed their contribution as a problem requiring attention. Where practical, some of these ideas are represented as their corollary in an effort to apply a positive focus on solutions and desirable outcomes.

During this work, PCG Education worked collaboratively with HWDSB Trustees to engage as many stakeholders as possible in a discussion regarding:

- What is excellence? What expectations do stakeholders have for excellence in education and how might excellence be achieved?
- How can HWDSB become the premiere or board of choice in the province?
- What changes, if any, to the strategic directions might be most impactful in producing the aforementioned outcomes?

During the collection of data, PCG Education made every effort to be available for conversations and to ensure that the multiple perspectives were heard and represented accurately within the data set. PCG Education offered a range of opportunities for both group and individual involvement. In addition to organized focus groups, individual interviews, and surveys, PCG conducted four (4) regional community forums.

### Data Collection

Data collection in the community began in late May with the launch of the online survey and the facilitation of the first focus groups. Focus groups continued through June 4, 2015 and the survey remained open for public input through June 15, 2015. In total, 120 people participated in 18 unique focus groups and nearly 750 surveys were submitted. Students, teachers, parents, community members, school administrators, and district administrators participated in the process.

Data analysis occurred concurrently with the data collection in an effort to prepare this report and make a draft available to the Board of Trustees on June 23<sup>rd</sup> prior to a formal release on June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

---

<sup>3</sup> In the appreciative inquiry process, the emphasis is on recognising and building upon what is working with a focal point on a shared vision of expectations, rather than just trying to list what may be broken.

Input from a broad and representative set of stakeholder groups was the goal of the data collection effort and as such was designed to provide any HWDSB student, parent, staff and community member ample opportunity to have their individual voice heard in this process. Input was captured from stakeholder groups in several distinct ways. PCG consultants conducted a series of stakeholder focus groups; online surveys, a link to which was provided on the Board website, were available for all to complete and four public community forums were arranged in different neighbourhoods across the district.

### Surveys

Online surveys<sup>4</sup> were used to collect data from constituents across the community. Electronic surveys were made available on the HWDSB website and multiple media releases, emails, and automated telephone calls were used to invite constituents to complete the survey.

The survey was developed in collaboration with the HWDSB Governance Committee, senior HWDSB officials and PCG Education and was designed to provide the respondents with the maximum flexibility to provide the information and feedback that each thought important to share with the board and process.

### Focus Groups

PCG Education worked with HWDSB to identify representative constituent groups with whom to meet. Each group was chosen and individuals invited to attend, pre-scheduled meetings at times that were held in HWDSB central offices or in one of the region high schools.

The report is based on the input of eighteen (18) distinct community-based focus groups, including several groups dedicated solely to professional educators and support personnel in the district. Collectively, one hundred twenty (120) individuals participated in these focus groups.

Focus groups included the following stakeholder groups:

- HWDSB Union Groups (OSSTF/HWETF0)
- Trustees
- School Councils & Home & School – South
- Executive Council
- Child Care Partners
- School Councils & Home & School North
- Student Senate
- School Councils & Home & School West
- Union Groups (CUPE & COPE)
- System Leaders Principal Group

---

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix A: Reimagine Survey Content

- Advisory Groups
- Community Leaders & Partners Group 1
- Community Leaders & Partners Group 2
- System Leaders Admin Group
- Community -At-Large Meeting (South)
- Community Leaders & Partners Group 3
- Community Leaders & Partners Group 4
- Community -At-Large Meeting (West)

While focus group attendees were presented with a series of questions<sup>5</sup> that focused on the current strategic directions and what the future of HWDSB might be, emphasis was placed on allowing attendees to discuss those issues that were of greatest importance to them. The facilitator would rely on the questions to refocus the conversation and to allow for aggregation of data across constituent groups. Frequently, attendees were prompted for additional information, and comments were probed for deeper analysis and causative beliefs when and where appropriate. Individual comments were captured, but not attributed to any one individual—in an effort to preserve the anonymity of participants—by the PCG staff for analysis. Subsequently, these notes have been summarized and categorized by similarity of content and on repeated themes as they emerged.

PCG staff and focus group attendees attended the meetings; no trustee or administration staff attended the information gathering sessions unless they were formally a part of the focus group.

### Community Forums

Community Forums were held across the four regions of the board to meet in open context with community members to receive feedback. In each case, the Board Chair and regional trustees were there to bring greetings from the board and to provide a context for the purpose and scope of the evening. In some cases, the Board Chair and trustees stayed for all or part of the session to hear the feedback.

---

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix B: Sample HWDSB Focus Group Protocol

## Data Collection Summary

Using the three data collection methods described above, scores of data points were collected from the students, staff, community, and other stakeholders of HWDSB.<sup>6</sup> These data—the experiences, perceptions, and expectations of a community—are the foundation of the emerging themes identified in this report.

Data Collection	Number
Surveys	739
Focus Groups	18
Community Forums	4

Irrespective of the collection method, PCG Education examined these data for common and divergent ideas amongst the stakeholders. This report summarizes the data into seven (7) *interdependent* themes. That is, in several cases, a theme may incorporate elements from one or more of the other themes.

<sup>6</sup> See Appendix C: Data Analysis

## EMERGING THEMES

PCG collected and documented feedback from focus groups and surveys. Subsequently, PCG reviewed the data collected in this feedback to identify a set of common themes. When possible PCG quantified data, but many of the questions were open-ended, focused on developing a vision of the future of HWDSB schools against the backdrop of the current strategic directions. Thus, some data are represented quantitatively, while others are represented with excerpted statements from the collected data.

While PCG ultimately identified sufficient evidence to describe seven (7) unique categories or themes, several are related to one another such that they may appear to be interdependent and in some cases even overlap to a degree. This means that a statement categorized by one theme might also appropriately fit within another. Three of the themes mirror the current Strategic Directions. This likely occurred as a result of asking specifically about the current Strategic Directions and reflects an overall attitude about the alignment to current community concerns and interests.

It should be understood that while the themes suggest priorities or areas of focus for the future, they do not, in and of themselves, provide direction for next steps or expected changes in the organization. During the planning process that follows in subsequent phases, overseen by the Governance Committee, this document may provide the needed detail and context to inform the work in those next steps.

The following themes, represented in alphabetic order, were prevalent and consistently represented across the data:

- ✓ Achievement
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Community Partnership
- ✓ Culture (Wellness / Respect / Trust)
- ✓ Engagement
- ✓ Equity
- ✓ Resources

On the following pages, each of these themes is explored in greater detail and illustrated through examples of data<sup>7</sup> collected during each of the aforementioned activities. The examples are not meant to be exhaustive, but rather to illustrate the attitudes, expectations, and current practices as expressed by stakeholders through the multiple data sources.

---

<sup>7</sup> The data sets that are shared in Appendix C showing respondent data for what HWDSB does well and could improve are sample sets and included as representative feedback from the survey.

## Achievement

**THEME: Achievement is perhaps the most sought after component of all plans and work in school systems across North America. At the end of the day, achievement is the proof that learning, work, and growth have taken place. The real dilemma is, just what is the achievement on which we should be focused?**

As is often the case, when we really want to know about something, we should actually ask the group of individuals to whom it is being done to find out what is happening. Such is the case with the data collected from the Student focus group. While others had comments to make about achievement the student group was probably the most poignant. Specifically, one attendee probably put it best when they said, “we don’t want grades to go away but having an emphasis on learning will allow us to feel good about what you are doing and have accomplished!” Surprisingly, the students were the ones who commented on the achievement topics more than any other focus group. In other words, they care deeply about achievement as an aspirational goal, but don’t agree with the narrow way in which it has either been defined or pursued by HWDSB.

Within the online survey, comments were also made that indicated that “Achievement does matter, but in my opinion, it sounds as though we are trying to promote high marks. Students who may achieve success at a different level than others may feel that their achievement is not as valid or celebrated.” In all, when achievement matters, students need to know that their achievements are valued.

Such is the conundrum with the topic of achievement as it evidently caused many to ask the question, “What is the definition of “success” regarding achievement? How do we define achievement and how it is linked with academic success, whole person, health wise, etc.?”

With respect to the Strategic Directions, the topic of achievement while seemingly straight forward and easily understood has yet to be made clear in the minds of many survey takers and several from the focus groups. With that said, there were no notable proponents of dropping the need for achievement, specifically student achievement, from the Strategic Directions or generally from plans going forward. What was most clearly articulated was the need for a balanced approach to what was considered achievement and how that would be measured in the future. For example, some wrote, “Celebrate all types of achievements” as “Achievement should matter for staff AND students. However, others stated, “Testing and scores are less important than the process. The process matters to me as a parent, not the achievement.”

## Communication

**THEME: Communication is a bi-directional process that requires both a communicator and a receiver. Without either party, communication cannot occur. George Bernard Shaw once wrote that the biggest problem in communication is the illusion it has taken place.**

Communication is undoubtedly one of the most frequently named issues that plague any organisation. Large or small, this one item can seemingly either ignite a collective to rise about almost any obstacle or issue or it can leave a vacuum that generally gets filled with a different kind of message that is usually not healthy for the organisation, its leadership or, ironically, the very issuers of the disruptive and damaging message. From a HWDSB perspective, this was one of the themes upon which there were the most comments.

Not surprisingly, there were a range of comments that suggested there was absolutely no information or communication from the board or systems within it, to groups who thought that there were complete systems in place for the provision of up-to-the-minute information. Clearly, the reality for HWDSB lies somewhere between these two sets of beliefs. As noted above, the process of effective communication requires clear, frequent, and effective modes of delivery that come through sources that reach the intended receivers. It also requires active receivers who engage in and pursue the information. There are a myriad of reasons why this process has proven to be difficult for HWDSB, the sender and the HWDSB community, the receiver(s). Regardless of the point of view that is taken, if the messages and information do not reach the intended recipient(s), no matter the cause, the goal of communication is in jeopardy. At least some evidence exists that the problem lies in believing that the act of sending a message, regardless of medium, satisfies the need for more communication.

This need for improved communication was most evident when speaking with School Councils, Community Partners and System Leaders. "Communication from school is NOT effective. We get robo-calls and emails and it is helpful but not enough". "Communication is "not easy and not as simple as translating a document!" Survey takers implored, "More communication with parents!" and perhaps the most troubling of all is when the issue is considered both inside and outside of the board itself. "Communication among employee groups and administration does not exist in any sincere manner" and "people in the board need to stop interfering (are you listening Trustees) and refer parents or community members with concerns to the Principal."

While the above is not an indictment of any individual or group within HWDSB, the data must surely give rise to the need for some consideration of the mechanism, frequency, and transparency that relevant communication is disseminated.

## Community Partnership

**THEME: School–community partnerships are connections between schools and community individuals, organizations or businesses to directly or indirectly promote students’ social, emotional, physical or intellectual development. These partnerships take many forms, from individuals working together to a collective of community groups forming partnerships with entire school divisions.<sup>8</sup>**

The creation of community partnerships is more than just seeking financial support from the surrounding business community and entails more than the perfunctory sharing of news and or initiatives. In the case of HWDSB, true partnership comes from the acceptance of a shared responsibility by all parties for the eventual outcomes of students and arguably, by extension, their families.

During the focus groups, it was stated time and time again that, “the real message is collaboration across the partners” and there must be a “single or common vision for the community” which was to include HWDSB and students who are served there. Not unexpectedly, the Community Leaders and Partners Focus Group were strong advocates for the idea that HWDSB must be “working with the community partners to support kids!”

Focus groups shared stories of how partnerships now are “haphazardly delivered and happens only in pockets.” In fact some of them complained openly about how, “we struggle as community agencies” and further added that, “there is disparity on how we are treated as partners and this makes it hard to provide services.” One example of this was outlined as such, “Principals and the staff at each of the schools have varying understanding of what community means and how that works in the schools. We do much education on how we are not outsiders and are trying to work together!” Further evidence suggests that the successful partnerships are the work of individuals willing to work together, rather than systematic commitment to such relationships. One focus group member pointed out a strong partnership that all but disappeared when the advocate in the building left for another position.

Even within the survey, there were suggestions that HWDSB needs to, “Build partnerships with other governments, services and community groups to - you guessed it - keep schools open!” Additionally, there were suggestions that the board must “Include the broader community in massive decisions, not just small groups of parents. Some decisions effect communities for generations to come, well outside the four walls of the school.”

In the end, HWDSB will need to find more effective ways to allow the community to participate in a “strengths based approach in helping to support the family” and provide service.

<sup>8</sup> <https://education.alberta.ca/media/1260778/ch11.pdf> -Accessed June 20, 2015



## Culture (Wellness / Respect / Trust)

**THEME: "School culture is the set of norms, values and beliefs, rituals and ceremonies, symbols and stories that make up the 'persona' of the school."<sup>9</sup> Similarly, the way in which a board behaves makes up the persona of HWDSB.**

The culture of a school system is representative of the way in which that organization operates in everything from how it communicates to how it values the wellness of its staff, students and school community members. In organisations where this is done well there is respect for all stakeholders and an enduring trust in the leadership. Where this is not well established, all of the above are jeopardised and the issues, wellness, respect, and trust, become the currency with which the organisation is distracted from its mission and vision.

With respect to the culture of HWDSB, focus groups and survey respondents were clear. In particular, it was expressed that HWDSB operates in a "culture of fear". It was expressed that there exists an "oversaturation of Mission / Vision corporate-speak." The Strategic Directions are an "exercise in futility and expense. There are jaded views and a real distrust" of the board and senior administration and "a disconnect between the board and the schools". At the same time, there appears to be a recognition and understanding of how the board needs to be seen. One focus group attendee stated, there is a "de-professionalisation of employees now so any discussion has to be about management facilitating education and then getting out of the way. The board needs to provide the resources and then allow teachers to make the decisions around what happens to kids." One attendee begged, "Respect is a requirement. Give and get. Mutual communication and respect" is a requirement for success.

A survey taker commented that, HWDSB needs to "Return to a culture of responsibility and culture of high expectations if the board is serious about preparing students for post-secondary success." It was cited that in order to achieve this, "Management style/culture (particularly senior administration)" would need to change.

Like communication, the belief that the issues of culture are being adequately addressed by those who are charged with the stewardship of its development does not align with the perceptions of those who are working, supporting, and learning within it.

The data suggest that the organisation culture needs to shift to one focused on success. This means establishing an environment in which there is greater mutual respect and the emphasis is on the outcomes, not the processes. It was pointed out that much energy is spent either covering ones' bases or ignoring issues by pushing them the organisational hierarchy. As one person expressed it, "they need to define what it means to express [professional] respect."

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.educationworld.com/a\\_admin/admin/admin275.shtml](http://www.educationworld.com/a_admin/admin/admin275.shtml) Accessed June 20, 2015

## Engagement

**THEME: In education, student engagement refers to the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning or being taught, which extends to the level of motivation they have to learn and progress in their education.<sup>10</sup>**

The term “student engagement” is oft used in educational circles today and the lack thereof frequently offered up as the reason for poor results and falling levels of student achievement. Whether it be the result of baby boomer parenting, lack of rigour in the curriculum or simply a function of Y-gen youth, the outcome is the same. Almost every adult in North America would suggest that kids today are simply apathetic. Unfortunately and often forgotten in this equation, is the need for the engagement of the professionals, parents and community in achieving those same lofty educational and achievement outcomes. Like it or not, student engagement is directly linked to the engagement levels of those around them. More specifically, they are interdependent.

Focus groups reported with some consistency that, “Engagement is the most important” thing and that when there is engagement, “This will demonstrate trust, needs, respect and cultivate a responsive culture” in which students will be engaged and learn. Still further, it was said that, “To really hit home, we need to make it [engage] with the students and staff.” When we do, staff will “be proud to work with this board. Kids too will be proud.”

Within the survey too, under the sections for improvement, “allowing more parent input and engagement” was recommended while warning that “Disengagement occurs when voice is no longer valued.” Not all of the comments were directed at students either, one parent suggested that, “I think it is really important to improve engagement with employee groups (teachers and other school staff). At this time it is clear they aren't being listened to at our city school. There are many suggestions about what teachers can do (let me tell you that my son's kindergarten teachers can't do any more - I sincerely worry about their own mental health and optimism) but get little help with the implementation of accommodations and strategies.”

No matter the perspective, student, staff, parent, community, it is almost self-evident that an increased level of engagement will no doubt produce more desirable results with a more satisfied HWDSB community of stakeholders.

---

<sup>10</sup> <http://edglossary.org/student-engagement/> Accessed June 20, 2015

## Equity

**THEME: The Ministry of Education for Ontario believes that an equitable, inclusive education system is one in which all students, parents, and other members of the school community are welcomed and respected, and every student is supported and inspired to succeed in a culture of high expectations for learning.<sup>11</sup>**

Like so many boards, HWDSB faces the same problem of defining and adequately pursuing equity. Moreover, there must be attention to equity over equality, which while related are not the same. Simply put, the delivery of the same thing for every child in every school might be equal, but is not equitable. Furthermore, it is not going to bring about the changes necessary to improve student learning to the levels desired by parents, expected by the Ministry and deserved of students.

Within HWDSB it was recognised that, “So diverse is HWDSB, rural and urban, with unique differences in our board, we strive to recognise those differences and support them.” With tremendous regularity, Focus Groups recounted story after story of the challenges of meeting the many needs of students and their families with the limited resources available at one location while coveting those at another.

“Disparity of schools and populations” was a recognised issue by both Union Groups and Community Partners alike suggesting that a one-size-fits-all philosophy was inadequate to meet the needs of the school communities in the HWDSB catchment area. In fact some attendees went as far as to say that, “Diversity is not recognised and no attention is paid to the fact that all students learn differently and so too do teachers.” Clearly, equity was not a concept applied only to students in HWDSB.

Perhaps more troubling were the comments that focused on the disparity not related to students. Some comments were more targeted at the actions (perhaps culture) of the board in calling out inequities between the engagement of staff, “We need downward direction and upward innovation and lately it is only about downward - equity is non-existent.” A survey respondent added that, “The board talks about equity a lot, but in practice, equity gets distorted to mean special policies and accommodations that don't make sense for everyone else.” Another added that, “I don't feel there is equity among all employees. Favouritism is rampant and often those who produce less than quality standard work are rewarded and appeased.”

The data suggests that equity is an issue at both the student and staff levels and will require attention going forward. HWDSB will need to address both of these areas.

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/inclusiveguide.pdf> Accessed June 20, 2015

## Resources

**THEME: Resources, regardless of the type, financial, human or material, are the foundation of educational endeavours. Any effort made without the minimal resources to carry out the mission is almost certainly doomed to fail. In the educational realm, students, teachers, schools and districts all need to be adequately resourced in order to accomplish the tasks with which they are charged. In the absence of those resources, student performance lags, morale dissipates and the district is at risk of falling into lethargy.**

A school system can only be as good as the resources that support it. More precisely, student performance and learning outcomes are driven by the district resources – school staffs; budgets; buildings; and the stuff (computers, textbooks, test tubes, soccer balls, paper, pencils...) of education.

In a bit of a twist, the Student Focus Group had much to say about the need for resources in HWDSB. One student said, “I am not proud of my school because of the condition of the building.” Students were also quick to comment on the need for the “Library should have at least one place where you can work and eat so we can have group work sessions as well as a request for “more extracurriculars and a dedicated person in the school to run extracurriculars at lunch and as after schools programs!” not to mention the disparity in the quality of the buildings.

Not unexpectedly, one of the union groups expressed a concern that there was a “disparity between the salaries of groups” that was not respectful of the roles of the employees and only exacerbated the belief that there was “no equity between employee groups.” Another reported that, “There needs to be more equity in staff resources. There is inequity amongst staff and teaching assignments.”

Survey takers said, “One of the points is that resources are allocated fairly - this is not true as the schools in higher demographic and income areas continue to receive greater benefits than those in the lower city.”

No matter the point of view, the data clearly supports the need for Resources to be included as a consideration for ongoing attention.

## CONCLUSIONS – RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusions

1. The current set of Strategic Directions is not inconsistent with the beliefs, values and aspirations of the HWDSB community
2. Generally speaking, there is almost universal acceptance of what is espoused in the current Strategic Directions under each of the primary topics (Achievement Matters, Engagement Matters and Equity Matters)
3. Trustees will need to play a pivotal role in supporting the work of the Strategic Directions
4. There are critical and mounting issues that will need to be addressed by the newly appointed incoming Director of Education. Specifically, HWDSB will need to:
  - a. Establish a culture in which the senior administration within the board is viewed in a leadership capacity that will allow them to bring pressure and support to the system in a way that is not seen as adversarial or dictatorial
  - b. Determine a more open hierarchical administrative structure that will encourage and support staff, appear more welcoming to parents, and demonstrate greater transparency to the entire school community

As has been previously stated in this document, the major themes that were put forward through the data by Focus Groups, Community Forums and Survey Respondents are as follows:

- ✓ Achievement
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Community Partnership
- ✓ Culture (Wellness / Respect / Trust)
- ✓ Engagement
- ✓ Equity
- ✓ Resources

If these Themes are further subdivided by the current Strategic Directions, they might look something like this:

- ✓ **Achievement Matters**
  - Achievement
- ✓ **Engagement Matters**
  - Communication
  - Community Partnership
  - Culture (Wellness / Respect / Trust)
  - Engagement

✓ **Equity Matters**

- Equity
- Resources

**Recommendations**

Based on the data and feedback collected and analysed through this process, and on the experience PCG Education has had working in this field, PCG Education proposes the following recommendations:

- ✓ That HWDSB reaffirms the three (3) major tenets of the current Strategic Directions. That is, HWDSB embraces each of the following:
  - Achievement Matters
  - Engagement Matters
  - Equity Matters
- ✓ That HWDSB immediately start to plan for ways to address the following themes as part of Phase 2 of the review/development of the Strategic Directions
  - Culture (Wellness/Respect/Trust)
  - Communication
  - Community Partnerships
  - Resources
- ✓ That HWDSB establish specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time bound (SMART) Goals to address each of the above issues
- ✓ That HWDSB develop Measures for each one of the SMART Goals to determine when and if the SMART Goal has been achieved
- ✓ That HWDSB develop Strategies that will address how each of the SMART Goals will be achieved
- ✓ That HWDSB develop individual Action Plans for the how each one of the Strategies will be implemented in order to achieve the SMART Goal

## APPENDIX A: ONLINE SURVEY<sup>12</sup>





---

**Default Question Block**



***Explore HWDSB's Vision and Focus***

Trustees are starting a sweeping review of the Board's vision, focus and strategic directions so we can better serve students, parents and the greater community.

As your elected voice, Trustees are committed to improving the way HWDSB operates.

But before we can move forward, step 1 is to explore our past. We're starting the conversation this spring with the following survey.

This survey was developed to gather your reflection on our current vision, focus and strategic directions. Your open and honest feedback will help set the course toward a Reimagined HWDSB.

**Please complete this survey by June 10, 2015, 4:00 pm**

This survey is voluntary. All responses will remain anonymous and confidential.

Responses are being collected by HWDSB and analyzed and reported on by HWDSB's external partner Public Consulting Group. A report of the findings will be made available to the public in late June 2015.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Heather Miller at 905-527-5092, extension 2279.

Please select one of the following:

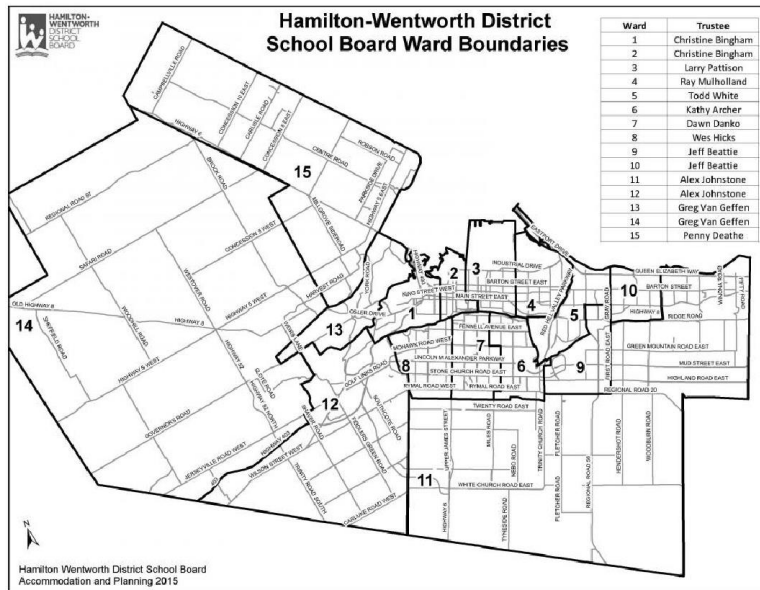
<sup>12</sup> The survey is shown without any question-response logic applied.

I do not belong to an HWDSB Ward (I do not live in Hamilton)

Unsure

I reside in an HWDSB Ward (I live in Hamilton)

Please indicate which Ward you reside in. Please use your mouse to click on the Ward number.



**PART A: About You**

**1. Please indicate which group you belong to:**

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver

Community Group/Member

HWDSB Student

HWDSB Staff Member

Other (Please specify):

**2. Do you have children in an HWDSB school?**

Yes

No



2a. Please indicate the number of children you have in an HWDSB school:

**PART B: About HWDSB's Current Strategic Directions**

**Below is a summary of HWDSB's current Strategic Directions including the Vision, Mission and Values that guide our work.**

Use your mouse to indicate your familiarity with the information below. Please [click](#) on any area of the image that you are familiar with.



Respect, Creativity,  
Excellence, Citizenship

Strategic Directions

**VISION**  
All Students Achieving Their Full Potential

**MISSION**  
Providing relevant, responsive education so that each student becomes a lifelong learner and contributing citizen in a diverse world.

**VALUES**  
Respect, Creativity, Excellence, Citizenship



*Achievement Matters*

- HWDSB will prepare all elementary students to be ready for success at the secondary school level.
- HWDSB will prepare all secondary students to be ready for success in their chosen pathway: apprenticeship, college, community, university or workplace.
- HWDSB will prepare all adult students to be ready for success in their chosen pathway: apprenticeship, college, community, university or workplace.

*Engagement Matters*

- HWDSB will achieve high levels of student engagement in our schools.
- HWDSB will achieve high levels of parent engagement in our school communities.
- HWDSB will maintain and strengthen collaborative relationships with employee groups.
- HWDSB will maintain and strengthen collaborative relationships with community partners.

*Equity Matters*

- HWDSB will ensure equitable resource allocation to schools, staff and students.
- HWDSB will ensure that our diverse learners receive the appropriate programming and support to achieve their full potential.
- HWDSB will provide safe, inclusive and respectful learning environments for all staff and students.

**Do you think the following core commitments need to be updated?**

	Yes, it needs to be updated	No, it should remain the same
<b>Vision:</b> All students achieving their full potential	<input type="radio"/>	
<b>Mission:</b> Providing relevant, responsive education so that each student becomes a lifelong learner and contributing citizen in a diverse world	<input type="radio"/>	
<b>Values:</b> Respect, Creativity, Excellence, Citizenship	<input type="radio"/>	

**What recommendations might you have for how the Vision should be updated:**



What recommendations might you have for how the **Mission** should be updated:

What recommendations might you have for how the **Values** should be updated:

You had indicated the **Vision** should remain the same.

What suggestions might you have for how the **Vision** could be improved:

You had indicated that the **Mission** should remain the same.

What suggestions might you have for how the **Mission** could be improved:

You had indicated that the **Values** should remain the same.

What suggestions might you have for how the **Values** could be improved:

**Do you think the following Strategic Directions need to be updated?**

Please place your mouse cursor on each statement to read further on each area.

	<b>Yes, it needs to be updated</b>	<b>No, it should remain the same</b>
Achievement Matters		<input type="radio"/>
Engagement Matters		<input type="radio"/>
Equity Matters		<input type="radio"/>

**What recommendations might you have for how the Strategic Direction Achievement Matters should be updated?**

**What recommendations might you have for how the Strategic Direction Engagement Matters should be updated?**

**What recommendations might you have for how the Strategic Direction Equity Matters should be updated?**

You had suggested that **Achievement Matters** should remain the same.

What suggestions might you have for how the Strategic Direction **Achievement Matters** could be improved?

You had indicated that **Engagement Matters** should remain the same.

What suggestions might you have for how the Strategic Direction **Engagement Matters** could be improved?

You had indicated that **Equity Matters** should remain the same.

What suggestions might you have for how the Strategic Direction **Equity Matters** could be improved?

**For the following areas please indicate how well HWDSB's work reflects our current Strategic Directions.**

Star Ratings:

★ (1) star indicates that our work does not reflect the current Strategic Directions, while  
★★★★★ (5) stars indicate that our work very much reflects the current Strategic Directions.

Please explain your ratings in the text box next to each area.

Achievement Matters  
(please explain rating):

Engagement Matters  
(please explain rating):

Equity Matters  
(please explain rating):

**PART C: Tell Us How We're Doing**

Please provide examples of areas where HWDSB is doing well:

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:

Example 4:

Example 5:

Please provide examples of areas where HWDSB could improve:

Example 1:

Example 2:

Example 3:



Example 4:

Example 5:

**Please provide any additional information that you feel would help Trustees as we Reimagine HWDSB.**

To submit your final responses please click the Submit button below.

*This survey was prepared by the Evidence-Based Education Services Team (E-BEST), the research service for HWDSB.*

Powered by Qualtrics

## APPENDIX B: FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

### Standard Focus Group – 20 Persons per group

**NOTE:** These sessions are ninety (90) minutes in length

#### **Narrative:**

Trustees are starting a sweeping review of the Board’s vision and focus so they can better serve students, parents and the greater community. As your elected voice, they’re committed to improving the way HWDSB operates. Before they can move forward, step 1 is to explore your past.

Today, we’re starting the conversation a focus group. You may have already participated in the survey and a Community forum. Your open and honest feedback will help set the course toward a reimagined HWDSB. Your Trustees want a fresh vision that HWDSB communities expect, staff require and students deserve.

#### **With that in mind...**

1. What does excellence look like with respect to an exemplary school district or school board?
  - a. What does excellence mean to students?
  - b. How will we know when we have achieved it?
2. What is the one thing you wish the board knew or understood (about you or your group) that would help address the strategic directions?
3. If the board were to select just one Strategic Direction on which to focus, either one that already exists or something completely new, what should that be?
  - a. Why should this be the focus?
  - b. How would this improve the Board?
  - c. How would this help students?
4. How well do these statements describe an aspiration to be best at what we do?
5. To what extent are the decisions made by HWDSB based on these ideas?
6. We are trying to identify several priorities around which HWDSB can grow and prepare for the future.
  - a. We can start the conversation by identifying 3 internal and 3 external factors that might significantly impact the school and the experience of the students? (social change; technological advancements; environment; economic; political)
7. Think of the young people you know. What skills would you like to see them develop in advance of graduating from school in preparation for life after school and in service of the communities into which they might settle?



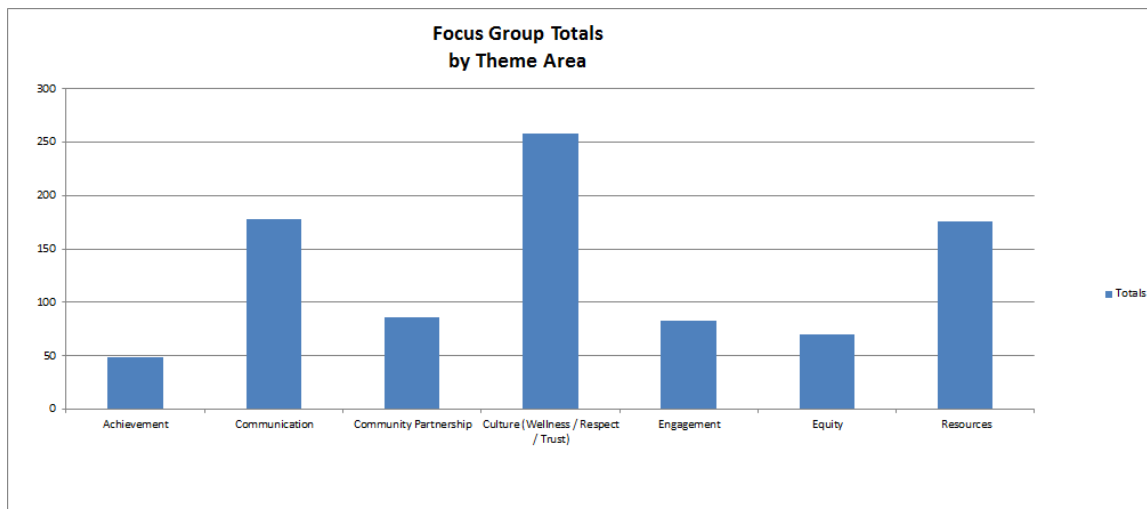


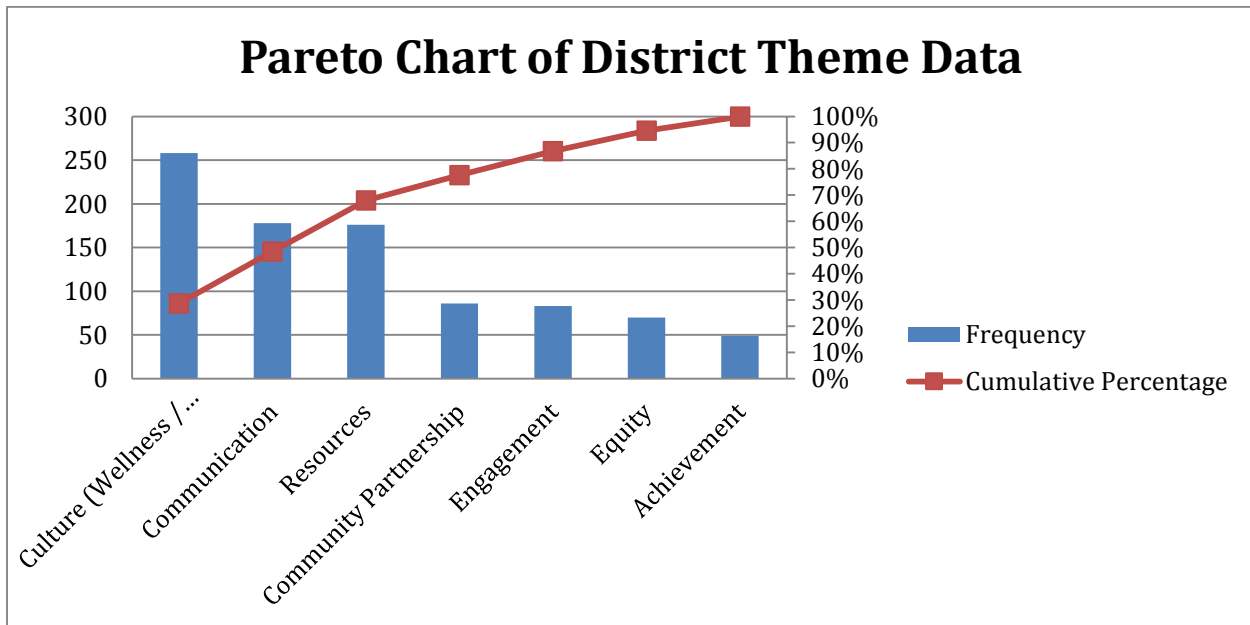
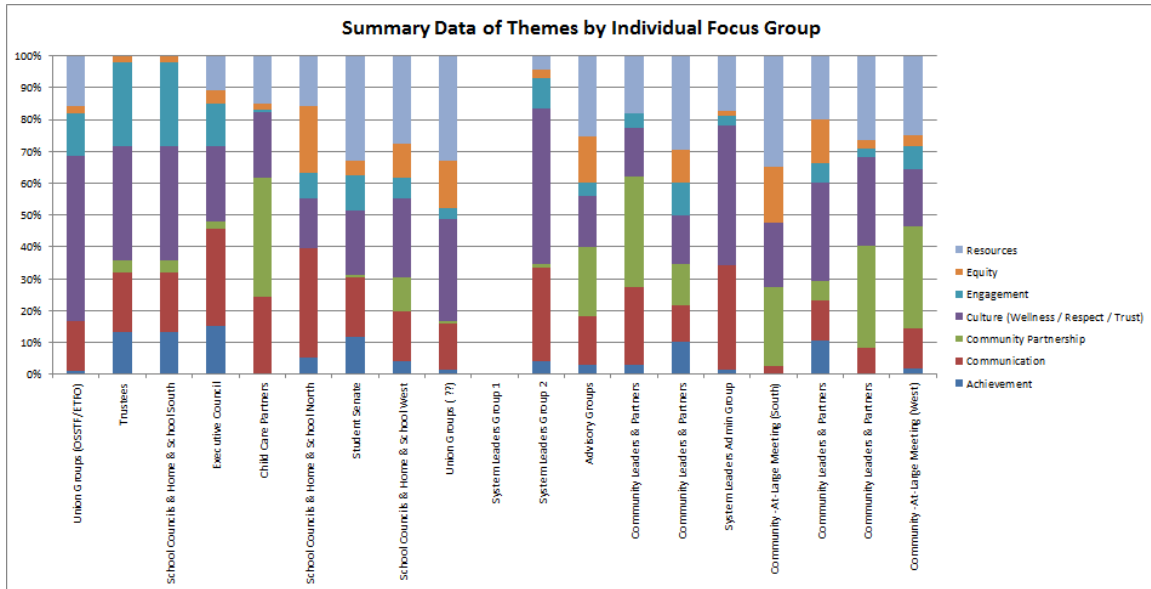
- 
8. If we want to improve teaching and learning—taking it up a notch—what would need to change in our schools? What would stay the same?
    - a. What kinds of goals can we set around each of these?
    - b. What does the board/we need to do to make that happen?
  9. If this video represented typical practices in HWDSB schools, what do you perceive as the benefits, drawbacks? What opportunities/obstacles do you perceive in attempting this or other initiatives in HWDSB?
  10. Final thoughts: What information does the Governance Committee / Trustees need to create and implement your vision of education for the future of HWDSB?
    - a. What is an area which cannot be ignored?

## APPENDIX C: DATA ANALYSIS

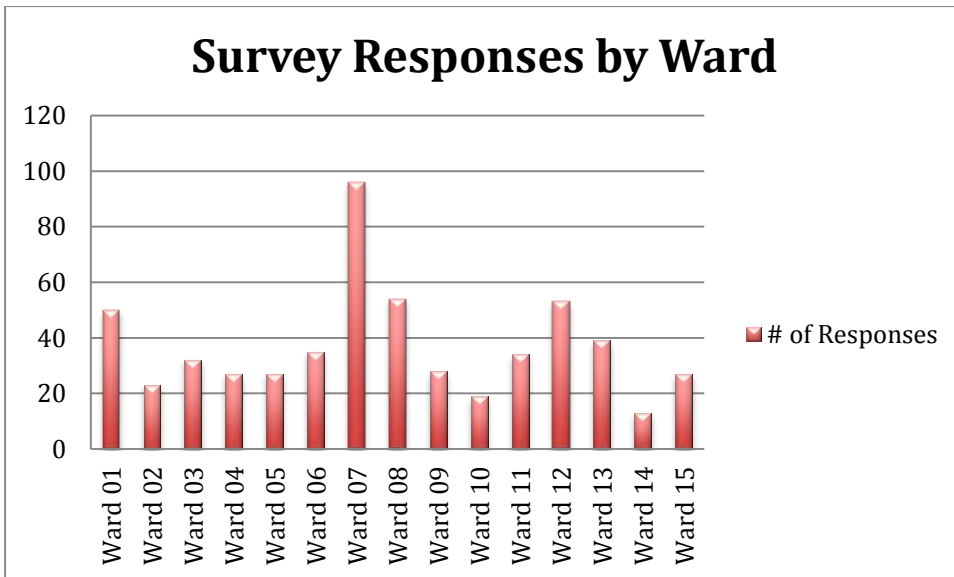
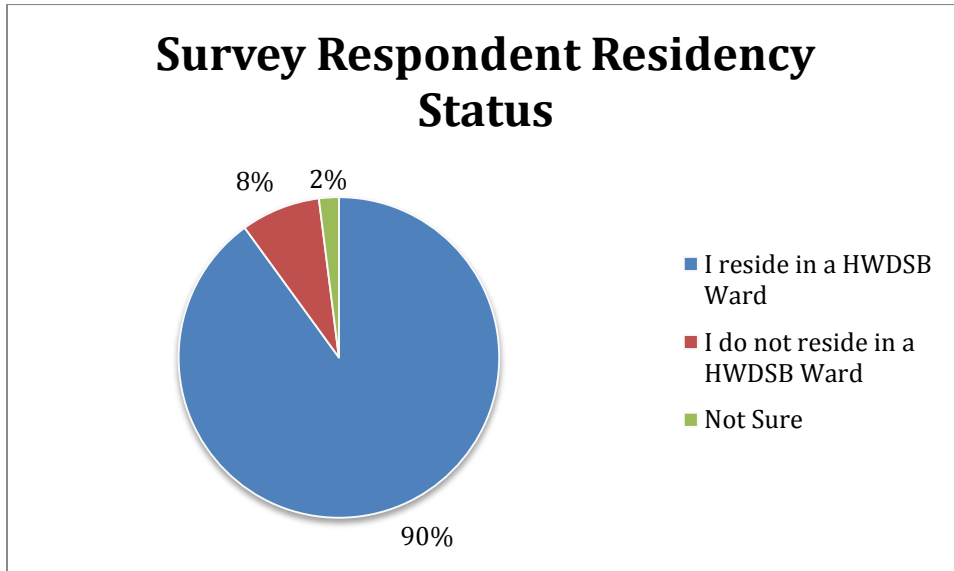
### Focus Group Findings

		Theme Area Totals by Focus Group																			
		Totals	Union Groups (CSSTF/ETFO)	Trustees	School Councils & Home & School South	Executive Council	Child Care Partners	School Councils & Home & School North	Student Senate	School Councils & Home & School West	Union Groups (??)	System Leaders Group 1	System Leaders Group 2	Advisory Groups	Community Leaders & Partners	Community Leaders & Partners	System Leaders Admin Group	Community -At-Large Meeting (South)	Community Leaders & Partners	Community Leaders & Partners	Community -At-Large Meeting (West)
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>120</b>	4	7	4	12	6	1	22	3	5	0	11	7	4	9	7	1	6	5	6
Achievement		49	1	7	7	7	0	2	13	3	2	0	3	4	2	8	1	0	7	0	1
Communication		178	13	10	10	14	26	13	20	12	18	0	21	21	16	9	21	1	8	6	7
Community Partnership		86	0	2	2	1	40	0	1	8	1	0	1	30	23	10	0	10	4	23	18
Culture (Wellness / Respect / Trust)		258	43	19	19	11	22	6	22	19	40	0	35	22	10	12	28	8	20	20	10
Engagement		83	11	14	14	6	1	3	12	5	4	0	7	6	3	8	2	0	4	2	4
Equity		70	2	1	1	2	2	8	5	8	19	0	2	20	0	8	1	7	9	2	2
Resources		176	13	0	0	5	16	6	36	21	41	0	3	35	12	23	11	14	13	19	14

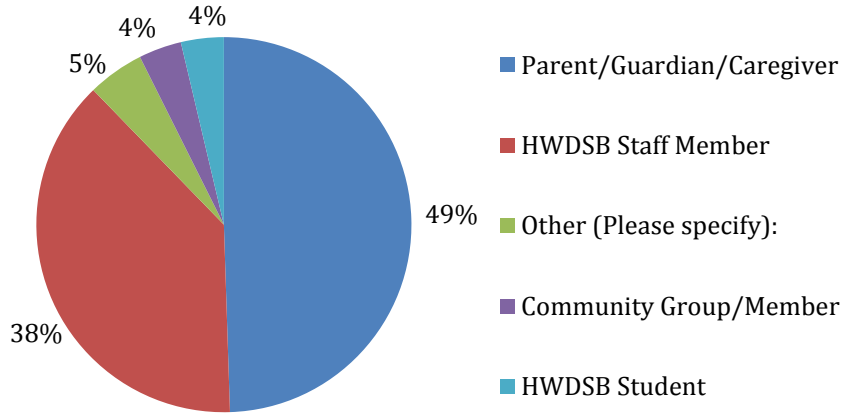




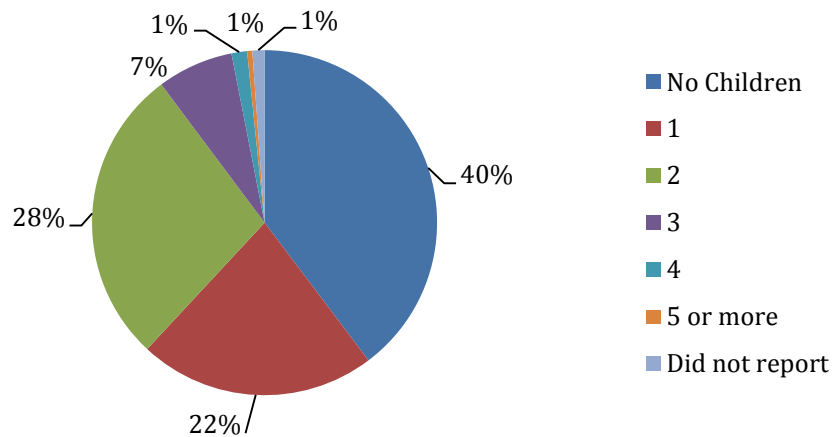
Online Survey Findings



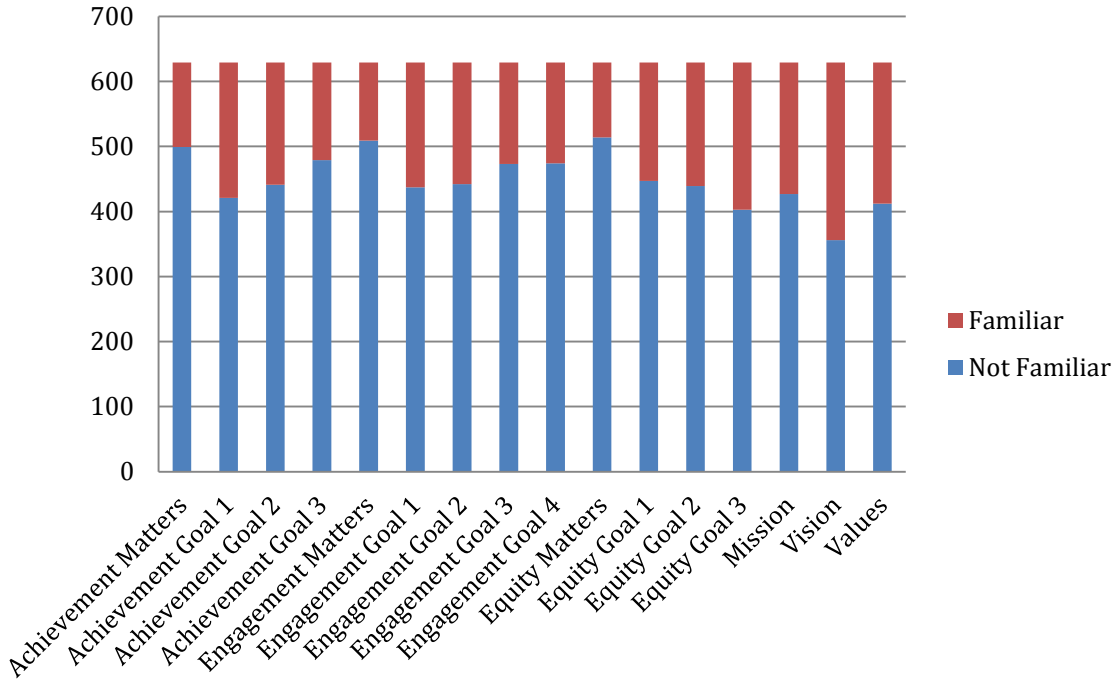
### Survey Responses by Role



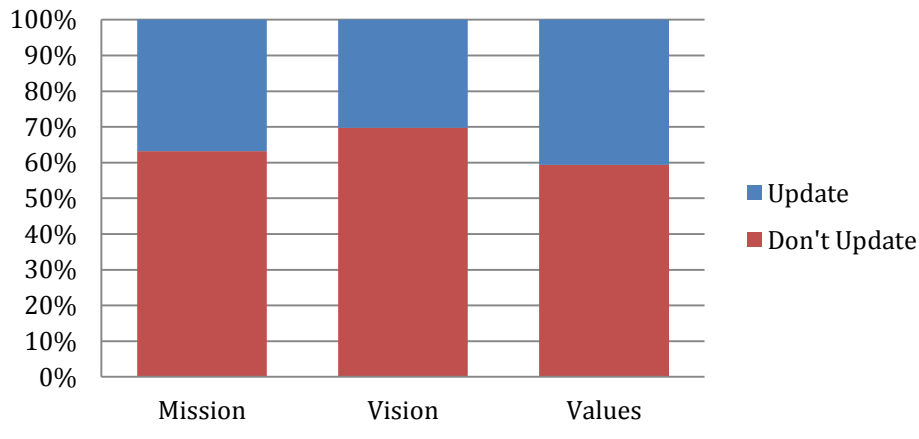
### % of Respondents with Children in an HWDSB School

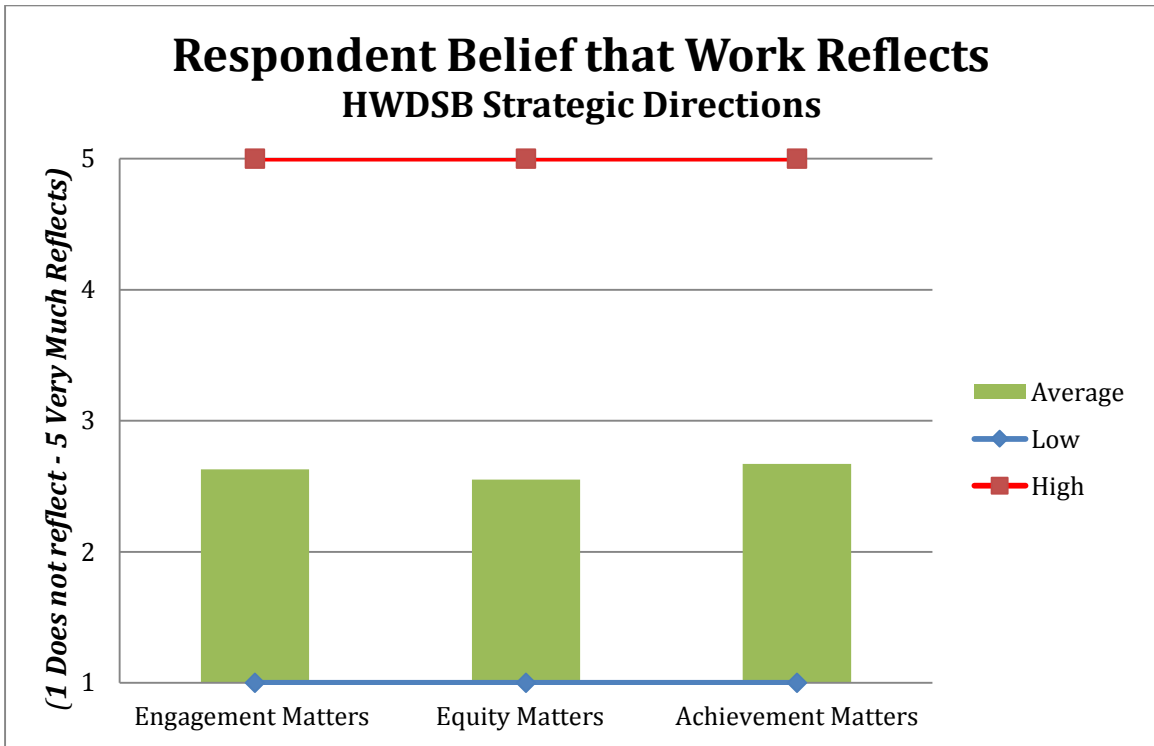
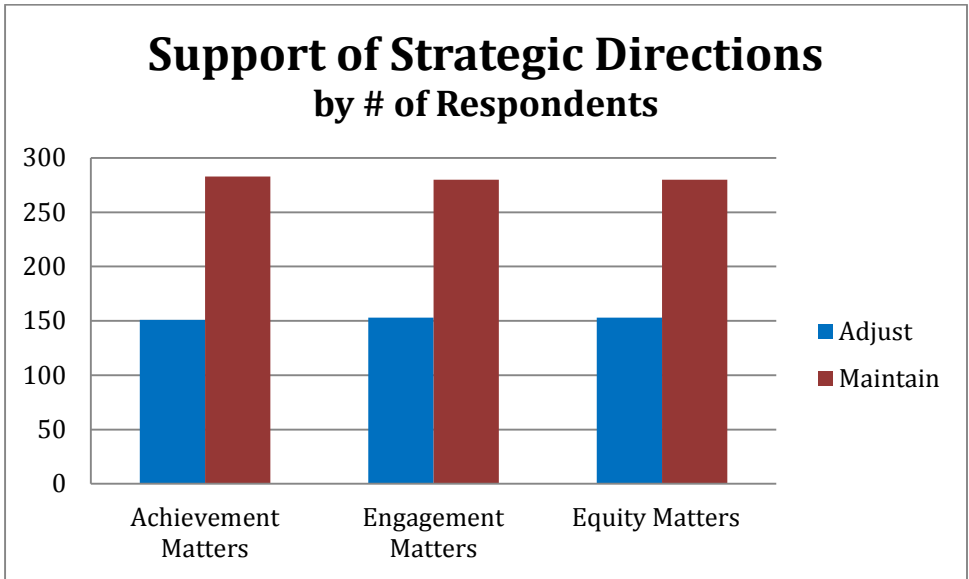


### Respondent Familiarity with HWDSB Strategic Directions Components



### Respondent Need to Change HWDSB Mission, Vision, Values





Please provide examples of areas where HWDSB is doing well:  
(Selected Sample Data)

Example 1:	Example 2:	Example 3:	Example 4:	Example 5:
Outreach and community engagement.	Talent across all work groups.	Student voice initiatives awesome! HWDSB creating conditions for leadership development.	Communication solid.	Extending learning experiences well beyond schools.
Curriculum: I'm very pleased with the curriculum that my children are learning. Lots of time to learn new concepts and my children are excited to go to school every day! Not bad for Grade 8 & 6! Thanks to everyone that works so hard to give the best to my children!	Making learning our business - everyone learning and being accountable for our learning-Principals working together supervised by superintendents to analyse their learning, Principals working with teachers to examine what works best for children and working together with parents to support their children's learning	Creating inequities in high schools through two tiered schools. Allowing any student to attend Westmount lets students leave what is perceived as a lower functioning school. That school now has fewer higher achieving students and fewer resources to support "lower" functioning students. If it is such a valuable program, why doesn't everyone have it????	1 to 1 technology project. HWDSB recognizes the need to transform education so that students can be prepared for the future.	Healthy focus on the arts and creativity -- we have many wonderful plays, dances, music concerts, art events etc. I think that creative people will be incredibly needed in the 21st century...and we need to continue celebrating these folks in addition to the athletes and academics, The Board website, the public one, has a clean and colourful feel to it....which is just one example of creative expression. We have Dance Fest, SHSMs, etc, more so than we had before.
All students being respected	Allowing parents to have a voice for their child's needs	attempting to meet the needs of diverse learners by providing targeted program	an incredibly active parent involvement committee	asking my opinion - waiting to see what comes of it
ALLOWING EDUCATION FOR ALL STUDENTS	Alternative tracts to meet academic requirements in secondary school. e.g. IB, High Skills Specialist etc.	A very caring teaching staff. In all schools I have worked at I have encountered so many dedicated and caring people.	Aboriginal supports for First nation Metis Inuit students and families.	Extracurricular Activities for the students: Giving an abundance of activities for the students to be a part.
Cadillac	At Ryerson, the art teacher and the dedication she gives to her students is outstanding.	Acknowledging that there needs to be many different paths for all of our students to achieve success	Arts programs	Graduation rates are rising



catching the required early learning and doing something about it	being inclusive to all children	activities are engaging and educational	Building a new Ed Centre	having more student engagement and student voice -i.e. student voice forums
Chilled groups for kids who struggle with anxiety	Bringing support services into schools to help students.	adequate extracurricular activities	Community Engagement	Arts
Closing schools so that funding is improved for rest of issues	celebrating student and school success and achievements	all students having access to necessary student services, special education	Community partnerships	Highlighting student achievement
communications have improved online	commons room seem to be working!	Always trying to improve and make it better for all involved in education.	Conducting useless surveys	Inquiry based learning being integrated at various grade levels.
Community	connection to research	Being equitable to all	Cross-curricular teaching embedding all subjects into the learning.	more attention to students
Community engagement	consolidating schools to make more resources better available to more students	Closing old schools and building new schools-- better environment for students & staff	1 to 1 technology project. HWDSB recognizes the need to transform education so that students can be prepared for the future.	More new trustees comprise the current Board which means more new ideas, beliefs and dedication.
constant updating of practices to ensure engagement and opportunities for achievement through PD	Co-op	Completed implementation of Full day Kindergarten.	Ensuring curriculum is taught.	Parents: the send us their best and we do the best to support them. A parent calls out for help and we give them an extension with a voice mail or a brochure that they cannot read to go to a location they can't access.
Creating a safe environment for its students	Each school functions well but I don't really know what the entire board does well.	Cool Little Kids - intervention for parents of shy and withdrawn kids	Excellent school/home communication.	PLC projects a few years ago, e.g. where FSL teachers worked through new ideas in class with instructional leader teachers

Acceptance amongst staff in regards to gender, sexuality, race, etc.	Educational Assistants: they are running from fire to fire. If we had more they could be preventative.	Giving an outside company the duty of holding an impartial survey.	Fairness is not sameness - knowing our students so we can provide the best learning for each students	Principals are in positions to facilitate help when they are motivated to do so.
Decision to postpone accommodation review (ARC) in Ancaster	effective anti-bullying campaign	Developing policy & procedure	Forward thinking with technology	early reading intervention
Embracing the use of technology to engage students in new ways of learning.	Expanding French immersion program in elementary schools	Empowering staff to solve problems and get the work done well.	Pushing for cultural change within the HWDSB to increase transparency and accountability	Putting out surveys like this so you can hear the voice of everyone.
Encouraging and teaching kids about equality, regardless of race, religion or anything else.	finding more content that students are engaged with	Encouraging collaboration between school with events such as Bandfest	having positive school climate within schools (i.e. SJAM Cares and After Dark)	removing vocational schools and have all schools meet the needs of all students
Saying we value your voice and then not listening and responding	Giving every student and worker the same respect they deserve	Evolution of old guard teachers out and new energetic teachers in	HWDSB wants to see their students succeed.	Running the schools.
Engaging all students.	EQAO	Good core education (3 Rs).	increased focus on math	Same
<b>Have made some progress in closing older schools</b>	Extra-curricular activities seem to work well	Extra-curricular programming and community in school buildings.	Lots of opportunities for students to interact with the community whether through extra-curricular activities or school programs.	Multiple communication modes (ie. newsletters from school, updates on school and HWDSB websites, robo calls)
Equity	Has recently increased the level of safety in schools	Strong Character Education programs.	more security	Science programs
especially in elementary, the teachers really seem to care about the children	Hiring teachers that care about the children they have with them every day. (and no, I'm not a teacher)	Extra-curricular activities	music programs	Support for educators to build their capacity around these initiatives (Instructional coaches, consultants)
HWDSB teachers care about students and communicate well with parents.	Learning Supplies	Increasing transportation costs.	Programming for kids with LD is available once they are identified.	providing musical instrument instruction in elementary to all students is great

HWDSB works to offer students the chance to engage with the community	LGBTQ awareness	Inquiry Based Instruction	promoting student well being	providing PD opportunities for staff to enhance learning and leadership
I believe that HWDSB is striving to meet the challenges of its diverse community.	Instrumental Music program	Integrating special needs and services.	Providing financial support for teacher development.	providing release days for teacher learning
I can't think of anything at this time. If I was doing it again, my children would be in the catholic board.	Lots of physical activity time	introducing technology to enhance learning and collaboration	Providing professional development workshop for staff members interested in building on their skills	Public communication, to some extent, but still needs improvement particularly with transparency.
I don't feel that teachers really care, or that they really get to the bottom of issues,	making all high school equal in programming	Keeping up to date on technology where applicable	If I think really hard, I don't think I could come up with one single thing that I believe the HWDSB is doing well!	raising money for things not in their budget
In preparing students for achievement for the workplace.	Mental health initiative - raising awareness	kids get problem solved if parent talk to principle	Secondary school reform being implemented	REALLY KNOW
increasing access to technology in schools (slow, but happening)	More options open to the pathways. The focus was always on university so it is good to see a more balanced approach	Making a good effort in the area of equity-- providing info., seminars and inclusiveness.	Some community engagement	Re-visioning HWDSB
launching a survey	Most of the teachers are excellent.	more trips	Special instructional coaches available for booking and leading PD like FSL coaches	Roots of Empathy is wonderful
Learning teams and networks - system thinking with administrators	Moving toward technological advances	Most of our schools remain safe places for students on a day to day basis.	sports	safe school protocols
Making progress in EQAO scores	my kids feel respected and well treated. i have never heard anything negative about any teacher or staff. very good to see. this is important as kids should feel comfortable so they can focus on school work and not feel stress.	music in all schools (instruments)	Student transportation, but inequities in some areas still exist.	SAGE program (although this program should be expanded and be offered in tandem with the French Immersion program)

**Please provide examples of areas where HWDSB could improve:  
(Sample Data ONLY – Not the full data set)**

Example 1:	Example 2:	Example 3:	Example 4:	Example 5:
Constant teachers and support staff for students with special needs	Accountability for staff - if someone isn't doing their job, they should not get to keep their job	ACTUALLY HAVING SOMEONE CALL HOME NOT ROBOT CALLS	"Preparing kids for higher education - more emphasis on study skills and planning and organizing	Appointing administrators who create positive atmosphere in their school with students, parents AND staff.
Although there are school rules, there is a lack of means of enforcing them--e.g. students in the halls between classes. Although this seems like a little thing, the lack of enforced structure sends a message that it is OK to disregard the structure that is necessary to run a school for 1000 students.	All Administration, both senior and junior management should be required to take a course in actually managing staff. Fear and intimidation are not positive motivators and a staff that are treated with respect and consulted when necessary create happy engaging classrooms.	Allow for more professional judgement from teachers. We want the best for our students. With each new initiative coming from the board our time is put into pleasing our superiors rather than helping students.	Adjust where funding is allocated. Why put 32 million into Sherwood when Barton needs less than half of the improvements. Why spend money to relocate the HWDSB headquarters and old school house when schools are literally falling apart?	Accountability - why are staff allowed to demonstrate disrespect and who do i take these specific concerns to? Who is accountable for addressing issues of staff disrespect to the public?
Already addresses	A better way to get help for students who need it	Accountability of the mission and values.	Accessibility	Accurate attendance reporting.
Better communication across the HWDSB ED center & across the organisation	Allowing administrators to have more say in what is happening in their schools - often directed to much from those at the Board	Allow parents 100% free choice of what school to send their children to. Get rid of all artificial boundaries - size and staff schools accordingly	Board should take-on less initiatives and instead focus on making the ones in place work (ironing out the kinks)	better communication between parent and teacher (agendas not being used enough)
allowing more parent input and engagement	Assign more, and clearer, homework	better infrastructure in schools to support technology	Attendance management	add French in grade 1 or 2
Communication - internal and external	communication with parents, students and employees	Communication between departments and schools	Collaboration	Consolidating schools where necessary
Better EA vetting training and supervision, accountability, less sick days	Board representatives should be available to parents not blocked behind voice mail & computers.	Bussing situation is unacceptable. My daughter was assaulted by another student on the bus.	Bullying (should be a zero tolerance for EVERYONE, NO EXCEPTIONS)	Better policies that are FOLLOWED when abuse and bullying takes place.



<p>Better utilization of assets. E.g. instead of paying higher cost teachers to supervise playground activities, utilize lower cost ECE workers to perform this task. Utilize the assets in a manner that is consistent with the profession versus where an administrator feels fit to use someone.</p>	<p>change that kinder pad, change the kinder pad, our children deserve better than a hot concrete slab with UV pouring down on them with no trees or grass around and in the winter many many of us have fallen dropping our kids off. I know many pregnant moms who slipped on black ice in that pen. It is poorly cared for in the winter. Why is this acceptable when Wynona and other schools have half and half? Disgraceful and unacceptable.</p>	<p>Bring back zeros and failing marks instead of Lower Limits that aren't fooling anyone. If my child earned 10%, then that is what I want so see, not some politically correct code that looks like she earned 30%, and has to be interpreted to be understood to mean she doesn't have a sweet clue about the material covered in the course. Likewise 45% is more informative than code 40 interpreted that some further evidence of learning is needed.</p>	<p>Caretaking. Caretakers are absent more than any other employee in the HWDSB. There are too many weak caretakers that do not do an adequate job and use too many of their days (sometimes over 100+ days off in one school year). The HWDSB is losing major money in this department. Employees spend more time on a break than working and the work they produce is bare minimum or skipped altogether</p>	<p>Create a vision for growth. We can't keep closing schools in the inner city area (mountain &amp; lower area) and build schools on the fringes of the city. What will happen in 20 years when the core is populated again with children? How will they walk to school? I understand this costs money but land needs to be kept for the future use of schooling.</p>
<p>Better communication between the school and board and parents especially at the secondary level. This could be done via email, phone or even printed material.</p>	<p>better direction regarding assessment and evaluation (use gradebook and overall expectations)</p>	<p>Continue to provide a variety of ways for students to share their learning - continue the TLE initiative to increase ways for students to communicate their learning and their needs</p>	<p>Buildings need - outdoor classrooms, social hub, gallery spaces to showcase kids work</p>	<p>As a tax payer and a parent I feel powerless to make changes in our school board</p>
<p>Build High Schools that attend to current learning needs, rather than the antiquated buildings we find ourselves in</p>	<p>Closer monitoring of academic departments in secondary school; correcting trends of poor grades in classes from semester to semester</p>	<p>Build partnerships with other governments, services and community groups to - you guessed it - keep schools open</p>	<p>Change the curriculum to be more creative, and help children succeed in a more individual environment</p>	<p>Board needs to listen to parents and communities - schools are for our children. You really don't know better</p>
<p>Bullying of staff by Principals</p>	<p>Bring back Family Studies and Shop/Technical classes for Elementary students.</p>	<p>Budget more money for behaviour supports, i.e., more EAs</p>	<p>Choosing priorities in regards to use of budget (i.e. revitalization, text book needs, etc.)</p>	<p>Communication systems throughout the Board are terrible and need to be improved immensely.</p>
<p>Caretaking/Maintenance (something needs to be done about the sick time, overtime and lack of cleanliness in many schools). This department is hurting our Board, our staff and our students</p>	<p>As a long-time employee, I was disrespected this past year, lied to, and treated unfairly. It is my wish that after I retire, things will improve here for other dedicated employees.</p>	<p>Claiming that all schools are equal and forcing students to attend their home school, except for "special" programs like sports academy or self-paced creates inequity. If it is good for some schools, then it is good for all.</p>	<p>Bring in real world employers to advise on the foundation that is important in education. Not just academics but also life skills like keeping commitments, being on time.</p>	<p>Bring back supervised lunch room. No more children supervising children while eating. Build some lunchrooms in the schools where the kids can heat up their lunch and sit at a proper table...not at their desk for 6 hours/day.</p>



Demand students treat school as their job. Attendance, punctuality and doing the assigned work are not optional- It's boiling is not a good reason to be truant, tardy, or slothful.	Disciplinary action for principals actions, and guarantees to follow through when they have stated...Wow your kid sounds like a handful....at a board intake meeting	Consider meaningful consequences for behavioural problems, as those students affect the learning of other students.	Commit more to building maintenance and renovations (rather than tearing down schools)	Centralizing Purchasing to eliminate schools wasting money on initiatives that don't complement the board direction
clear, precise expectations around instruction	Clearer communication across the system	continue roll out of technology in more areas	communication and alignment amongst departments	Consistency. All kids treated equal good or bad
Classes	deal with overcrowded kindergarten classrooms	Communication	Cleanliness of schools	Curriculum
communication to all stakeholders	continue with strong leadership from the top	communication within schools	Dealing with favouritism / white bias	depend less on fund raising initiatives
Communication - to collaborate effectively we need timely communication about what we are learning - PLTs have been effective, teachers working together to improve their practice works - need structures and electronic tools	Discipline in the schools seems to be an ever growing problem. My children complain about the fact that they see people getting in fights in the hallways, doing drugs, or swearing at teachers and nothing is being done. Rather they just get more privileges and less work than others that are doing well. Often my child will talk about how they don't feel safe at times in the school because the students run the schools, not the administrators.	Communication - people in the board need to stop interfering (are you listening Trustees) and refer parents or community members with concerns to the Principal. When Trustees and SOSAs engage with parents they empower the parents but pull the rug out from under the Principal. Don't take calls unless you have confirmed that the parent/community member has discussed their concern with the Principal first.	cooperation between schools, particularly high schools, instead of competition - competition and school pride is fine in the sports arena, but not helpful when it comes to programming and special events	Charge parents for the privilege of publicly funded private school. If French Immersion parents do not accept fully shutting down French Immersion - turn it in to a for profit system where money can be used to benefit non-French Immersion schools and offset the damage caused by the French Immersion program. At the very least it is only fair that French Immersion parents pay their fair share - so at a minimum fees could be to recover the extra costs of French Immersion so that regular program students are no longer subsidizing French Immersion.
developing character and mental health of students so they develop into caring individuals	collaboration/communication with parents as partners from kindergarten to high school	decisions are not transparent and explained well to frontline staff	Create policies that force students to be more responsible in terms of attendance & deadlines.	communicate budget challenges regarding enrolment/closures before making decisions



education seems more about what teachers, staff and minorities want than educating the children	Do something about inept principals who continue to negatively affect positive and effective school climate.	Don't pursue mental health strategy without focus on poverty.	Discipline policy. Schools where no discipline is delivered from the principal yet teachers, E.A.s and other students are being hit, bitten, etc.	Continue to support early reading intervention - provide interventions and support teachers to implement them as part of daily instruction
Disconnect between schools and board- It seems like we are two completely separate entities. There is so little in the way of real communication between teaching staff and people at the board. Top down administration is part of this. There is a feeling that people at the board spend much of their time 'slapping each other on the back' for their work, when so little of it has any real impact on the classroom. Teachers have a feeling that board staff has little to no idea what is really going on in schools-nor do they want to. This is a disaster for our system. Superintendents need to get into schools in a NON-THREATENING WAY. Get in to schools often. Leave the power suits at home. Learn about the real concerns in schools. Don't dismiss us as whiners and complainers.				
deal with the actual issues that really affect students, i.e. poverty, bullying in a meaningful way rather than just developing statements and policy	Don't allow your senior administration and Trustees to bail like they did this past year. Make them stay and deal with the decisions they had made instead of dumping it into the lap of incoming Trustees and the new Director of Education.	Ensuring neighbourhood schools are maintained and kept open to promote a sense of community and keep kids walking and biking to school instead of using buses	do SOMETHING to control student behaviour - it is atrocious and disruptive and disrespectful, should not be allowed - we need more DISCIPLINE and STRUCTURE in schools	Discipline procedures-following through with consequences. Safe schools should mean safe for everyone, not just students with difficulties.
Decision-making needs to be more inclusive of parent and student voices	ensure enough janitorial staff is available at all locations	ensuring specialized skills are present within specialized programming by all staff	Embrace the many beautiful cultures in our city.	Decisions should be based on research and facts - and should take the entire system into account.
Decisions of staffing based solely on a Principal's personal preference rather than qualifications or experience.	ensure that both secondary and elementary schools are equally represented in high level board posts	Finish the ARC processes so that students don't have to continue to attend dilapidated schools	encourage your principals and staff to be more involved	Equalize spending across the board - based on student enrollment, not geography.
Downsize admin at the board level. Each sends out directives without realizing the other department's directives.	ensuring teachers receive training needed to effectively implement technology	ensuring there is enough support staff to service the technology	Ensuring the right teachers/EA's are in the right positions - best fit, not "just because"	don't close all the high schools
Don't hold grudges or get stuck on a certain idea. Allow yourselves to be open to criticism or better ideas. Challenge each other respectfully and dear long serving trustees, we can tell when your knickers are in a twist. Poker faces are better. Shake hands at the end of your long meeting and lift each other up along with staff. Don't be afraid to ask staff follow up questions or to suggest the answer given is insufficient or not good enough. Demand better of your staff. We all know they are capable but we all sometimes need a push to become better. How many grants is HWDSB applying for on an annual basis? I hear the Catholic board has 1 staffer designated to grant writing and receive millions in funding from this one staff enhancement. Are we doing that? If not why?				