

# Newsletter

## A Message from our Chair of the Board of Directors and Executive Director

Dear HFSS family,

Thank you for taking the time to read our Winter 2023 newsletter! We are so proud of what Hamilton Foundation for Student Success has achieved and are excited to continue working together to influence change in our community.

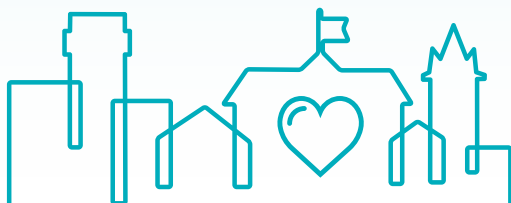
The past 12 months have brought many successes for us, beginning with HFSS being recognized as the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB)'s Charity of Choice. Thanks to your commitment and generosity, this achievement means HWDSB will prioritize HFSS's goals and strengthens our commitment to supporting student success.

As we welcomed the return of in-person events, it was wonderful to see everyone at our Donor Appreciation Event! It was the first time in over two years that donors, volunteers and staff were able to connect under the same roof.

Another event that we look forward to seeing you at is Showcase of heARTS in March 2023! We recognize that attending in-person events may not yet be feasible for all guests and have created ticket options that allow guests to participate either in-person or virtually from their own location. Thanks to your contributions, Showcase of heARTS was able to raise roughly \$51,000 for HWDSB students last year. We are excited to continue our fundraising efforts and hopefully top last year's total!

We want to take a moment to welcome HWDSB's new Director of Education and Secretary of the Board, Sheryl Robinson Petrazzini. Sheryl joins HFSS's Board of Directors with over 30 years of experience working in education, serving in richly diverse communities, supporting all students with a particular focus on underserved and marginalized students.

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## Charity of Choice

### HFSS Recognized as HWDSB's Charity of Choice

The HWDSB proudly continues to recognize the Hamilton Foundation for Student Success as the school board's Charity of Choice.

The HFSS is the only registered charity in Canada with the main focus of supporting HWDSB Students.

"Without HWDSB, there would be no Foundation. Its students are the motivation for our mission," Ian Brisbin, chair of the HFSS Board of Directors, said in a release earlier this year.

The foundation was established in 1976 as the HWDSB Foundation. The name has changed but the goal remains the same - engage the community to support HWDSB students and help them overcome social and financial barriers so they can thrive and reach their full potential.

The decision to name the HFSS as HWDSB's charity of choice means the board will prioritize the Foundation and its goal of supporting HWDSB students when considering charitable support and donations.

"Trustees have heard countless stories of how Hamilton Foundation for Student Success has been a champion and advocate for our children and youth," said HWDSB Chair Dawn Danko during the January 2022 board meeting. "The Board is thrilled to make a commitment to the learning, growth, and success of our students through this Charity of Choice designation." HFSS led initiatives like the Covid Relief Fund, and Student Awards program, are key pillars in supporting student success.

The first event after being named the HWDSB Charity of Choice was the Showcase of heARTS, which took place on April 7, 2022. The event put HWDSB student talent on display with the goal of raising money for the Foundation's Student Success Grants.

The event was a huge success. In total, it raised approximately \$51,000 to help HWDSB students come to school and stay in school.

We are so excited to see what the Showcase of heARTS 2023 has in store for the Hamilton community



## Student Support Grants Provide Hope and Joy for HWDSB Students

Hamilton Foundation for Student Success is seeing an alarming increase in need for Student Support Grants.

Student Support Grants were established to support HWDSB students in need of financial assistance with school related expenses and basic personal needs. With the number of students requiring financial support increasing every day, HWDSB staff are reflecting on how these Grants directly impact student success and well-being.

Jacqueline Elliott-Books, a former Grade 2 teacher at Holbrook Elementary School, says Student Support Grants made it possible for students to attend a field trip to the ArtSmart production at Sir Allan MacNab Secondary School.

“Many students had never attended a theatrical performance and would not have the opportunity to do so in their home lives. The grant made it possible for them to participate in this awesome experience,” said Jacqueline. “Some of the students at MacNab attended Holbrook in the past and are siblings and neighbours to students at Holbrook. To see former students participating in this production was an uplifting connection that they could make.”



“Funding from Student Support Grants made it possible to purchase winter coats to get students ready for the winter season.”

“Our students commented on how much they enjoyed the experience. I heard kids singing songs in the hall and students in my class asked when we are going again! Student Support Grants are so important to build community, support student learning, and provide hope and joy for students,” she said.

On top of lessening the financial burden for HWDSB students to attend school trips, Student Support Grants are essential in providing basic personal needs for students to come to and stay in school.

Annie Beattie-Bigelow, former office administrator at Helen Detweiler Elementary School, says that Grants provide HWDSB students with the resources they need to be present and ready to learn.

“Staff utilize Student Support Grants to make sure students are comfortable and warm in the winter by providing snow pants, winter coats, and boots,” said Annie. “Grants help students attend school safely and go outside for recess without worrying about the cold weather. Removing these barriers makes it easier for students to come to school and participate in outdoor activities with their classmates.”

“Grants are also used to make sure our students have safe, well-fitting footwear so they can participate fully in gym class and sports teams. Having fun and feeling included with their peers positively impacts students’ self confidence and emotional well-being,” she said.



### Student Support Grants

From October 1, 2021 to May 30, 2022, 533 Student Support Grants totalling \$99,315 were given out.

From October 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021, Hamilton Foundation for Student Success provided financial help to 344 students totaling \$58,780. From October 1, 2022 to December 14, 2022, that has increased to 499 students totaling \$93,753.

With this number increasing every day, Hamilton Foundation for Student Success is calling for donations to raise much needed funds for our students. With your help, students are able to overcome financial barriers so they have an equal opportunity to learn, grow and succeed.

Hamilton Foundation for Student Success looks forward to working with our community to support Student Support Grants so that HWDSB students can grow into their full potential.

**SHOWCASE OF heARTS**

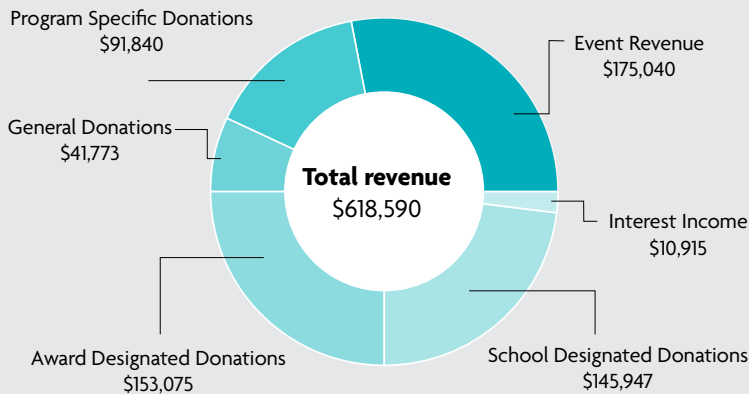
**PLEASE JOIN US**

**MARCH 30, 2023**  
**6:15 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.**  
[hwdsb.info/showcase2023](http://hwdsb.info/showcase2023)

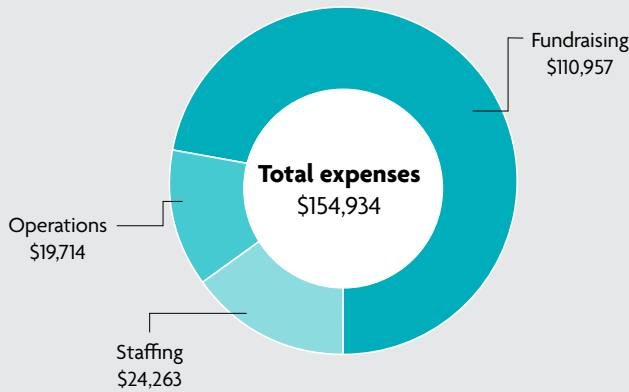
Presented by **JOHNSON INSURANCE**

In support of **HAMILTON Foundation for Student Success**

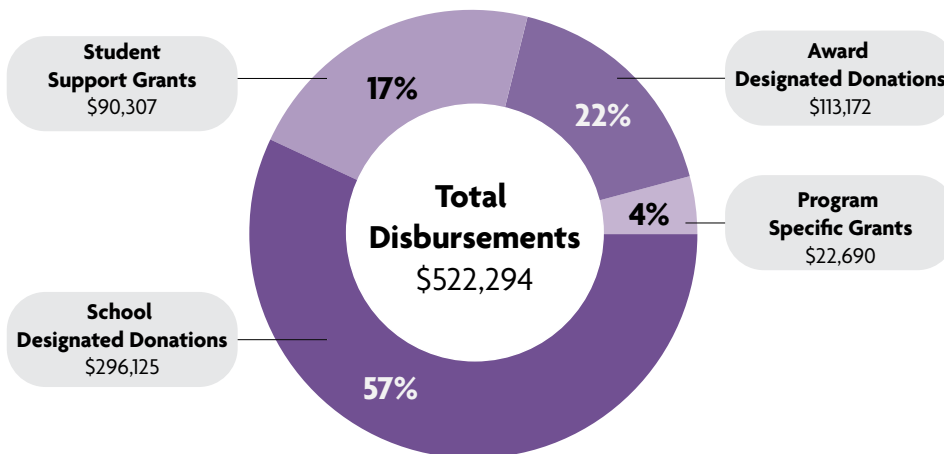
2021-2022 Revenue



2021-2022 Expenses



Disbursements by Designation



You can view the Foundation's audited financial statements at [www.hamiltonfoundationforstudentsuccess.ca](http://www.hamiltonfoundationforstudentsuccess.ca) or email [foundation@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:foundation@hwdsb.on.ca) to request a copy.

We would like to thank our departing Board members Heather Beale and Joe O'Connor, and introduce our HFSS Board of Directors for 2022-2023:

Lorraine Valmadrid and Lohifa Pogason Acker.

While our accomplishments are cause for celebration, it also confirms the urgency for HFSS to provide support to students in our community. In response to an increase in demand for Student Support Grants, HFSS is launching the Student Barrier Fund to help remove financial barriers for HWDSB families.

As we enter 2023, we thank you for your enthusiasm and generosity, and look forward to collaborating with you to continue supporting our HWDSB community.

Sincerely,

Ian Brisbin, Chair of the Board of Directors  
Amy Learning Cote, Executive Director

2022-2023 Board of Directors

**Chair**

Ian Brisbin  
Partner, Martin & Hillyer Associates

**Vice-Chair**

Carla Ricci  
Manager of Business Development & Partnership,  
Tandia Credit Union

**Treasurer**

Matthew Gerard  
Associate Director, Support Services,  
HWDSB

**Secretary**

Peggy Savage  
Freelance Writer/Marketing Director,  
Retired

**Directors**

Lyndsy Baillie  
System Principal (Acting),  
Learning Services, HWDSB

Lohifa Pogason Acker  
Entrepreneur/Hair Artist

Becky Buck  
Trustee Representative,  
HWDSB

Sheryl Robinson-Petrazzini  
Director of Education,  
HWDSB

Brent Foreman  
Partner,  
SimpsonWigle LLP

Lorraine Valmadrid  
Research Officer,  
Research and Analytics,  
HWDSB

Nair Lecruz  
Associate Dean,  
Health Studies,  
Mohawk College

**Hamilton Golf and Country Club Foundation Award**

Hamilton Foundation for Student Success was proud to work with HGCC Foundation to launch two new bursaries for deserving HWDSB graduates.

For two Ancaster High School graduates, their ability to achieve their goals has been made a little bit easier. Thanks to a bursary from the HGCC Foundation, each student received \$5,000 to put towards their post-secondary endeavours. HFSS was thrilled to assist the HGCC Foundation in its effort to support HWDSB student success.



“The concept of giving back to the community is built right into our club pillars.”

Al Scott, the president of the HGCC Foundation, which has been actively donating to local charities for the last 50 years, sat down with the HFSS to speak about the new bursary award.

“One of the pillars the Club focuses its strategic planning on is social responsibility and investing in the community”, Al noted in the interview. “The concept of giving back to the community is built right into our club pillars.”

The HGCC Foundation has made the decision to shift its focus towards supporting graduating students from HWDSB, and their financial success, in an effort to help more students achieve their post-secondary goals.

Moving forward, the HGCC Foundation has a goal of awarding a post-secondary bursary to deserving students at each HWDSB high school. “There is nothing more important than investing in education for students,” Al noted.

Affording post-secondary education in any pathway is no small task. Financial barriers for students can make or break the decision to pursue these goals. The HGCC Foundation is thrilled to be a part of the solution. Al proudly mentioned “If we can get them into that program, or reduce at least one barrier for them, if we can get them over that hurdle with a bursary, that is our intent.”



*Student Awards*

For the 2021-2022 school year, 462 Awards were presented, totalling \$93,935.



*Contact Us*

20 Education Court Hamilton, ON L8N 3L1  
 Phone: 905-527-5092 ext. 2103  
 foundation@hwdb.on.ca  
 Charitable Business #: 89089 6046 RR0001

