

MONDAY, MARCH 18, 2013

6:30 pm

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest
4. Minutes
 - A) February 4, 2013
 - B) February 11, 2013

R. Barlow

ACTION ITEMS

5. Living Wage
6. Consultation Results of the Board Priorities to Guide Budget Development

MONITORING ITEMS

7. District Mental Health Strategy

8. Public Questions for Clarification
9. Adjournment

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Upcoming Public Meetings</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
Policy Working Sub-Committee		Thursday, March 21, 2013	6:00 p.m.	100 King St W - 6th Floor - Room E
Special Information Meeting		Monday, March 25, 2013	6:00 p.m.	City Hall - Council Chambers
Board		Monday, March 25, 2013	7:30 p.m.	City Hall - Council Chambers
Special Education Advisory Committee		Wednesday, March 27, 2013	7:00 p.m.	Helen Detwiler School - Library
Special Information Meeting		Monday, April 8, 2013	7:00 p.m.	City Hall - Council Chambers
Parent Involvement Committee		Tuesday, April 9, 2013	6:30 p.m.	Central School - Gym
Finance		Wednesday, April 10, 2013	12:00 p.m.	Standard Life-120 King St W Room5
Committee of the Whole		Monday, April 15, 2013	7:00 p.m.	City Hall - Council Chambers
Special Board		Monday, April 15, 2013	9:45 p.m.	City Hall - Council Chambers
Governance		Tuesday, April 16, 2013	6:00 p.m.	100 King St W - 6th Floor - Room E
Policy Working Sub-Committee		Thursday, April 18, 2013	6:00 p.m.	100 King St W - 6th Floor - Room E
Special Education Advisory Committee		Wednesday, April 24, 2013	7:00 p.m.	Helen Detwiler School - Library
Board		Monday, April 29, 2013	6:30 p.m.	City Hall - Council Chambers

Meeting times and locations are subject to change. Please refer to our website for the latest information.

www.hwdsb.on.ca/aboutus/meetings/meetings.aspx



Minutes of the Special Committee of the Whole

Monday, February 4, 2013

PRESENT:

Trustees: Judith Bishop (Wards 1&2), Tim Simmons (Chair of the Board, Ward 3), Ray Mulholland (Ward 4), Lillian Orban (Ward 7), Wes Hicks (Ward 8), Alex Johnstone (Wards 11 & 12) and Jessica Brennan (Ward 13). **Student Trustees** Alexandra Ewing (Highland School), Sydney Stenekes (Parkside School).

Administration: Dr. John Malloy, Ken Bain, Vicki Corcoran, Krys Croxall, Manny Figueiredo, Dr. Mag Gardner, Don Grant, Peter Joshua, Pam Reinholdt, Pat Rocco, Scott Sincerbox and Sharon Stephanian.

REGRETS:

Trustees: Todd White (Ward 5), Laura Peddle (Ward 6), Robert Barlow (Vice-Chair, Wards 9 & 10) and Karen Turkstra (Wards 14 & 15).

Administration: John Laverty.

1. Call to Order

Trustee Barlow was away so Tim Simmons acted as Chair Pro Tem. He called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m., welcoming everyone.

2. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: J. Brennan
Seconded by: L. Orban

That the agenda be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Student Trustees Ewing and Stenekes voted in favour.

3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Trustee Mulholland declared a possible conflict for interest for Action item #5 (2012/2013 Revised Operating Budget), noting he would not be participating in the debate and voting.

4. Consent Agenda: Year-End Financial Report - August 31, 2012

Moved by: J. Brennan
Seconded by: L. Orban

That the Year-End Financial Report - August 31, 2012 be received.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Student Trustees Ewing and Stenekes voted in favour.

ACTION ITEMS:

5. 2012-2013 Revised Operating Budget

Moved by: J. Bishop
Seconded by: J. Brennan

That the Board approve the 2012/2013 Revised Operating Budget in the amount of \$506,286,676 and that the Superintendent of Business and Treasurer be authorized to proceed with the expenditure of funds as outlined in Appendix A.

Denise Dawson (Manager of Budget) presented the report, noting the key changes outlined in Appendix A.

To the motion,

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. (Trustee Mulholland abstained from voting.)
Student Trustees Ewing and Stenekes voted in favour.

6. Key Parameters/Assumptions to Guide 2013/2014 Budget Development

Moved by: J. Bishop
Seconded by: A. Johnstone

That the Board approve the Parameters and Assumptions outlined in Appendix A dated January 14, 2013 to guide the 2013/2014 Budget Development.

Superintendent Grant reviewed the salient details of the report.

To the motion,

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Student Trustees Ewing and Stenekes voted in favour.

7. Code of Conduct Policy

Moved by: J. Bishop
Seconded by: J. Brennan

That the Student Code of Conduct Policy and Policy Directive be approved pending no changes as a result of the forthcoming Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM).

Superintendent Reinholdt presented the key highlights of the report.

To the motion,

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Student Trustees Ewing and Stenekes voted in favour.

8. Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy

Superintendent Reinholdt presented the salient details of the report.

Moved by: J. Bishop
Seconded by: W. Hicks

That the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy and Policy Directive be approved pending no changes as a result of the forthcoming Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM).

Trustee Bishop advised that this policy has been refined to reflect legislated changes which further enhanced the previously approved policy.

To the motion,

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Student Trustees Ewing and Stenekes voted in favour.

MONITORING ITEMS:

9. Gatestone/Mount Albion Boundary Review

Superintendent Figueiredo presented the report, noting that the Board-approved boundary strategy received support from both school communities. Daniel Del Bianco, Senior Facilities Manager was in attendance to assist in responding to questions.

The Chair thanked Superintendent Figueiredo and D. Del Bianco for their time and efforts.

10. Director's Annual Report

The Director introduced the report. Jackie Penman, Corporate Communications Manager, presented the key highlights along with Mark Taylor, Communications Officer.

In response to Trustee questions, the following clarifications were provided:

- This report is posted on HWDSB's website with the link sent to the Ministry of Education for information.
- Corporate Communications' virtual Blackboard and school newsletters are key communication tools for this annual report. The information is fed through HWDSB's website before this can be disseminated to various social media.
- The Director's Annual Report was presented to the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce for the first time in September 2013. This will now be an annual occurrence.

The Chair thanked the Director, J. Penman and M. Taylor for their efforts.

11. Board Budget Priorities for Consultation Purposes

Superintendent Grant presented the report, acknowledging the collaborative efforts of Corporate Communications, E-Best and Finance.

The Chair thanked Superintendent Grant and other staff involved in this undertaking for their efforts.

12. Safe and Equitable Schools Report

The Director provided a brief overview and thanked Superintendents Reinholdt and Stephanian for their collaborative efforts with this report.

Superintendents Reinholdt and Stephanian spoke on their respective areas in the report. The support from Superintendent Joshua and E-Best was acknowledged.

In response to Trustee questions, the following clarifications were provided:

- The Director affirmed HWDSB's vision of providing inclusive support to all students across the system in a holistic way without losing sight of specific issues.
- Many HWDSB students have expressed clearly, through the student forums, what kind of culture they want in their schools.
- Student Trustees Ewing and Stenekes agreed that the students are very involved, particularly with the bullying issue, have gathered and reviewed considerable information and provided excellent and relevant feedback.
- The HWDSB TipOff mobile App is still under review with a launch date scheduled for February 19th.
- There is a tracking mechanism (facilitated by school and social work services staff and parents) for expelled students.
- School principals monitor the number of students participating in social justice circle program and maintain tracking records in terms of student behaviour improving or continuing.

The Chair thanked Superintendents Reinholdt, Stephanian and all staff involved in the report for their efforts.

13. Public Questions for Clarification - None received.

Moved by: J. Brennan
Seconded by: J. Bishop

That the meeting be adjourned, this being done at 7:27 p.m.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Student Trustees Ewing and Stenekes voted in favour.

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Minutes of the Open Committee of the Whole

Monday, February 11, 2013

PRESENT:

Trustees: Judith Bishop (Wards 1&2), Tim Simmons (Chair of the Board, Ward 3), Ray Mulholland (Ward 4), Todd White (Ward 5), Laura Peddle (Ward 6), Lillian Orban (Ward 7), Wes Hicks (Ward 8), Robert Barlow (Vice-Chair, Wards 9 & 10), Alex Johnstone (Wards 11 & 12), Jessica Brennan (Ward 13) and Karen Turkstra (Wards 14 & 15). **Student Trustees** Alexandra Ewing (Highland School) and Sydney Stenekes (Parkside School).

Administration: Dr. John Malloy, Ken Bain, Vicki, Corcoran, Krys Croxall, Manny Figueiredo, Dr. Mag Gardner, Don Grant, Peter Joshua, John Laverty, Pam Reinholdt, Pat Rocco and Scott Sincerbox.

REGRETS:

Administration: Sharon Stephanian.

1. Call to Order

The Chair of Committee of the Whole, Robert Barlow, called the meeting to order at 6:48 p.m., welcoming everyone.

2. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: W. Hicks
Seconded by: A. Johnstone

(Trustee Brennan was not in the room during the vote.)

That the agenda be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Student Trustees Ewing and Stenekes voted in favour.

3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Trustee Turkstra advised of a possible conflict of interest on item 7 (Education Development Charges), noting she would not be participating in the debate nor the voting on the recommended action in the report.

ACTION ITEMS:

4. Report of the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Moved by: J. Bishop
Seconded by: A. Johnstone

That the following Report of SEAC be approved:

Correspondence:

CNIB re Representation on HWDSB SEAC

It was moved by J. McEwen-Hill, seconded S. Starr: That April Benner and Susi Owen be appointed the new main and alternate representatives, respectively, of CNIB on SEAC during the 2010-2014 membership term.

CARRIED.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

(Trustee Brennan was not in the room during the vote.) Student Trustees Ewing and Stenekes voted in favour.

5. Strategy in Response to Capital Funding Announcements

The Director gave an overview of the report and Dan Del Bianco, Senior Facilities Officer, discussed the salient details.

Trustee Brennan returned to the meeting.

Moved by: T. Simmons
Seconded by: W. Hicks

- 1) That the Chair of the Board send a letter to the City of Hamilton Mayor and local ward councillor to ascertain the City's willingness to commit, through a Memorandum of Agreement to be executed no later than March 27, 2013, to a joint venture with HWDSB for a joint civic/recreational/educational precinct within the Pan Am Precinct (between Lottridge, Barton, King and Gage Streets).
- 2) That the Board approve the attached Capital Priorities Cash Flow Analysis (Appendix A) for the six projects approved by the Board through the accommodation review process and capital priorities submission.

Trustee Mulholland requested that the clauses be voted on separately.

The trustees' concerns pertaining to recommended actions for G. R. Allan School Addition, Dalewood School Renovation and Highland Secondary School Renovation (clause 2) were noted as follows:

- With the combined \$19 million renovation costs for G. R. Allan and Dalewood Schools, it may be more cost effective to build a new school.
- A perception of inequity is likely with the proposed capital priorities plan. The report could set a precedent.
- How the Board spends its funds should be revisited.

Trustees who were supportive of clause 2 noted that the proposed capital priorities plan resulted from the approved Board decision during the ARC process.

In response to Trustee questions, the following clarifications were provided:

- The recommended action is time sensitive in terms of Ministry deadline and project completion timelines.
- A large portion of the renovation costs for the three schools represents "legacy costs" -- these costs remain constant in all accommodation reviews and it is in the Board's best interest financially to do these maintenance renovations while the walls are open.
- This report is focused on timeline relative to Board direction around the ARC process while decision pertaining to program strategy will be dealt with at the next report forthcoming to the trustees. A more comprehensive report which provides a bigger picture will be brought to the committee in June 2013.

To address some in-camera items relative to the report,

Moved by: J. Brennan
Seconded by: T. Simmons

That the committee move to in-camera session, this being done at 7:57 p.m.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Student Trustees Ewing and Stenekes voted in favour.

The open session resumed at 8:25 p.m.

Moved in amendment by: K. Turkstra
Seconded by: L. Peddle

That the recommendations for new schools be approved and the renovation recommendations be referred back to staff.

The vote was recorded and the motion was **LOST** on the following division:

FOR:	Trustees Brennan, White, Orban, Turkstra, Peddle.	(5)
OPPOSED:	Trustees Johnstone, Hicks, Mulholland, Simmons, Barlow, Bishop.	(6)
ABSTENTIONS:	None.	(0)

Student Trustees Ewing and Stenekes voted in favour.

Moved in amendment by: K. Turkstra
Seconded by: L. Peddle

That clause 2 be referred back to staff.

Trustees supporting the referral motion would like staff to revisit the legacy costs and confirm if these are cost-efficient use of funds.

It was clarified that the referral will not permit administration to move further into the next stages around secondary schools.

Trustee Mulholland challenged the Chair for accepting the referral motion given that the decisions for G. R. Allan and Dalewood Schools were already approved during the ARC process.

The Chair stated that the intent of the referral motion was to deal with the legacy costs.

The Director called the vote.

The vote was recorded and the Chair's rule was **UPHELD** on the following division:

FOR:	Trustees Brennan, Johnstone, White, Barlow, Turkstra, Peddle.	(6)
OPPOSED:	Trustees Hicks, Orban, Mulholland, Simmons, Bishop.	(5)
ABSTENTIONS:	None.	(0)

Student Trustees Ewing and Stenekes voted in favour.

The referral motion was put to a vote.

The vote was recorded and the motion was **LOST** on the following division:

FOR:	Trustees White, Orban, Mulholland, Turkstra, Peddle.	(5)
OPPOSED:	Trustees Brennan, Johnstone, Hicks, Simmons, Barlow, Bishop.	(6)
ABSTENTIONS:	None.	(0)

Student Trustees Ewing and Stenekes voted in favour.

The following amendment motion was moved by Trustee Johnstone, seconded by Trustee Brennan but after some thought withdrawn by the mover, with the Chair's permission:

That consideration of the capital projects be split: North/South Secondary Schools and Schools for Renovations (Highland Secondary, G. R. Allan and Dalewood Elementary Schools)

Moved in amendment by: A. Johnstone
Seconded by: K. Turkstra

That the recommendations for Highland Secondary School, G. R. Allan and Dalewood Elementary Schools be referred back to staff for further review with input from the Finance Advisory Sub-Committee.

In response to Trustee questions, the following clarifications were provided:

- Staff will be able to itemize the legacy costs for trustees.
- Delaying legacy costs will cost the Board more money.

The amendment was put to a vote.

The vote was recorded and the motion was **LOST** on the following division:

FOR:	Trustees Brennan, Johnstone, White, Turkstra, Peddle.	(5)
OPPOSED:	Trustees Hicks, Orban, Mulholland, Simmons, Barlow, Bishop.	(6)
ABSTENTIONS:	None.	(0)

Student Trustees Ewing and Stenekes voted in favour.

Clause 1 of the original motion was put to a vote.

The vote was recorded and the motion was **CARRIED** on the following division:

FOR:	Trustees Brennan, Johnstone, Hicks, White, Orban, Simmons, Barlow, Bishop, Turkstra, Peddle.	(10)
OPPOSED:	Trustee Mulholland.	(1)
ABSTENTIONS:	None.	(0)

Student Trustees Ewing and Stenekes voted in favour.

Clause 2 of the original motion was put to a vote.

The vote was recorded and the motion was **CARRIED** on the following division:

FOR:	Trustees Brennan, Johnstone, Hicks, Orban, Simmons, Barlow, Bishop.	(7)
OPPOSED:	Trustee White, Mulholland, Turkstra, Peddle.	(4)
ABSTENTIONS:	None.	(0)

Student Trustees Ewing and Stenekes were opposed to the motion.

6. Long-Term Facilities Master Plan – Accommodation Strategy Schedule

D. Del Bianco introduced the report. Using PowerPoint, E. Warling reviewed the proposed timelines and planning areas. This item will be continued at the next Committee of the Whole meeting.

Closer to 10:00 p.m., it was

Moved by: A. Johnstone
Seconded by: T. White

That the committee move to the open Special Board.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY. Student Trustees Ewing and Stenekes voted in favour.

Due to a lack of time, the following items were not considered:

Action:

- Education Development Charges
- Report of the Governance Committee - Governance Review
- March 2013 Ontario Financing Authority (OFA) Debt Offering

Monitoring:

- School Year Calendar

Public Questions for Clarification

None received.

The meeting then adjourned at 9:46 p.m.

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DRAFT



EXECUTIVE REPORT TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

DATE: March 18, 2013

TO: Committee of the Whole

FROM: Don Grant, Superintendent of Business & Treasurer
Denise Dawson, Manager of Budget

RE: **Consultation Results for the Identification of Board Priorities to Guide 2013/2014 Budget Development**

Action X

Monitoring

Recommended Action:

That the Board approve the listing of Board Priorities as outlined in Appendix A dated March 18, 2013 to guide the 2013/2014 Budget Development.

Rationale/Benefits:

The budget consultation survey confirms that respondents are very supportive of the Board's Listing of Board Priorities for Budget development purposes. Therefore, as supported by the results of the public consultation the foregoing recommended action will serve to approve and reaffirm the listing of Board Priorities (see Appendix A) that will influence the development of the 2013/2014 budget.

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that the consultation exercise has also served to help achieve the following benefits:

- served to improve the public's understanding of HWDSB Budget priorities and builds strong lines of communication
- provides the Board with the opportunity to take the public's views into consideration as future Board priorities are determined
- Establishes a positive environment for the development of the Board's budget as members of the public have been provided with the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.

Background:

Responsibility for the "Budget Planning and Development of the Board's budget has been assigned to the Finance Advisory Sub-Committee (FASC). As reported to Committee of the Whole in January, 2013, FASC once again, has initiated a consultation process regarding the identification of Board Priorities to Guide 2013/2014 budget development. Board Priorities are comprised of initiatives &/or programs to which the Board would direct funds; if we have the opportunity to do so.

Background (cont.):

Accordingly, an online survey was conducted from January 17th to February 20th, 2013 and garnered a total of **298** (note: this response rate is almost four times the number of responses received in last year's consultation). The purpose of this report is to share with Committee of the Whole the results from this consultation. The following appendices are provided for Committee reference:

Appendix A	Listing of Board Priorities
Appendix B	Online Survey
Appendix C	Communication Plan re Consultation
Appendix D	E-Best Summary of Online Survey Findings

Survey Design and Analysis:

E-Best and Corporate Communications with assistance from Business Services collaborated in the design of the online survey (see attached Appendix B). E-Best also received and analyzed all responses to the invitation for input (see attached Appendix D).

Communication of the Opportunity to Provide Input:

The opportunity to provide input on this foundational and important topic was communicated to various HWDSB stakeholders to inform them of our priorities, while soliciting feedback on what, if any, priorities should change. Notification of the consultation was sent to 112 different groups, representing staff, parents, students, and the community (see attached Appendix C). Sending notification to various groups allows for awareness of the survey to spread quickly, but as many groups fill out the survey in consultation with their members this may also limit the number of responses we receive.

Each group was sent a letter informing them of the consultation and directing them to where on the website the survey was located; including definitions of the priorities. Schools were provided a brief description of the survey to include in their newsletters and a media release was also sent out to all local media in an effort to reach those not directly associated with any of the groups contacted.

Response to the Online Survey:

The survey garnered a total of 298 responses. Furthermore, Google Analytics indicate that this year's Budget Consultation webpage was viewed 924 times suggesting that members of the public were interested in HWDSB's Budget Priorities. Of the 298 responses, 216 (72.5%) surveys were completed online, 81 (27.2%) were received via mail and one survey was e-mailed. Respondents to the survey identified themselves as follows:

44.3%	HWDSB staff
43.3%	Parents/Guardians
8.0%	HWDSB students
3.2%	Community members
1.2%	Did not identify themselves

Overall 60% of respondents came from individuals with children attending an HWDSB school.

Summary of Consultation Findings:

As noted above E-Best received and analyzed all responses to the invitation for input (see attached Appendix D). The key findings from the survey are as follows:

- **On average, the majority of responses indicate that the HWDSB should remain committed to the current listing of priorities.**
- Responses suggest that HWDSB should post more information about these priorities on the website.
- Respondents also provided support for the allocation of additional resources to students, schools and clusters on a per-need basis.

Finance Advisory Sub-Committee has discussed this report and is supportive of it being shared with Committee of the Whole.



6-4
**Appendix A: Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board Listing of 2013/2014
 Board Budget Priorities - March 18, 2013**

These priorities are currently being funded, but we would like to allocate additional funds if possible.

Priority	Definition	Example of program related to priority
Early Years Strategy	Our Early Years Strategy supports all students to reach their goals. Our goal is to have students reading at grade level by the end of Grade 2. We are focused on working with families and children. Research shows that student achievement and engagement starts before children ever enter a school. Our Early Years Strategy begins to support our students at birth. We know we have a role to play with families and the community to make the move into school easier for children.	Empower: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qdiNHp60ue0&feature=youtu.be Full-Day Kindergarten: http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/kindergarten/?page_id=9
Program Strategy	We want all students to have what they need to succeed at any one of our schools. We are listening to what our students tell us they need and what interests them. Our Goal is to improve student success in reading, writing and math by providing equity of access. Our Program Strategy focuses on making every school a great school, giving students more choice, and providing the same opportunities to all students.	True Colours: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wzQKjolyDEM Learning for All : HWDSB Program Strategy http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/aboutus/strategic-directions/learning-for-all/documents/Program-Strategy.pdf
Special Education	We believe all students can succeed. This is why we work with families to meet the needs of all students. Because each student has different learning strengths and needs, we offer a variety of programs to meet these needs. Our Oral Language / Early Reading and Mental Health Strategies are two examples. All students need to have the supports they need to succeed and to feel safe and welcome in our schools.	Westdale Special Education Class: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cEOTMxlRn7c Special Education/Student Services http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/programs/specialed/
Wireless	Our Wireless Strategy aims to improve student achievement and equity. This encourages students to use their own tools to access the Internet when and where they want it to support their learning. We live in a digital world where learners prefer to learn, live and work together this way.	21 st Century Fluency Awareness: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j6SXYVuHvRI 21 st Century Fluencies http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/programs/21cf/



2013 / 2014 Budget Priorities Feedback Form

As part of HWDSB's commitment to be accountable to its community stakeholders, the Board informs its stakeholders of its preliminary budget priorities for the upcoming school year to show how it uses its resources wisely, efficiently, effectively and equitably.

Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board's Strategic Directions focus on Achievement Matters, Engagement Matters and Equity Matters. Therefore, we have created many strategies to meet these directions. Four of these strategies are required as our preliminary priorities for the 2013/2014 Budget. Through our budget, we will supply the right resources needed to support our Strategic Directions. We would like your comments and views on these priorities. As such, HWDSB has developed a survey to gather feedback on our current Board wide priorities and your responses will help HWDSB's Trustees further refine HWDSB's budget to benefit our students and staff in 2013/2014.

Please complete this survey by 4:00 PM on February 28, 2013

This survey is voluntary. All responses will remain anonymous and confidential. Responses will be compiled and reported in general themes and will not link answers to any individual or group. Feedback will only be accessed by the HWDSB research department and will be securely stored in their office (if paper copies).

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Don Grant, Superintendent of Business at 905-527-5092, extension 2500 or by email at don.grant@hwdsb.on.ca.



2013 / 2014 Budget Priorities Feedback Form

PART A: ABOUT YOU

1. Please indicate which group you belong to:

- Parent/Guardian
- Community member
- Student
- HWDSB staff member

1a. If a "Community Member", please complete the following:

Your organization or affiliation: _____

Your position in the organization: _____

2. Do you have children attending an HWDSB school?

- Yes
- No

3. How many children do you have in an HWDSB school?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5+

Part B - 2012-2013 HWDSB Budget Priorities

HWDSB defines a priority as "initiatives and/or programs to which the board is committed to and would direct funds to if financially possible". The following is a list of priorities that HWDSB is committed to for 2013-2014:

Please refer to Appendix A for more information regarding each of the priorities.

- Early Years Strategy
- Program Strategy
- Special Education
- Wireless



2013 /2014 Budget Priorities Feedback Form

4a. Using this table, please comment on the priorities HWDSB has identified for 2013-2014. You may comment on as many priorities as you wish.

Priorities	Definition	Example of program that supports priority	Do you think HWDSB should be committed to this priority?		What direction(s) should HWDSB take with regard to this priority? (select as many that apply)		
			Yes	No	Post more information about this priority on the HWDSB website	Allocate additional resources to students, schools and clusters on a per-need basis	Engage in consultation with expert groups and committees (e.g., Parent-Involvement Committee)
Early Years Strategy	Pdf <link>	Video <link>					
Program Strategy	Pdf <link>	Video <link>					
Special Education	Pdf <link>	Video <link>					
Wireless	Pdf <link>	Video <link>					



2013 / 2014 Budget Priorities Feedback Form

4b. Indicate additional direction(s) for any of the following priorities that HWDSB is committed to for 2013/2014:

Priority	Direction
Early Years Strategy	
Program Strategy	
Special Education	
Wireless	

5. Please list additional priorities that HWDSB should consider for its 2013/2014 Budget:

Thank you for your feedback!



6-9 Appendix A: Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board Listing of 2013/2014 Board Budget Priorities

Priority	Definition	Example of program related to priority
Early Years Strategy	Our Early Years Strategy supports all students to reach their goals. It starts by having students reading at grade level by the end of Grade 2. We are focused on working with families and children. Research shows that student achievement and engagement starts before children ever enter a school. Our Early Years Strategy begins to support our students at birth. We know we have a role to play with families and the community to make the move into school easier for children.	Empower: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qdiNHp60ue0&feature=youtu.be
Program Strategy	We are re-shaping how each school blends our Arts, French Immersion, Kindergarten – Grade 2, Mental Health and other strategies. Our Goal is to improve student success in reading, writing and math. We want all students to have what they need to succeed at any one of our schools. We are listening to what our students tell us they need and what interests them. Our Program Strategy focuses on making every school a great school, giving students more choice, and providing the same opportunities to all students.	True Colours: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wzQKjolyDEM
Special Education	We believe all students can succeed. This is why we work with families to meet the needs of all students. Because each student has different learning strengths and needs, we offer a variety of programs to meet these needs. Our Oral Language / Early Reading and Mental Health Strategies are two examples. All students need to have the supports they need to succeed and to feel safe and welcome in our schools.	Westdale Special Education Class: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cEOTMxIRn7c
Wireless	Our Wireless Strategy aims to improve student achievement and equity. This encourages students to use their own tools to access the Internet when and where they want it to support their learning. We live in a digital world where learners prefer to learn, live and work together this way. These are vital tools that prepare students for their ongoing and future achievement.	21 st Century Fluency Awareness: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j6SXYVuHvRI



HWDSB 2013 / 2014 Budget Consultation Plan

Prepared By: Mark Taylor
 Superintendent Responsible: Don Grant
 Department: Superintendent of Business

Date Prepared: November 29, 2012

Context

At the direction of Trustees, staff has been asked to engage the public in the Budget Process. This will be done through a consultation process

Communications Strategy

As per the direction of the Finance Advisory Sub-Committee, staff will engage in a public consultation on the priorities of HWDSB. The consultation will begin on January 17, 2013 and end on February 20, 2013. This will allow HWDSB to inform the public of its priorities, while soliciting feedback on what, if any priorities should change. This also allows for the priorities in the budget to coordinate with the strategic planning process, which allows for consistency from year to year.

Target Audience

Overall, 112 groups will be targeted for consultation:

Group Classification	
Staff	
1.	Trustees
2.	Executive Council
3.	Hamilton-Wentworth Elementary Teachers' Local
4.	Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation
5.	Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 4153
6.	Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 4977
7.	Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union, Local 527
8.	Hamilton-Wentworth Occasional Teachers' Local
9.	Hamilton-Wentworth Principals' Council
10.	Professional Administrative Support Staff
11.	Managers Cabinet
12.	Hamilton Wentworth Student Transportation Services
Parents	
1.	French Immersion Advisory Committee
2.	Hamilton-Wentworth Home & School Association
3.	Interfaith Advisory Committee
4.	Parent Involvement Committee
5.	Rural Schools Committee
6.	School Councils
7.	Special Education Advisory Committee
Students	
1.	Student Senate

Community	
1.	Ainslie Wood/Westdale Community Association of Resident Homeowners Inc.
2.	Allison Park Community Association
3.	Alternatives for Youth
4.	Ancaster Community Council
5.	Beasley Neighbourhood Association
6.	Berrisfield Community Council
7.	Best Start Network
8.	BOND
9.	Bonnington, Buchanan, Mohawk, Southam Neighbourhood Association
10.	Boys and Girls Clubs of Hamilton
11.	Central Neighbourhood Association
12.	Chamber of Commerce
13.	Citizens for Citizens Ward Three Neighbourhoods
14.	City of Hamilton
15.	City of Hamilton – City Council
16.	CNIB
17.	Community Action Program for Children
18.	Corktown Neighbourhood Association
19.	Crown Point Community Planning Team
20.	Davis Creek Community Hub
21.	Delta West Community Association
22.	Dundas Community Council
23.	Durand Neighbourhood Association
24.	Eastmount Community Council
25.	Eleanor Community Council
26.	Environment Hamilton
27.	Federation of Urban Neighbourhoods of Ontario
28.	Flamborough Community Council
29.	Food Share
30.	Friends of Rural Communities and the Environment (FORCE)
31.	Friends of the Eramosa Karst
32.	The Friends of Gage Park
33.	Gilkson Park Community Associations
34.	Glanbrook Conservation Committee
35.	Good Shepherd Centres
36.	Gourley Park Community Association
37.	Hamilton Aboriginal Education Council
38.	Hamilton Beach Community Council
39.	Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion
40.	Hamilton Community Foundation
41.	Hamilton East Mountain Community Association
42.	Hamilton Executive Director's Aboriginal Coalition
43.	Hamilton Industrial Environmental Association
44.	Hamilton Partners In Nutrition
45.	Hamilton Police Services
46.	Hamilton Public Library
47.	Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction
48.	Hamilton Waterfront Trust
49.	Hamiltonians for Progressive Development
50.	Industry Education Council of Hamilton
51.	John Howard Society
52.	Kinsmen Club of Hamilton

53. Kirkendall Neighbourhood Association
54. Kiwanis Club
55. Knights of Columbus (various councils)
56. Landsdale Area Neighbourhood Association
57. Lawson Ministries
58. Lions Club (various councils)
59. McMaster University
60. McQuesten Community Planning Team
61. Mohawk College
62. Neighbour to Neighbour Centre
63. North Central Community Council
64. North End Neighbours
65. North Hamilton Community Health Centre
66. Pleasant View Rate Payers Association
67. Red Hill Valley Neighbourhoods Association
68. Riverdale Hub
69. Robert Land Community Association
70. Rosedale Community Council
71. Rotary International (various councils)
72. Royal Botanical Gardens
73. Sacajawea Non-Project Housing Inc.
74. Scenic Woods Neighbourhood Association
75. SHAE
76. Social Planning and Research Council
77. The SOOT Group
78. South Centre Community Council
79. South Sherman Community Planning Team
80. South Stipeley Neighbourhood Association
81. Spring Valley Community Association
82. St. Joseph's Immigrant Women
83. Stinson Community Association c/o Central Memorial Rec Centre
84. Strathcona Community Council
85. Templemead Community Council
86. Today's Family
87. Umbrella Board of Family & Child Care Centres United Way
88. Waterdown South Residents' Association
89. Wesley Urban Ministries
90. Wever Community Hub
91. YMCA
92. Zonta Club

Tactics

Group	Activity
Staff	Memo/Letter – where applicable
	myHWDSB
	Media Release
	Social Media
Parents	Letter
	School Newsletters
	School Website

	Media Release
	Social Media
Students	Presentation
	School Website
	Media Release
	Social Media
Community	Letter
	Media Release
	Availability at local school
	Social Media

Summary of Online Survey Findings

A. Purpose of Consultation

As part of Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board's commitment to be accountable to its community stakeholders, the Board informs its stakeholders of its budget for the upcoming school year to show how it uses its resources wisely, efficiently, effectively and equitably. HWDSB's Strategic Directions focus on Achievement Matters, Engagement Matters and Equity Matters. We have created many strategies to meet these directions. Four of these strategies are our focus for the 2013/2014 Budget. Through our budget we will supply additional resources needed to support our budget priorities above the level of funding that is provided by the province.

Members of the public were invited to provide feedback on the following four areas:

- (1) To indicate whether HWDSB should remain committed to each of the 4 priorities listed (Early Years Strategy, Program Strategy, Special Education and Wireless)
- (2) To indicate which of three directions HWDSB should take with regard to each priority (directions: 1. *Post more information about the priority on the HWDSB website*, 2. *Allocate additional resources to students, schools and clusters on a per-need basis* 3. *Engage in consultation with expert groups and committees*),
- (3) To comment on additional directions that the board should take with regard to each priority, and
- (4) To list additional priorities that HWDSB should consider for its 2013/2014 budget. The following sections of this report summarize stakeholders' responses to the online consultation.

B. Limitations of the Consultation

Several limitations of the consultation are noteworthy. First, it is unknown whether the consultation respondents are representative of the HWDSB and Hamilton community. Therefore it is unclear whether the responses summarized in this report accurately reflect the opinions of members of the Hamilton and HWDSB community. Second, the total number of responses should not be equated with total number of unique respondents as it is possible that the same person may have submitted the survey multiple times. It is therefore recommended that the results summarized herein are interpreted within the bounds of these limitations.

C. Respondent Characteristics

The online survey ran from January 17th to February 20th 2013 and garnered a total of **298** responses. It is noteworthy that this response rate is threefold that of last year's (2012/2013) consultation response rate of 77. Furthermore, Google Analytics indicate that this year's Budget Consultation Webpage was viewed 924 times suggesting that members of the public were interested in HWDSB's Budget Priorities. Of the 298 responses received on this year's consultation, 216 (72.5%) surveys were completed online, 81 (27.2%) surveys were received via mail, while one survey was emailed. The majority of the responses came from HWDSB staff members (N=132, 44.3%) and from parents/guardians (N=129, 43.3%), while 24 (8%) responses were from HWDSB students and 13 (3.2%) from community members.

Members of the public were asked to indicate whether they had children currently attending an HWDSB school and if yes, to indicate how many children. Overall, 169 (60%) of the 298 responses came from individuals who had children attending an HWDSB school and 113 (40%) responses were from individuals who did not have children. Of the 169 respondents who indicated having children, 127 (78.9%) indicated having one to two children currently attending an HWDSB school, 31 (18.3%) responses came from individuals with three to four children. Three surveys were received which it was not possible to determine the number of children indicated, 8 respondents did answer this question.

D. Executive Summary of Consultation Findings

Topic 1: Members of the public were asked to indicate whether HWDSB should remain committed to the existing priorities.

- On average the majority of comments (83.6%) indicated that HWDSB should remain committed to the current priorities, while on average, 8.4% indicated that some priorities should not remain.

Topic 2: Members of the public were asked to comment on the following three directions that HWDSB should take across each of the existing priorities. The average percentage of endorsement for each direction, across the four priorities, is indicated in brackets.

1. Allocate additional resources to students, school and clusters, on as per-need basis (25.8% endorsement)
2. Post more information about this priority on the HWDSB website (47.1% endorsement)
3. Engage in consultation with expert groups and committees (27.1% endorsement)

Topic 3: Members of the public commented on additional directions that they would like for HWDSB to take with regard to the four priorities. Feedback received is summarized below per priority:

- With regard to the Early Learning Strategy majority of respondents commented that the board should continue with the implementation of early learning programming, to evaluate the effectiveness of this priority and to share the evaluation findings with members of the public.
- For the Program Strategy priority, majority of comments indicated wanting to better understand how this priority area with particular understanding of the benefits and how it is expanding to elementary grades.
- With respect to the Special Education strategy, majority of respondents indicated that the board should prioritize allocating more school-based support in particular for students with mental health difficulties and unique special needs.
- For Wireless, the majority of comments indicated that HWDSB should proceed with a quick implementation of Wireless across the system, including older schools and prioritizing high-needs schools.

Topic 4: Members of the public were asked to comment on additional priorities the HWDSB should consider for its 2013/2014 budget. 66.5% (N=198) of responses did not include a list of additional priorities that the Board should consider. Of the 33.5% (N=100) of responses that included additional priorities, the following items were mentioned: (listed in alphabetical order):

1. Allocate additional consumables (e.g., technology resources, classroom resources)
2. Allocate additional staffing supports (e.g., Educational Assistants, Social Workers, Child and Youth Workers)
3. Continue with mental health promotion as a priority
4. Careful budgeting to conserve spending
5. Identify International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme as system priority
6. Increase equity in program and resource access across the system
7. Improve facilities maintenance



Annual Work Plan Report (Executive Summary)

Name of Report: HWDSB Mental Health Strategy Report

To: Dr. John Malloy, Director of Education and Secretary

From: Vicki Corcoran, Superintendent, Leadership and Learning
Michelle Bates, Mental Health Lead
Erin Freeburn, Implementation Support Worker, Mental Health Strategy
Dr. Christine Gudas-Murphy, Manager, Psychological Services
David Hoy, Manager, Social Work Services
Dr. Kathy Short, Director, School Mental Health ASSIST

Date: March 18, 2013

The HWDSB Mental Health Strategy is designed to mobilize our system around issues of child and youth mental health, enhance district capacity to recognize and respond to mental health issues, decrease fragmentation in service delivery, and increase community collaboration. As HWDSB is the provincial lead board for School Mental Health ASSIST (Awareness, Strategy Selection & Implementation Support Team) our HWDSB strategy aligns with the areas of focus for the ASSIST program as well. Finally, the HWDSB Mental Health Strategy is an integral part of the district's work with regard to promoting positive school climates in all our schools, alongside our work in the areas of equity, inclusion, and safe schools.

To assist in the promotion of positive mental health and well-being, the HWDSB Mental Health Strategy has focused on programs and interventions to support:

- ✓ Tier 1 – the promotion of school conditions to support all students;
- ✓ Tier 2 – prevention strategies to support some students who are experiencing greater difficulties than their peers; and
- ✓ Tier 3 – interventions for the few students who require significant support.

Positive Action, a JK-12 program, has been selected as an effective vehicle for providing all students with appropriate social-emotional learning. Plans have been developed to support the implementation of the program in several schools over the next school year. In addition, staff continue to review the roles that many departments have in supporting mental health and well-being for all students and will continue to work to align services for our students. Some schools have been provided with additional literacy information and supported to implement appropriate strategies. Staff will continue to expand this support to other schools.

Staff have selected and have been providing support in the delivery and implementation of *Coping Power*, a Tier 2 intervention program that promotes student social-emotional literacy and mental health. This work will be continued and expanded to other sites over the next school year.

Protocols for schools and staff responding to the risk of student suicide and high profile tragic events have been drafted and reviewed by principals and Executive Council. Supports for schools in the prevention, intervention and postvention of incidents of suicide will continue and be refined/revised as appropriate. Training to support staff and students will continue to be provided.

HWDSB Mental Health staff will continue to collaborate with other boards in the School Mental Health ASSIST program. Information from various data sources has been collected and will support our strategy as it moves forward. Over the course of the last 2 years, we have worked closely with community partners in the area of mental health, and will continue to do so. HWDSB staff are participating in the Hamilton Service Collaborative, looking at identifying gaps in service with the goal of developing plans to address local areas of need.



Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board

Annual Work Plan Report (Monitoring)

Name of Report: HWDSB Mental Health Strategy Report

To: Dr. John Malloy, Director of Education and Secretary

From: Vicki Corcoran, Superintendent, Leadership and Learning
Michelle Bates, Mental Health Lead
Erin Freeburn, Implementation Support Worker, Mental Health Strategy
Dr. Christine Gudas-Murphy, Manager, Psychological Services
David Hoy, Manager, Social Work Services
Dr. Kathy Short, Director, School Mental Health ASSIST

Date: March 18, 2013

Organizational Alignment

Strategic Direction: Equity Matters: HWDSB will provide safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environments for all staff and students.
Engagement Matters: HWDSB will achieve high level of student engagement in our schools.

Annual Operating Plan: Tiered Approach to instruction and intervention;
Engaging/re-engaging all students

Director's Performance Appraisal: Engage all students in their learning, which considers student mental health/well-being and analysis and support for other areas identified as obstacles for school success.

Overview/Context

The HWDSB Mental Health Strategy is designed to mobilize our system around issues of child and youth mental health, enhance district capacity to recognize and respond to mental health issues, decrease fragmentation in service delivery, and increase community collaboration.

HWDSB is the provincial lead board for School Mental Health ASSIST (Awareness, Strategy Selection & Implementation Support Team) and as such our HWDSB strategy aligns with the three key areas of focus for the ASSIST program: organizational conditions, mental health awareness and literacy, and school mental health programming and support.

In addition to these areas of focus, the HWDSB Mental Health Strategy is an integral part of the district's work with regard to promoting positive school climates in all our schools, alongside our work in the areas of equity, inclusion, and safe schools. We know that "students who experience a positive school culture feel supported and accepted by peers and school staff and tend to develop a strong sense of school membership. Feelings of belonging enhance students' self-esteem and can contribute both directly and indirectly to improvements in academic and behavioural functioning and overall mental health" (*Caring and Safe Schools in Ontario*: Ministry of Education). Thus, the strategies we implement to improve the mental health and well-being of our students also help to support the promotion of positive school climates.

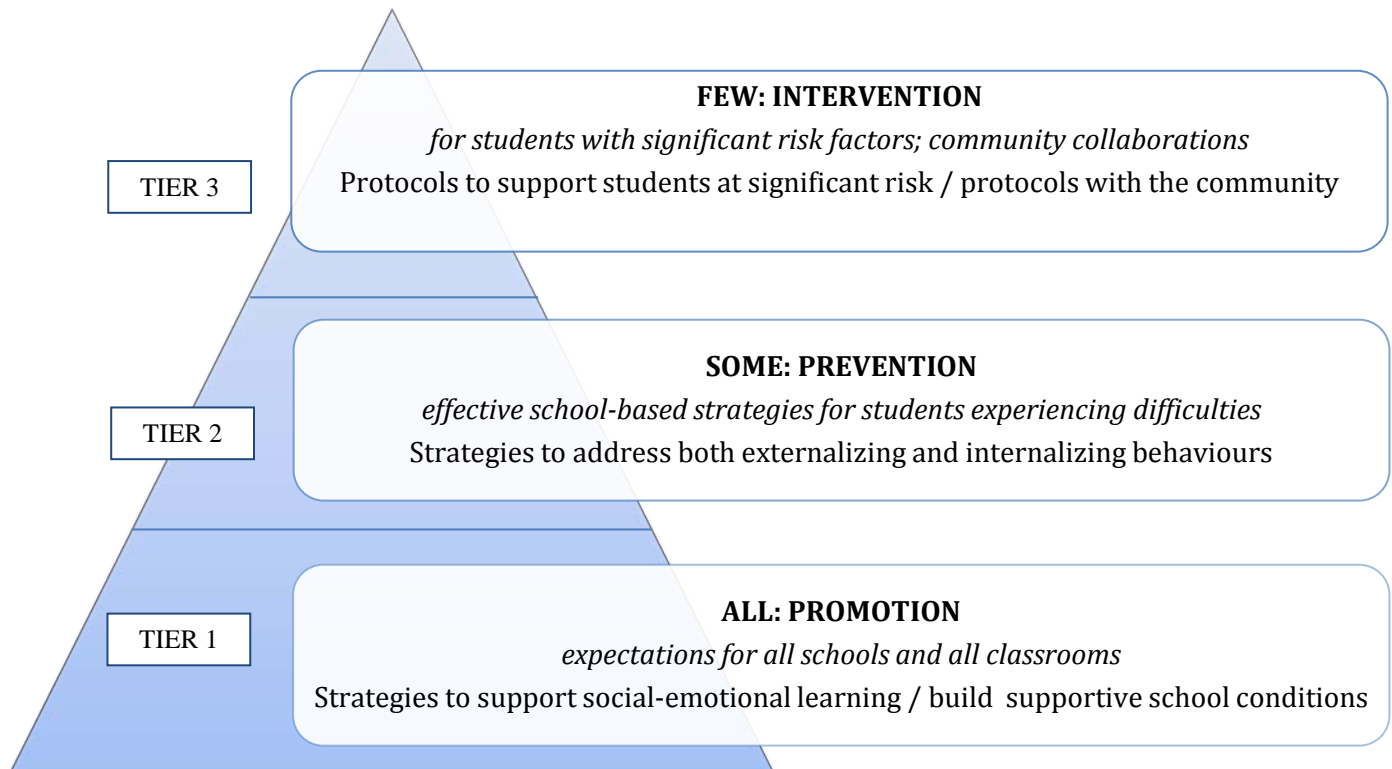
Tiered Intervention Strategy to Promote Positive Mental Health and Well-Being

To assist in the promotion of positive mental health and well-being, the HWDSB Mental Health Strategy has focused on programs and interventions to support:

- ✓ all students (tier 1);
- ✓ some students who require specific support (tier 2); and
- ✓ the few students who require significant support (tier 3).

Tier 1 programs focus on the promotion of school conditions which support the well-being of all students, in all classrooms, in all schools. Activities include information sessions for staff on mental health and evidence-based programs that support social-emotional learning. Tier 2 activities are designed to support some students who are experiencing greater difficulties than their peers. As with all tier 2 programs, the time-limited strategies in this area are designed to be preventative, such that the students will gain the skills necessary to experience success in the regular class and school environment. Tier 3 interventions are targeted to support those few students who present with significant risk factors. Initiatives at this level are specific to the need and involve inter-disciplinary support, including the involvement of mental health providers in our community. Figure 1 (below) illustrates this tiered approach.

Figure 1: Positive School Climate: Mental Health and Well-Being



Tier 1: Promotion

What We Did

A. Supporting Social-Emotional Learning

Over the course of last year, a team of staff reviewed a large number of social-emotional learning (SEL) programs and determined that *Positive Action*, a JK-12 program, would be an effective vehicle for providing all students with appropriate social-emotional learning. (Appendix A). Plans have been developed to support the implementation of the program and several schools have been approached to pilot this program.

Many HWDSB staff and departments contribute to supporting student mental health and well-being. It is important that the role that each group plays be understood in order to avoid confusion and/or duplication of function, both internally and in relation to the child and adolescent community supports that are available. Thus, we have been reviewing the roles of each contributor to better align services for our students. This review has involved both an on-line survey and face-to-face meetings. Respondents were asked to identify the type of support they provide.

B. Building School Conditions to Support Mental Health and Well-Being

Mental Health, Safe Schools, Equity, and E-BEST staff have collaborated on several initiatives to better align system practices under the umbrella of Positive School Climate. In the 2012 Secondary Student Climate Survey, five questions were specifically related to mental health. Many of the student leadership teams who attended the Accepting and Safe Schools Leadership Camp selected mental health as one of their goals.

In addition, at sessions to review safe schools data, school teams were provided with information to help to better understand the relationship between bullying, student mental health and suicide. School teams were also provided with tools and resources to assist in the development of their Safe Schools Plans. A session focusing on mental health awareness and literacy was presented to Student Success Leads and Student Services Heads in November. As well as promoting shared language and understanding of the continuum of mental health, the working session invited school teams to consider the ways in which students who are struggling with achievement and/or social-emotional concerns are supported. At the principals' conference in January, members of the Mental Health Leadership team facilitated learning sessions focusing on the alignment between mental health and student achievement. Finally, the team has been invited to contribute ideas to support a Section 23 (Educational Programs in Care, Treatment and Corrections Facilities) initiative.

Corporate Communications has supported the mental health initiative by drafting both an internal and external communication strategy. The HWDSB Mental Health Strategy is now posted on the HWDSB website, and information for staff is available on the MyHWDSB web portal.

In June 2012, *Opening Up*, a video that features four HWDSB parents who have a child with mental illness, was completed. The parents voiced their recommendations as to how schools can help them and their children. This project represents a partnership between HWDSB, the local Student Support Leadership Initiative (SSLI), the School-Based Mental Health Symposium, and Partners for Children's Mental Health.

What We Learned

A. Supporting Social-Emotional Learning

Staff have needed to continue to explore the parameters of implementing the tier 1 social-emotional learning program, *Positive Action* in some HWDSB schools. Various schools have been approached to participate in this initial implementation.

While the review of the supports for mental health and well-being provided by various school departments and staff is still in progress, data compiled to-date reveals some trends:

- ✓ A number of support services are committed to providing support to school staff and students in the area of mental health;
- ✓ In some areas of mental health support, such as supporting well-being and resilience, there are a large number of supports available;
- ✓ Some areas have very few supports, such as the areas of substance abuse and addiction; and
- ✓ Staff are not always aware of the other services providing support and the areas of support provided.

B. Building School Conditions to Support Mental Health and Well-Being

Surveys of our students indicate that over half perceive peers and family members as a source of support and that they see a strong connection between their mental health and success at school. We have also learned that most students are unlikely to seek support from school staff.

The requests for information regarding mental health continue to grow. Providing the time necessary to provide effective literacy sessions continues to be a challenge. Secondly, when schools are requesting direct support for students, the offer of learning session(s) for staff may be perceived as not responding to what schools have requested. Being explicit about the value of professional learning as a method of directly supporting students, in particular because learning leads to new knowledge, promotes deeper understanding and can lead to changes in practice behaviour, is an essential part of explaining the offer of learning as a way to address their need for student support.

Next Steps

A. Supporting Social-Emotional Learning

Five schools have committed to the implementation of the social-emotional learning program, *Positive Action*, in the upcoming 2013/14 school year. Mental Health Leads will support the schools both in the implementation and the evaluation of the program.

From the survey of mental health supports within HWDSB, we will continue to work on clarity of roles to better align services for students, as well as working to ensure that supports being provided are evidence-based. As well, we will assist schools with the implementation and evaluation of the effectiveness of these supports.

B. Building School Conditions to Support Mental Health and Well-Being

School Mental Health ASSIST has developed a principal resource guide: *Supporting Health Minds at School: A Vision for Student Mental Health and Well-Being in Ontario Schools: A resource for School Administrators*, to enhance school capacity for mental health. We are currently developing plans to implement this guide during the 2013-14 school year.

Mental Health Leads will continue to support the expansion of the implementation of the mental health literacy modules that have been developed, to increase the basic understanding of mental health and well-being among staff in order to better support students.

Tier 2: Prevention

What We Did

Strategies to address both externalizing and internalizing behavior.

Many mental health programming and supports exist within HWDSB to support students struggling with behavioural difficulties. As part of the Mental Health Strategy, staff have selected and have been providing support in the delivery and implementation of *Coping Power*, a Tier 2 intervention program that promotes student social-emotional literacy and mental health. (Appendix B). The *Coping Power* program is an evidence-based intervention designed to help students develop skills, reduce negative behaviours, and prevent further isolation and rejection from pro-social peers. This evidence-based program has been proven to help students sustain these skills over time. The program is designed to be delivered in small groups for students in Grade 5 who are presenting with acting-out behaviours, and has been implemented in three elementary schools (Bennetto, Lawfield, and C.B. Stirling Schools) as a targeted group. In addition, in consultation with the program developers, we have implemented *Coping Power* as a whole class program in one elementary school (Sir Wilfrid Laurier School) and as a targeted program in two secondary schools (Mountain and Parkview Secondary Schools).

As part of the implementation process, schools were invited to consider their need, interest, and readiness for the program. Schools were provided with support via a principal information session, a mental health co-facilitator information session, and other training. Together with E-BEST, staff developed an implementation and outcome evaluation program that included a high risk protocol for students at risk of emotional distress, and various consent protocols. Consent was obtained from parents for their child to participate in the *Coping Power* program (in both the whole class and targeted group programs) and from both parents and students to participate in the research evaluation. Information regarding the program is being shared between schools and parents in the program via *Coping Power* newsletters.

What We Learned

To date, recruiting interested schools and mental health co-facilitators for *Coping Power* and *Positive Action* has relied upon schools and staff to volunteer to be part of piloting these initiatives. From our experience with *Coping Power*, we have learned that it is possible to implement an evidence-based mental health program within schools, in alignment with academic initiatives. Adjustments are necessary to ensure the program can be delivered with fidelity, and participating schools, through their commitment, have provided valuable lessons and examples of how this can be done effectively.

Most parents were receptive and supportive of their child's involvement in *Coping Power*. However, for some parents, the offer of a targeted group was confusing, as either the school year had just started, and/or the extent of the difficulties with their child's behaviour at school was not fully understood by the parent. We have learned that obtaining consent is a much-involved, yet necessary, process. Improved communication with the families, as well as sharing the positive experiences of the students that have been involved, will help to improve the understanding of this process.

An important part of the program is the co-facilitation between school-based staff and system mental health professionals. We have learned that it will be difficult to sustain this kind of evidence-based school mental health programming at the Tier 2 level without dedicated professional staff support.

Next Steps

We will continue to work with the initial pilot schools to sustain these programs and examine the effectiveness of the intervention over time. Additional schools will be invited to participate in order for us to expand district implementation. Information regarding the program will be shared with other system staff offering support to similar difficulties, such that services are aligned and part of the district's continuum of services. As participation in this type of facilitation is not currently part of a social work or psycho-educational consultant role, this will require some re-examination in order to expand the implementation of the *Coping Power* program.

Tier 3: Intervention

What We Did

A. Protocols to support students at significant risk

Protocols for schools and staff responding to the risk of student suicide and high profile tragic events have been drafted and reviewed by principals and Executive Council (Appendices C and D). Additionally, we are exploring the feasibility of Board staff providing suicide risk assessment, and the implications of providing this important service to our students.

Aware of the high numbers of students who were presenting with suicidal ideation and suicidal behaviours in our high schools, we provided a suicide awareness session for principals and superintendents in November. We have also developed and provided suicide awareness sessions for four high schools.

As of April 20th this year, each high school will have four *ASIST*-trained staff (Applied Skills In Suicide Training – Appendix E). *ASIST* is a two-day training session that helps to identify students who have thoughts of suicide and to develop a plan to increase safety and provide or connect to appropriate interventions. All social workers and psycho-educational consultants have received certification in *ASIST* as part of our implementation. In addition, a psycho-educational consultant provides coaching and assistance to those who have been *ASIST* trained.

Sadly, our schools continue to be impacted by suicide – both death by suicide and incidents of suicidal behaviour. In addition to supporting all our schools through protocol development and mental health awareness and literacy initiatives, we also provided direct support to two schools in postvention circumstances (student deaths by suicide, and suicide attempt).

One high school was supported with information relating to memorialization practices, in order to achieve the balance between memorializing the deceased while reducing the risk of contagion to other students who may be struggling with suicidal ideation. We have further supported this high school with recommendations related to suicide prevention and mental health awareness activities, parent engagement/community mobilization strategies, and a staff suicide awareness session. This high school also hosted a *SafeTALK* session in late spring 2012. *SafeTALK* is a three-hour training program that prepares participants to identify persons with thoughts of suicide and connect them to appropriate resources and supports (Appendix F).

A second high school was supported through facilitated communication with McMaster Hospital's treatment team, and through the provision of a recommended process and resource guide to help identify other students who may be at risk for suicide. Recommendations for a communication plan with staff were provided, along with a suicide awareness session for all staff.

In response to the high profile death by suicide of a British Columbia student, and shooting deaths of students and staff in Connecticut, we provided guidance and resources for administrators and school staff as they sought to support their students and families in the most helpful way (Appendices G and H). Principals chose diverse responses – some principals immediately called a team together to share the information and determine their next steps while others posted the information in conference sites.

B. Protocols with the community

HWDSB staff were responsible for developing the program for the first Educator Stream Day of the CASP (Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention) conference held in October. In addition, we also supported the attendance of some administrators, school staff and support staff at the conference and pre-conference days.

In order to best serve our most at-risk students, we recognize the need to work closely with our community partners that can offer our students and their families the supports they need when they are in crisis. HWDSB staff are working with our community partners to explore the feasibility of a standardized suicide risk assessment tool and identify pathways to service commiserate with the level of risk. The *Ontario Minds Healthy Minds Mental Health and Addictions Strategy* includes the provision of Mental Health and Addictions Nurses (MHANs) through the Community Care Access Centre (CCAC). We have been working closely with the CCAC and our neighbouring boards of education (Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic DSB, DSB of Niagara, Niagara Catholic DSB, Grand Erie DSB, and Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk Catholic DSB) to develop programs and protocols, with the intended goal of having these nurses support our students during the difficult transition period of discharge from a psychiatric inpatient unit and discharge from the emergency room when presenting with psychiatric concerns.

Parallel to the MHAN initiative, we have been working closely with McMaster Hospital's Child and Youth Psychiatric Inpatient Unit. There is a commitment to strengthen the communication and involvement of our students' schools (where there is consent present) with the inpatient treatment team. Draft protocols and communication tools will result in notification to a school that one of their students has been admitted, a request for information from school staff to supplement the hospital's assessment process, an invitation to school staff to participate in the hospital discharge plan and formal communication with the school team of the treatment teams' recommendations and follow-up plans.

COAST (Crisis Outreach and Support Team) provides a critical service to schools and families to support our students. We will continue to meet with COAST as we move towards a formal partnership agreement between COAST and HWDSB.

Finally, this year we have witnessed an increased willingness for collaboration and responsiveness among service agencies in the Hamilton community. As one example, Child and Adolescent Services, in response to a request, arranged for counseling to be available in the Saltfleet District Secondary School community last summer. HWDSB, along with Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic DSB, are also participating in the *Systems Improvements through Service Collaboration (SISC)* initiative, as part of the *Open Minds, Health Minds: Ontario's Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy*. The Hamilton Service Collaborative brings together service providers from a cross-section of services that all work with children and youth and their families, to look at supporting coordinated services within the Hamilton community.

What We Learned

A. Protocols to support students at significant risk

A student death is one of the most tragic experiences for a school community. We have learned that responding to a student death by suicide and providing care and support to students who are struggling with suicidal ideation and suicidal behaviours is an emotionally charged experience for staff providing direct care, school administrators and the administration and support teams at the board level. We have learned that it is important to remember that a school community's grief and mourning process is long, that a student death by suicide becomes a defining experience for staff, and we are reminded of the value and importance of reaching out to support one another.

Many school-based staff have reported that their participation in the *ASIST* program has been a highly relevant training experience. By June 2012, two and a half months after the first five schools received *ASIST* training, they reported having used the *ASIST* suicide intervention model 42 times with students who were presenting in crisis. We have learned that this kind of practical, relevant training is highly valued and results in use by most staff who became certified. We've also learned that who gets trained is essential. While it may seem obvious that staff in certain positions within the school are the 'right ones' to be trained, we have learned that, due to the intense nature of the training, the selection of trainees is important, and we need to support principals and teachers as to the suitability of the training for them.

This year we have twice provided information and resources to school staff in response to tragic news in the media. We learned that, when providing information, it is important to also provide direction and guidance as to what we are asking principals to do with that information. These experiences also highlighted the need to review our communication protocols.

B. Protocols with the community

Our Mental Strategy work to date has highlighted several key areas of focus including:

- ✓ the need to work together with community agencies to provide linked services that help students and families;
- ✓ the need to work to provide these services in a timely and appropriate manner; and
- ✓ the need to continue to explore partnerships and protocols that will support mental health and well-being in our schools and in the wider community.

The Hamilton Service Collaborative has met on several occasions to work together to identify a gap in service in the Hamilton community. This represents a commitment to identifying a service need or gap, an intervention to meet that gap, and the need to make decision regarding how best to meet the identified need.

Next Steps

A. Protocols to support students at significant risk

The Mental Health Steering Committee, our Mental Health Leads, and the other mental health and educational professionals within our system will continue to develop appropriate responses and protocols to deal with high risk situations and incidents. We will continue to support schools in the implementation of these protocols. We are committed to learning from our experiences to date and, in collaboration with school administrators, continue to refine our procedures such that we are able to provide schools with appropriate and effective strategies and training.

In order to remain current with *ASIST* and *SafeTALK* procedures, we will explore a train-the-trainer model in order to have internal staff to provide on-going training and support. This training will be part of our district's work to promote positive school climates in all our schools, and as such will be aligned with other training occurring in the areas of Safe Schools, Inclusion, and Equity.

B. Protocols with the community

As part of our lead responsibilities in the School Mental Health ASSIST program, we will share our learnings with other districts as well as benefit from the dialogue with other boards as they implement this program.

In order to best serve our needs, the Mental Health Steering Committee will collate information received from principal and support staff recommendations, community partnership initiatives, student surveys, and other data sources to focus on envisioning the ideal connections-to-care process between HWDSB and our community partners.

We will continue to work together with community agencies to provide linked services that help students and families, and continue to refine and solidify community protocols and partnerships.

HWDSB will continue to participate in the Hamilton Service Collaborative as it moves to further develop and implement strategies to address the area of need that the group is in the process of identifying as a community gap in service.

Action Plan Summary:

<u>Process</u>	<u>Area of Focus</u>
Tier 1	
Promotion	Supporting Social-Emotional Learning: Support five schools in piloting <i>Positive Action</i> with Mental Health team support
	Building School Conditions to Support Mental Health and Well-Being: Implementation of Principal Resource Guide: <i>Supporting Health Minds at School</i> Expanded implementation of mental health literacy modules
Tier 2	
Prevention	Strategies to address both externalizing and internalizing behavior: Continue <i>Coping Power</i> pilot programs; examine the effectiveness of the intervention over time Invite additional schools to participate in the <i>Coping Power</i> program Align tier 2 services as part of the district’s continuum of services Examine the role of system mental health professionals in the implementation of the program
Tier 3	
Intervention	Protocols to support students at significant risk: Continue to develop/refine appropriate responses and protocols to deal with high risk situations and incidents Continue to support schools in the implementation of high risk protocols Provide training on <i>ASIST</i> and <i>SafeTALK</i> procedures, aligned with other training occurring in the areas of Safe Schools, Inclusion, and Equity
	Protocols with the community: Collaborate with other boards as part of the <i>School Mental Health ASSIST</i> initiative Collate information received from various data sources in order to develop connections-to-care processes between HWDSB and our community partners Continue to work together with community agencies to provide linked services and refine/solidify community protocols and partnerships Continue to participate in the Hamilton Service Collaborative initiative

Appendices

- A. Positive Action
- B. Coping Power
- C. Draft Event Protocol: Student Death by Suicide
- D. School Response to Suicide Concerns
- E. ASIST
- F. SafeTALK
- G. Talking to Students about Suicide
- H. Key Messages Related to Connecticut School Tragedy

For 30 years, Positive Action has been helping educators around the world create a healthy school climate for their students. We are excited to continue this journey and will be launching a new website soon. Part of this update will include new tools to help you plan and manage an implementation. The new website will also include our new logo and style.



How It Works

Positive Action is an educational program featuring a series of scripted lessons, for each grade level Pre-K through 12th.

The program is presented in a kit, which includes all the materials required for implementation. The lessons are scoped-and-sequenced, allowing schools to create a unified environment. No training is necessary and the lessons are easy to use.

It works by teaching and reinforcing the intuitive philosophy that you feel good about yourself when you do positive actions. The program teaches the positive actions for the physical, intellectual, social, and emotional areas of the self.

The philosophy is illustrated by the Thoughts-Actions-Feelings Circle where positive thoughts lead to positive actions, positive actions lead to positive feelings about your self and positive feelings lead to more positive thoughts.

Mission

The mission of the *Positive Action* program (PA) is to transform individuals, schools, families, and communities by teaching and reinforcing positive actions for a lifetime of health, happiness, and success.

We define success and happiness as feeling good about who you are, what you do, and how you treat others.

Goals

Our goal is to offer a program that is **effective, efficient, empowering, and easy to use**. *Positive Action* is a proven **evidence-based** program for improving **academics, behavior, and character**. Our program helps you achieve excellence by meeting your needs, challenges, and goals.

Information Sheet about the Coping Power Program

“He meant to knock my stuff off my desk.”

“Maybe he just bumped into your desk.”

“No, he did it on purpose.”

“Yelling at other people and getting back at them isn’t a way to solve problems”.

Teachers regularly encounter these kinds of situations. In situations where students get emotionally charged, are unable to understand the social cues of others, when they attribute a negative intention to other people’s behaviours, and when they have limited problem-solving skills, social difficulties result that leads to school discipline and a loss of pro-social peer relationships.

The Coping Power program is an evidence-based ***intervention designed to help students develop skills, reduce negative behaviours, and prevent further isolation and rejection from pro-social peers.***

The Coping Power program is a manualized program that ***fits within the school day.*** Fun and engaging, the program teaches students goal setting and organizational skills, awareness of feelings and emotional arousal, anger coping and self-control, perspective taking, and social problem-solving. In the second half of the program, students reinforce their newly acquired skills through the development of their own videotapes and rehearsal in situations such as teacher-student conflict, peer conflict, and peer pressure.

Evidence from a large school-based trial indicated that students improved their skills and maintained these improvements three years post intervention. Additionally, teachers who deliver the program have added strategies and skills to support students, feel confident that they are helping their students, and experience less behavioural disruptions.

The Coping Power program consists of 34, 50 minute sessions delivered during the school day by a teacher and mental health co-facilitator (school social worker or psycho-educational consultant). There is also a concurrent parent group with up to 10 sessions. The program can be delivered to a whole class of Grade 5 students or a small group (6-8 students) at the Grade 5 level.

As part of the HWDSB mental health strategy this program will be delivered in approximately six elementary schools in September 2012. You are being invited to consider if this program would support you in your work with your students. As part of delivering the program, teachers will receive a one and a half day training in May 2012, work with a mental health co-facilitator, and participate in monthly check-ins.

Coping Power – Whole Class

Co- delivered by HWDSB mental health professional (SW or Psych), teacher and/or EA to build capacity

Sessions 1-4 **Goal Setting and Organizational Skills**

Sessions 5- 11 **Awareness of Feelings and Psychological Arousal, Anger, Coping and Self-control**

Session 12- 15 **Perspective Taking**

Session 16-19 **Social Problem Solving**

Session 20-24 **Group develops video tape and shares with peers**

Sessions 23-24 **Review**

Session 25-32 **Application of Social Problem Solving to:**

Teacher conflict, Making and Being a Friend, Group Entry and Negotiation with Peers, Sibling Conflict, Peer Pressure, Refusal Skills, Neighbourhood Problems, Deviant Peer Groups and Centrality of Group Membership,

Session 32 **Group Creates Peer Pressure Poster**

Session 33 **Positive Quality Development and Peer Relationships**

Session 34 **Review and Termination**

Monthly booster sessions for 6 weeks at start of the grade 6 year.



DRAFT EVENT PROTOCOL: STUDENT DEATH BY SUICIDE

While there is no set formula to follow as an administrator when faced with the need to support your community following a student's death by suicide, the following outline may help you guide your next steps. Note that the time frames will vary depending on when the death occurs and when you are able to confirm the details.

Immediate Response (beginning within first few hours of the news of the death)

- Contact your Superintendent of Student Achievement
 - SOSA, in turn, will contact Director, Associate Director and members of Executive Council
- Contact the Manager of Social Work Services to mobilize the Critical Intervention Response Team
- Contact your leadership team (begin to pull together as much information as possible regarding the student)
 - Begin to delegate jobs
 - For example, one team member should contact the school Guidance department, Social Worker, Public Health Nurse, Police Liaison Officer (and other community supports, if applicable)
- Arrange for a School Administrator to be at the school for 2-3 days (if at the start of a semester, the need may be longer) to handle routine operational matters (new registrations, student discipline, etc.). This colleague can also provide support at the school level (to walk halls, answer questions and connect with kids)
- Contact Corporate Communications (share basic information)
- If not received directly from the family, contact the family to 'confirm' nature of death and level of information to be shared with your school community (recommend preparing a few notes prior to the phone call to parents, see attached draft script template); reconnect immediately with school SOSA if the family suggests a connect between the school and the 'reason' for the death.
- Contact the Office Administrator to share information, and prepare various details for the days going forward (Office Administrator should, in turn, contact the rest of the office team to share information)
- Contact Student Council Chair(s)
- Post a message to all staff in Staff-Only conference room, invite them to an emergency staff meeting to discuss further details, available supports and next steps
- Contact the four immediate teachers, Guidance Counsellor, and any other staff (e.g. coach, EA, etc.) who taught or worked with the student and his/her siblings. It is good to touch base in person rather than this specific group of staff reading it in an email.
- Ask Attendance and Student Services to adjust attendance register to ensure 'absence' phone calls are not sent home to the parents of the deceased
- Reconnect with SOSA and Corporate Communications to discuss immediate response

Subsequent Response (within 24 hours of the news of the death)

- Ask custodians to lower the school flag
- Have a Staff Meeting to share information with ALL staff (be certain to include all staff from the office to the cafeteria; introduce the Critical Intervention Response Team)
- Hire 2-3 occasional teachers for the day to cover classes or walk the halls and connect with kids
- Provide staff with a copy of your speaking notes to take to class (sample attached)
- Organize a space for the Critical Intervention Response Team (order food, and drinks and Kleenex/tissue) to work and meet with students, teachers and parents (if applicable).
- Begin to identify vulnerable students that need immediate support. Encourage staff to indicate to the admin team if they believe that particular students are especially vulnerable at this time.
- Confirm a media plan with Corporate Communications immediately. Be aware that the Ministry of Education will likely be informed.
- With Corporate Communications, draft a letter to the school community (the letter, in turn, could be sent home with students, posted on the school website and/or sent to local community papers)
- Monitor social media to see what students and the community are discussing
- Contact your OSSTF Branch President; provide staff with information regarding Hurst Place Mohawk Employee Assistance Provider (open 24 hours a day to schedule an appointment). The phone numbers are 905-521-8300 or 1-888-521-8300. Their website www.mohawkssi.com provides valuable resources, and reading materials for all employees.
- Ensure your SO has contacted your trustee, as per the emergency communication protocol, to ensure he or she is aware of the death and your action plan moving forward

- Generate a list of students in need of additional support (these could be students who were close to the student who died or had an immediate connection at the time of the student's death); be certain to share this list with all staff in a private conference room
- Set up a Memory Table for students to write messages (great opportunity to get a sense of who is in need). The table should be set up in an area close to the guidance dept. in order to monitor student response.
- Cover the locker with paper to allow students to write messages – attempts to avoid writing directly on locker
- Read a morning announcement; focus on the celebration of the student's life (see attached draft sample)
- Reconnect with the family and discuss funeral plans and arrangements (determine level of school involvement)
- Share information with colleagues across the HWDSB considering students will be impacted in other schools (note feeder schools in particular)
- Continue to monitor social media to see what students and the community are discussing
- Depending on the nature of the death, be prepared for uninformed & potentially unfair comments
- Meet with the Crisis Intervention Response team at the end of each day. Share notes on students and develop a plan to ensure students at risk are safe. Connect with parents as needed.

In the First Days going forward (within 48-72 hours of the news of the death)

- Continue to provide all staff, support staff, and SOSA with updated information (for example, through daily Memos or staff emails, see attached draft examples)
- Be mindful people grieve in different ways and at different times; continue to provide tips from the counsellors on our Critical Intervention Response Team to help support employees with their feelings:
- Return the school to regular routines, to the degree possible
- Prepare for the funeral, and wake (especially if the funeral is during school hours). Avoid having a service on campus for fear of glorifying suicide and triggering contagion.
- Continue to monitor vulnerable staff and students.
- Begin long-range planning with Social Work Services for students in need beyond the immediate 'grieving' period
- Involve community partners in postvention support. If the death are close to a school holiday period (i.e. Christmas Break, summer vacation) work with the Dept. of Social Work to ensure that community supports are available for students and families when school is not in session.
- Discuss a contingency plan with all staff regarding student work; missed assignments, and assignment deadlines
- Consultation on how to respectfully deal with the potential of "shrines" being created by students e.g. flowers and photos on the student's locker or in an area of the school campus
- Document actions during the crisis period, if possible

During the First Month

- Monitor staff and student well-being
- Set a time for a 'check-in' with the team to discuss long-term plans for events like graduation, the Yearbook (creating a Memory Page), planting a Healing Garden, birthdays, anniversaries, etc.
- Set a time for team reflection and debriefing on the postvention process. Self-care for leaders is important.
- Consider offering information sessions for parent community with mental health agency
- Continue documentation of actions, and feedback for future process

Planning for the Future

- Continue to monitor staff and student well-being
- Implement recommendations from the reflection and debriefing process (feedback to board mental health leadership team and secondary administrator suicide work team, etc)
- Share the postvention plan with new staff members
- Continue to work with board and community to refine response for future

This is very difficult work, particularly for the school leadership team. Remember that you are not alone, and that you have many colleagues throughout the board who are ready to help you through this. Take care of yourself, and each other, through this crisis period.



School Response to Suicide Concerns

All suicidal and self-harm gestures/comments must be taken seriously and responded to immediately.

Anyone can help a student.

Active Suicide Attempt
(self-harming behaviour that includes an intention to die)

This is a Medical Emergency - Call 911
Ensure that student is not left alone.

Contact :

School First Aid representative (as needed)	Principal/VP or designate	Parent/Guardian
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Students At Risk

Warning Signs include:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Withdrawal from friends, family, school</i> ▪ <i>Serious mood changes</i> ▪ <i>Loss of interest in pleasurable activities</i> ▪ <i>Loss of interest in things one cares about</i> ▪ <i>Change in eating and sleeping habits</i> ▪ <i>Difficulty concentrating</i> ▪ <i>Decline in school work</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Hopelessness and helplessness</i> ▪ <i>Seeking out ways to harm or kill oneself</i> ▪ <i>Giving away favourite possessions</i> ▪ <i>Impulsivity</i> ▪ <i>Frequent physical complaints</i> ▪ <i>Direct or indirect statements about suicide, including via social media or in writing</i> |
|--|--|

In Response to Suicidal Ideation / Behaviour / Threats

School staff are instructed to contact a member of the Admin Team, a school mental health professionals and/or an ASIST trained staff member if they have concerns about a student engaging in suicidal ideation, behaviour, threats or plans.



- Review Risk of Suicide**
- Review completed by ASIST trained staff member, student services staff and/or school mental health professional.
 - Consider consultation with COAST and/or Community Mental Health Service in your school (AY)
 - Contact Parent/Guardian —if student does not want parent/guardian contacted explore reasons
 - In most cases parent/guardian will be contacted



- High Risk** (description on back of page)
- COAST 905-972-8338,
 - Emergency Psychiatry at MUMC (under 18) or at St. Joseph's Hospital (over 18)
 - Or 911 as needed

- Low Risk** (description on back of page)
- Develop safety plan
 - Support family in connecting to resources:
 - Family Doctor
 - CONTACT Hamilton 905-570-8888
 - COAST 905-972-8338
 - Parent's employee assistance program
 - Kids Help Phone 1-800-668-6868 or www.kidshelpphone.ca
 - LGBTQ Youth Helpline: 1-800-268-9688



- Student Returns to School/Program**
- Return to school meeting with parent/guardian and student
 - Check-in system developed
 - Appropriate school personnel notified
 - Consents for community services obtained

Determination of Risk

Only staff who are ASIST trained and/or have professional training should be interviewing students to determine the student's level of risk. The level of risk will determine the staff person's immediate action plan.

Ask the student, "Are you having thoughts of Suicide?" "Do you have a suicide plan? What is your plan?" "Have you made a previous suicide attempt?" "Are you receiving or have you received mental health care?" "Do you have pain that at times feels unbearable?"

Any remarks related to death and dying, or an expressed intent to commit self-harm must always be taken very seriously.

Consultation is available through your school mental health professional and COAST. **When in doubt always assume a higher level of risk.**

Lower Risk

- Student appears to have no plan and no means to carry out the plan
- No previous attempt or family history of attempts
- Student has a network of supportive family and/or peers, and experiences them as supportive
- Absence of overwhelming triggering or precipitating factors such as a relationship breakup, academic failure, grief
- Absence of alcohol and/or drug use
- Student identifies coping strategies and other resources

Higher Risk

- Student has indicated a desire or intent to commit suicide
- Documented psychiatric disorder, especially mood, conduct or substance use
- Student has a specific plan (including method, place, time, etc.)
- Student is able to carry out the plan (has access to the method)
- There have been repeated expressions of hopelessness, helplessness or desperation
- There is a specific loss or significant triggering event (i.e. death of a friend or family member, relationship breakup)
- History of previous suicide attempt
- Recent suicide attempt
- Death by suicide of a friend, relative, or person whom the student relates to/identifies with
- Presence of destructive, risky or impulsive behaviour including drug or alcohol use
- Family and friends are not perceived as supportive
- Student has been giving away important personal belongings to others
- Student makes comments such as "I just can't take it anymore", "Thanks for everything—you meant a lot to me", "I shouldn't have been born", "I wish I were dead", "Nobody will miss me—people will be better off without me", "It won't matter soon", "I might as well be dead".

School Based Suicide Intervention Tracking Sheet
(Complete for each student assessed and give to Principal —DO NOT KEEP IN OSR)

Student Name: _____
Grade: _____
Gender: _____
School: _____
Parent(s) Guardian(s) Notified: _____

School Level Assessment of Concerns

Date of Intervention _____
Assessment Completed by: _____

Precipitating events:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawal from friends, family, school | <input type="checkbox"/> Change in eating and sleeping habits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of interest in pleasurable activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of interest in things one cares about |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent complaints about physical symptoms | <input type="checkbox"/> Impulsivity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Expressing hopelessness and helplessness | <input type="checkbox"/> Serious mood changes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty concentrating and decline in school work | <input type="checkbox"/> Giving away favorite possessions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Direct or indirect statements about suicide | <input type="checkbox"/> Seeking out ways to harm or kill oneself |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Suicide statements contained in social media or in personal writing | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

Intervention Plan: High Risk

- Involve Parent/Guardian
- School Based Safety Plan in consult with school mental health professional
- COAST (mobile crisis team)
- Emergency Psychiatry Team at MUMC (under 18) or St. Joseph's Hospital (over 18)
- Call 911— ambulance, police

Actions Plan: Low Risk

- Involve Parent/Guardian
- School Based Safety Plan in consult with school mental health professional
- Other School Based Services (ie Alternatives for Youth)
- COAST (mobile crisis team)
- Family Doctor
- CONTACT Hamilton
- Parent's employee assistance program
- KidsHelpPhone 1-800-668-6868
- LGBTQ Youth Helpline: 1-800-268-9688



ASIST Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training

ASIST is a two day, interactive workshop that prepares caregivers to provide suicide first aid interventions. Small group discussions and skills practice are based on adult learning principles. ASIST teaches the Suicide Intervention Model, a practical guide to doing suicide interventions. Powerful videos support learning.

WHO CAN ATTEND?

All caregivers formally designated or not; minimum age 16 years.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the workshop, participants will be better able to:

- Identify people who have thoughts of suicide
- Understand how beliefs and attitudes can affect suicide interventions
- Seek a shared understanding of the reasons for thoughts of suicide and the reasons for living
- Review current risk and develop a plan to increase safety from suicidal behaviour for an agreed amount of time
- Follow up on safety commitments accessing further help as needed



SafeTALK Suicide alertness for everyone

SafeTALK is a three hour training program that prepares helpers to identify persons with thoughts of suicide and connect them to suicide first aid resources. Most people with thoughts of suicide, either directly or indirectly invite help to stay safe. Alert helpers know how to identify and work with these opportunities to help protect life. Powerful videos illustrate both non alert and alert responses. Discussion and practice stimulate learning.

WHO CAN ATTEND?

Anyone who might want to help; minimum age 15 years

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the training, participants will be better able to:

- Move beyond common tendencies to miss, dismiss or avoid suicide
- Identify people who have thoughts of suicide
- Apply TALK steps (Tell, Ask, Listen and Keep Safe) to connect a person with thoughts of suicide to a suicide first aid intervention caregiver



Talking with Students about Suicide

Talking with Individual Students

We may be aware of a student at potential risk for suicide from individual students, their friends, or our own observations and interactions with students. The Suicide Prevention School Quick Reference Guide provides information and guidelines for how to talk with students, and link them with appropriate supports. You may also consult members of your school team.

Talking with Groups of students (including class-level)

In a small group or class setting, students may ask about suicide and/or want to discuss recent events or media coverage.

It is important to talk about suicide, but **it is critical HOW we talk about suicide.**

Can talking about suicide in classrooms be helpful?

Talking about suicide in helpful ways can raise awareness of mental health and mental health problems, reduce stigma about mental health concerns, assist us to identify (or self-identify) concerns, encourage/promote coping skills, promote caring and connectedness in our relationships and get help for students in need.

What are helpful ways to talk about suicide?

- ✓ When we talk about suicide, we need to stress the link between suicidal thoughts and behaviours and mental health. For example, “most people who are experiencing suicidal thoughts and behaviours have a mental health problem, but having a mental health problem like depression doesn’t mean that that person will become suicidal. It’s important to know that there is help available for mental health problems and that people can and do get better.”
- ✓ We need to stress that suicide, and the reasons for it, are not simple. For example, say: “Suicide is a complicated reaction to a number of overwhelming factors. There is no one single cause for suicide.” “Suicide is not caused by a single event such as bullying, fighting with parents, a bad grade, or the break-up of a relationship.”
- ✓ Provide clear information about bullying and suicide. For example, “Victims of bullying behaviour frequently experience social isolation from peers, decreased self-worth, loneliness, and withdrawal. Sometimes being bullied can result in new or increased feelings of depression and anxiety. Being the victim of bullying, when added to other major stressors and mental health problems are risk factors for suicidal thoughts and actions.”



- ✓ Talking openly about mental health provides the opportunity to de-stigmatize the topic. For example, list famous people who have a mental illness and who are well or in recovery. You may also choose to let students know that people you care about have a mental illness or a mental health problem.
- ✓ Provide information about mental health problems. Consider providing students with an information sheet such as “Children and Youth Mental Health”. Let students know that some feelings require immediate help such as threats of suicide, talking about wishing to die or having a plan.
- ✓ Talk about, provide information and reinforce helpful problem-solving, coping and stress management skills. Ask students about their coping strategies, and encourage them to use strategies that help them to feel better and solve the problem. Discuss stress management strategies.
- ✓ Promote resiliency in students. Help students to identify their areas of strength (skills and abilities), the people in their lives who provide support and understanding, and healthy living skills such as hobbies, sports, exercise, nutrition, proper sleep, and having a positive attitude.
- ✓ If the topic of suicide is featured in curriculum or associated readings, question any portrayal of suicide as romantic, heroic or tragic.
- ✓ Encourage help seeking behaviour. Let students know that help is available, and where they or someone they know can get help. For example, “sometimes we might be unsure of where to turn for help, but there is help available. Here are some websites we can look at:

www.emental.ca

www.mindyourmind.ca

www.kidshelpphone.ca

“There are also phone lines. Here is the KidsHelpPhone: 1-888-668-6868 or the local crisis line COAST: 905 -972-8338”.

“There are people here to help you through any problem, no matter what. Who are the people you would go to if you or a friend were feeling worried, depressed or had thoughts of suicide? Parents, extended family members, and religious leaders can be a source of support and help. There are also people here at school who care about you and are here to help. I am willing to support you and/or there are these people here at our school who can help.” List people who can help within the school.

“There are also people in the community who can help such as your family doctor or Contact Hamilton 905-570-8888”.

“If you have a friend that you are worried about tell a trusted adult. Friends don’t let friends get hurt.”



Ways not to talk about Suicide because of Potential Harm:

Watching or showing a video of someone discussing their suicidal thoughts or discussing images of media coverage about a specific instance of death by suicide when the coverage is glamorized, sensationalized or graphic in nature is known to heighten the risk for vulnerable students.

Discussing the means of how someone died by suicide, or the location increases risk for vulnerable students.

Do not give permission for suicide to be the sole topic of an essay, debate, play, etc.

Talking with students about suicide in large assemblies has been found to have harmful effects for students and **is not recommended**. In particular, this kind of format “does not provide enough exposure to the messages of suicide prevention, nor do they allow for monitoring of student reactions.” Additionally, “media depictions of suicidal behaviours or speeches by teens who have made suicide attempts should not be used, as they could have modeling effects for at-risk teens.” As well, there is risk of students being exposed to unsupportive and/or stigmatizing and judgmental comments made by peers.

We know this is a difficult topic and it may be affecting some staff as well as students. It is important to engage in supportive conversations with your colleagues or contact the Employee Assistance program. Teachers are not expected to become mental health professionals, so if you need additional support please contact the mental health team for guidance, Michelle Bates at michelle.bates@hwdsb.on.ca or 905-527-5092 x2710 or David Hoy at david.hoy@hwdsb.on.ca or 905-527-5092 x2448.

Key Messages related to Connecticut School Tragedy

For Students...

- You are safe.
- Our school is safe.
- School violence is very rare.
- We have protocols in place to help us if something unexpected happens, and we practice these to make sure we have thought it all through.
- It is natural to feel worried and sad when we hear about tragedies like this, even when they happen far away.
- If you feel really upset and can't stop thinking about it, it is important to talk with an adult. We can help.

For Staff...

- Tragic events like the school shootings in Connecticut hit close to home amongst education professionals.
- It is natural to feel empathy and sadness when we think about our colleagues in this school community, though they are a distance away, as the intensive media coverage draws them closer.
- It is important to care for ourselves, and one another, so that we can be strong for our students and clear in our communication with them about this event.
- There are some things we can do to support our school community at this time. For example, we can minimize student exposure to the details, reassure our students, reassure our parents and families, and watch for students who may be vulnerable (see sample letter for details in each of these areas).

For Parents/Guardians...

- As parents and grandparents, the events in Connecticut last week trouble us, and we hold our children even closer.
- As educators, we know we are entrusted with your children each day, and we take our responsibility for school safety very seriously.
- While school violence is not completely preventable, we can be reassured that extreme acts of violence are very rare.
- At the same time, we need to be prepared. At our school we have a number of safeguards and protocols in place <be prepared to describe>.
- Parents have a role in supporting these safety measures by reinforcing for us key terms and protocols with their children <be prepared to describe>.
- In talking with your children during this difficult time, some of the advice from experts in trauma response may be helpful (see summary from National Child Traumatic Stress Network in the US).
- Key messages for supporting children include:
 - ✓ Reassure your child that s/he is safe.
 - ✓ Provide extra emotional support (attention, affection).
 - ✓ Minimize their exposure to media coverage of the events in Connecticut.
 - ✓ Talk calmly about the events, and answer any questions they might have at a good level for their age (not too much detail, especially for younger children).
 - ✓ Look for signs that your child is struggling (e.g., nervousness, irritability, problems eating or sleeping), and check in with a professional if you are worried.