



# Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School

PROUD SCHOOL OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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October 4, 2021

Dear Families,

On October 7, 2019, the Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School community, along with the broader Hamilton community, was shaken by the death of a student, Devan Selvey. Since his death, the grounds behind Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School has been a reminder of the tragic incident that took place two years ago.

Today, an Eastern Redbud (*Cercis Canadensis*) tree, which is native to this region, has been planted for the Selvey family. Many will recall that Devan's favourite colour was purple. The tree blooms vibrant purple flowers and showcases heart-shaped leaves.

A 2-metre wide top oak bench with carved words "Compassion, Empathy, Respect" supported by the Selvey family will also be on the site. This plan was developed through collaboration with Devan's mother, Shari-Ann Selvey, and within HWDSB's memorialization guidelines, school administration and system staff representing social work, Indigenous education, and safe schools.

In the coming weeks, you will also notice that the current memorial will be removed. This is part of the plan that was agreed to by the family. These items will be given to Devan's mother. This is all being done with the intention of promoting healing for the family as well as for us, as a school and community.

The broader conversation raised by the community after this incident was about bullying. Since then, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) launched the [Safe Schools: Bullying Prevention and Intervention Review Panel](#) in 2019 and the [Safe Schools Action Plan](#) in 2021.

As part of that plan, our school will be the site of something special. Sir Winston Churchill will soon receive a dedicated outdoor classroom and community space at the back of the school. Learn more about the [Outdoor Learning Space](#) and the safer schools teaching and learnings associated with this new project.



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Consultation for the learning space will include students, staff and the Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School community, the Indigenous community, and Hamilton residents. Staff will offer outreach opportunities and individuals can email their submissions. Community consultation processes will begin the week of October 18.

Our school community has gone through a lot together. It has been a challenging time. We want our families to know that we care about our students and our school community.

Educators shared information with the students in their classrooms this morning. We emphasized that support is available as this week may be difficult.

If you have any questions, please reach out to either your child's classroom educator, a vice-principal, or me. Our priority is the health, safety, and well-being of our students within the Sir Winston Churchill family.

Sincerely,

Christine Nicolaides  
Principal